

Tukaram Gatha

तुकाराम गाथा

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

Volume 9: Gatha 4001-4575 - 574 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 4001

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the empty teacher

मराठी मूळ

मुखें सांगे भ्रमकथान । जन लोकाची कापितो मान ॥1॥
 असत्य सांगतो जनासी । नाहीं अनुभव आपणासी ॥ध्रु॥
 कथा करितो ज्ञानाची । अंतरीं आशा बहु लोभाची ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे तो चि वेडा । त्याचें बहू उद्देश हाणावा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He speaks deluding stories from his mouth and nods along with the crowd. He tells falsehoods to the people, having no experience of his own.

He discourses on knowledge while harboring greed and desire within. Says Tuka, such a man is truly mad; his pretensions deserve to be exposed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With his mouth he tells deluding tales. He is cutting the throats of the people. He tells the people what is not true, for he has no experience of his own. He gives discourses on knowledge, while inside him there is much craving and greed. Tuka says: that man is the real madman. His pretense should be thoroughly exposed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns on the teacher who speaks of God without knowing God. The man preaches wisdom and lectures the crowd, but he has no inner experience to back it, so what he hands them is delusion, and Tukaram calls it a cutting of throats because false guidance ruins the people who trust it. Worse, the same mouth that talks of knowledge hides a heart full of greed. The poem names the pattern bluntly: such pretension should be unmasked. The warning is also a mirror, asking whether what we teach is something we have actually lived.

GATHA 4002

Worldly Life

Worldly life, trades steeped in sin

मराठी मूळ

कांहीं दुसरा विचार । न लगे करावा चि फार ॥1॥
 सेटण ना चौधरी । पांडेपण वाहे शिरीं ॥ध्रु॥
 पाप न लगे धुंडावें ॥ पाहिजे तरि तेथें जावें ॥2॥
 जकातीचा धंदा । तेथें पाप वसे सदा ॥3॥
 गाई ह्मसी हेड । तुप विकी महा द्वाड ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे पाहीं । तेथें पुण्या रीघ नाहीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No great deliberation is needed for this. Becoming a merchant, a headman, or a revenue officer, one carries the weight of worldly position on one's head.

Sin needs no searching; it is right there if you go looking. The tax-collection trade is where sin dwells permanently.

One who sells adulterated ghee from a cow's milk is deeply wicked. Says Tuka, look closely: there is no room for virtue in such pursuits.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no need to think long about this. The big merchant, the headman, the revenue clerk: each one carries the weight of his office on his head. You do not have to go searching for sin. It is right there, the moment you step in. The tax-collecting trade is a place where sin lives all the time. The man who waters down ghee from the cow's milk and sells it is deeply crooked. Tuka says: look and see. There is no doorway for virtue in any of that.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks plainly at certain worldly occupations and judges them by the sin built into them. The merchant, the village headman, the revenue officer all carry the load of their position, and the tax trade in particular is a place where wrongdoing is constant rather than occasional. He gives a sharp example, the dealer who adulterates ghee and sells it as pure, as a stand-in for trades that run on cheating. His point is not that work itself is evil but that some occupations leave no opening for virtue to enter. The poem invites an honest look at how one earns, and at whether the daily means itself is clean.

GATHA 4003

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the oldest kinship

मराठी मूळ

तुझी माझी आहे जुनी सोयरीक । आधीं बंधु लेंक मग जाले ॥1॥
 वांटेकरी ह्मणून पुसती आतां । परि आहे सत्ता करीन ते ॥ध्रु॥
 लेंकीचें लेंकरुं नातु जाल्यावरी । मंगळा ही दुरि अंतरलों ॥2॥
 बाइलेचा भाऊ पिसुना सोयरा । ह्मणउनि करा विनोद हा ॥3॥
 आकुळीं तों करुं नये तें चि केलें । न बोलावें भलें तों चि आतां ॥4॥
 न ह्मणसी लेंकी माउसी बहिणी । आह्मां केलें धणी पापाचें त्या ॥5॥
 बहु पांचांजणी केली विटंबना । नये दाऊं जना तोंड ऐसें ॥6॥
 तुका ह्मणे आधीं मूळ तें चि धरुं । मागील तें करुं उरी आतां ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You and I have an old kinship; we were kin before brothers and children came along. Now the heirs ask about shares, but the authority remains mine to exercise.

After grandchildren and great-grandchildren arrived, even auspicious occasions grew distant. A wife's brother is but a nosy relative, so let us make light of this.

In the confusion, what should not have been done was done; now it is best not to speak of it. Says Tuka, let us first hold fast to the original bond and then settle whatever remains.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You and I have an old kinship. We were bound before there were any brothers or children. Now the heirs come asking about their shares. But the right is mine, and I will use it. After daughters' children and grandchildren came along, even the festivals grew distant from me. A wife's brother is just a meddling in-law, so let us make light of this. In the confusion, what should not have been done got done. Now the kind thing is to say no more about it. Do not call them daughter, aunt, sister. They have made me a master of nothing but sin. The five of them shamed me badly. One should not show such a face to the world. Tuka says: let us first hold to the original bond. Whatever is left over, let us settle it after.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks of his bond with God as the oldest kinship of all, older than any tie of blood or family. He sets that original relationship against the crowd of worldly relations that came later: heirs claiming shares, in-laws meddling, festivals and obligations pulling him away. He treats those entanglements wryly, even the sense of shame they have brought him, as things best laughed off and not dwelt on. His resolve is to grip the first bond, the one with God, before anything else. The worldly accounts can wait; the kinship that came before everything comes first.

GATHA 4004

Autobiography

Old age, the spent vessel

मराठी मूळ

मार्गे बहुत जाले खेळ । आतां बळ वोसरलें ॥१॥
 हालों नये चालों आतां । घट रिता पोकळ ॥२॥
 भाजल्याची दिसे घडी । पट ओढी न साहे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पाहतां घडी । जगा जोडी अंगारा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Many games have been played in the past, but now the strength has waned. I cannot walk or move anymore; this vessel is empty and hollow.

It shows the crease of one who has been scorched; it cannot bear even a gentle tug. Says Tuka, when you look at this body, all it offers the world is ashes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Many games have been played already. Now the strength has drained away. I cannot stir, I cannot walk anymore. The pot is empty and hollow. It shows the crack of a thing that has been fired. It cannot bear even a tug on the cloth. Tuka says: look at this body. All it has to give the world now is ashes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as an old man taking stock of a worn-out body. The games of an active life are behind him, the strength is gone, and he can no longer move about. He pictures the body as an empty clay pot, fired and cracked, unable to take even the lightest strain. The closing line is unsparing: this body, looked at honestly, has nothing left to offer the world but ashes. It is a clear-eyed reckoning with the body's end, the kind of looking that turns a person toward what does not turn to ash.

GATHA 4005

Prayers

Cry for help, come running

मराठी मूळ

आळस आला अंगा । धांव घालीं पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 सोसूं शरीराचे भाव । पडती अवगुणाचे घाव ॥२॥
 करावीं व्यसनं । दुरी येउनि नारायणें ॥३॥
 जवळील दुरी । जालों देवा धरीं करीं ॥४॥
 ह्मणउनि देवा । वेळोवेळां करीं धावा ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे पांडुरंगा । दुरी धरूं नका अंगा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Laziness has overtaken my body; rush to my aid, O Panduranga. I endure the moods of this body as the blows of bad qualities rain down.

Narayana, come near and drive away these vices. I have strayed far from You, O Lord; take me by the hand.

Therefore, O God, come rushing to my rescue again and again. Says Tuka, Panduranga, do not hold me at a distance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Laziness has come over my body. Come running, Panduranga. I bear the moods of this body, and the blows of my bad qualities keep falling. Narayana, come close and drive these habits away. I am near You, yet I have gone far; God, take me by the hand. So, God, again and again I call You to come. Tuka says: Panduranga, do not hold me away from You.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying out of weakness, not strength. He names a sluggishness that has crept into his body, and the way his own faults strike at him like blows he cannot stop. He does not pretend to fix himself; he asks Narayana to come near and drive the habits out, and to take him by the hand. The ache underneath is that he is near God and still feels far, so he calls again and again, and his last word is the plea not to be kept at a distance.

GATHA 4006

Social Criticism

Social criticism, as seed so fruit

मराठी मूळ

झंवविली महारें । त्याची व्याली असे पोरें ॥१॥
 करी संताचा मत्सर । कोपें उभारोनि कर ॥२॥
 बीज तैसें फळ । वरी आलें अमंगळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ठावें । ऐसें जालें अनुभवं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One fathered by a lowly person bears fruit according to that seed. He harbors envy toward the saints and raises his fist in anger.

As the seed, so the fruit; what grows from it is inauspicious. Says Tuka, this is known and proven by experience.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He is the offspring of a base begetting, and the fruit follows the seed. He hates the saints, and raises his fist in anger. As the seed, so the fruit; what comes of it is foul. Tuka says: I know this; experience has made it plain.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pointing at a pattern, not a person, when he ties what someone produces to the root it grew from. The man he describes hates the saints and lifts his fist against them, and Tukaram reads that hatred as the natural fruit of a corrupt source. The claim is harsh: vile conduct comes from a vile beginning, as fruit comes from seed. He grounds it not in theory but in what he says he has watched happen. The mirror for the listener is to ask what kind of fruit one's own anger toward holy people is bearing.

GATHA 4007

Social Criticism

Social criticism, blaming God

मराठी मूळ

पापी तो नाठवी आपुल्या संचिता । ठेवी भगवंता वरी बोल ॥१॥
 भेईना करितां पापाचे डोंगर । दुर्जन पामर दुराचारी ॥२॥
 नाठवी तो खळ आपुली करणी । देवासी निंदोनि बोलतसे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्याच्या तोंडा लागो काटी । नाहीं जगजेठी जया चितीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The wrongdoer never reflects on his own accumulated deeds but lays blame upon God. He fears not though he piles up mountains of sin, that wretched and vile wrongdoer.

The wicked one never recalls his own conduct; he goes on slandering God. Says Tuka, may thorns fill his mouth, for he who has no room in his chitta for the Lord of the world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The sinner never thinks of his own gathered deeds; he puts the blame on God. He piles up mountains of sin and is not afraid, that low, wretched, evil-living man. The fool never recalls his own doing; he goes on slandering God. Tuka says: let thorns fill the mouth of the man who has no room for the Lord of the world in his heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the move of a man who will not own his own life. Such a person ignores the deeds he has stored up and lays the fault on God instead, heaping sin without fear. The thing Tukaram cannot bear is the slander: the same mouth that should hold the Name is used to abuse the Lord. His curse, that thorns fill that mouth, is aimed at the speech, not at damning the soul. The self-examination underneath is the question of whether we blame God for the harvest of our own choices, and whether the Lord has any room left in our heart.

GATHA 4008

The Nature of God

Nondual seeing, no ground for fate

मराठी मूळ

आधीं देह पाहता वाव । कैचा प्रारब्धासी ठाव ॥१॥
 कां रे रडतोसी माना । लागें विठ्ठलचरणा ॥२॥
 दुजेपण जालें वाव । त्रिभुवनासि नाहीं ठाव ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे खरे पाहें । विठ्ठल पाहोनियां राहें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When you look closely, this body itself is empty; where then is there any ground for fate? Why do you weep? Devote yourself to the feet of Vitthal. When duality itself is seen to be hollow, there is no place for it in all three worlds.

Says Tuka, look truly and remain steadfast in the vision of Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Look first: the body itself is empty. Where then is there any place for fate? Why are you crying, my mind? Hold to Vitthal's feet. Duality has become empty; in the three worlds it has no place. Tuka says: see truly. Look at Vitthal, and stay.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is cutting away the ground that worry stands on. He tells his own mind to look closely and see that the body it grieves over is hollow; if the body is empty, the karma and fate hung on it have nowhere to rest. He pushes further, saying duality itself is hollow and has no place in all three worlds. The cure he offers is not argument but attention: hold to Vitthal's feet, look truly at Vitthal, and remain there. The weeping stops not because the problem is solved but because the seer sees there was no second thing to fear.

GATHA 4009

Renunciation

Renunciation, women and wealth

मराठी मूळ

िस्त्रया धन बा हें खोटें । नागवले मोठे मोठे ॥1॥
 ह्यणोनि सांडा दोनी । सुख पावाल निदानीं ॥ध्रु॥
 सर्वदुःखासी कारण । हीं च दोन्हीचीं प्रमाण ॥2॥
 आशा सर्वस्वें सांडावी । तेणें निजपदवी पावावी ॥3॥
 देह लोभें नाडला । घाला यमाचा पडला॥4॥
 तुका ह्यणे निरापेक्षा । कांहीं न धरावी अपेक्षा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Women and wealth are false; they have ruined even the mightiest. Therefore abandon both, and you will find peace in the end.

These two alone are the root cause of all suffering. Desire must be abandoned entirely, and by that one attains the supreme state.

The body deluded by greed falls into Yama's trap. Says Tuka, be free of all expectation; hold onto no craving whatsoever.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Women and wealth are false, my friend; they have stripped even the great ones bare. So let both go, and in the end you will find peace. These two alone are the cause of all sorrow; both are the proof of it. Desire must be given up entirely, and by that the true state is reached. The body deluded by greed has fallen into Yama's trap. Tuka says: want nothing; hold to no craving at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming two snares and the cost of carrying them. He calls women and wealth false because the security people stake on them does not hold; even the mighty have been ruined by them. He does not soften the prescription: let both go entirely, give up desire itself, and the true state opens. The stakes are stated plainly, the body lost to greed falls into death's noose. Read for self-examination, the abhanga is less about scorning others than about loosening one's own grip on what cannot be kept.

GATHA 4010

*The Power of the Name**The Name, intention and essence*

मराठी मूळ

जेंजें होआवें संकल्पें । तें चि पुण्य होय पाप ॥१॥
 कारण तें मनापासीं । मेळविल्या मिळे रसीं ॥२॥
 सांडी मांडी हाली चाली । राहे तरि भली बोली ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सार । नांव जीवनाचे सागर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever arises by intention becomes either virtue or sin. The cause lies with the mind; when it is aligned, the essence is tasted.

Whether you start or stop, move or stay still, speak well while you remain. Says Tuka, the essence of this is the name, which is the ocean of true life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever arises by intention becomes either merit or sin. The cause lies with the mind; align it, and the essence is tasted. Whether you put down or take up, move or stay, speak well while you remain. Tuka says: the heart of it is the Name, the ocean of true living.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is locating the root of merit and sin in intention rather than in the act alone. The same deed turns to virtue or to fault depending on the mind behind it, so the work is to align the mind, and then the real taste is given. Whatever the body does, start or stop, move or rest, he asks that speech stay good while life lasts. The single thing he calls the essence is the Name, which he names the ocean that holds all true life. The point is that practice need not be elaborate when the Name is held and the intention is clean.

GATHA 4011

*Appeals and Exhortations**Exhortation, the body of wet clay*

मराठी मूळ

ओले मातीचा भरवसा । कां रे धरिशी मानसा ॥१॥
 डोळे चिरीव चांगले । वृद्धपणीं सरवया जाले ॥२॥
 नाक सरळ चांगलें । येउन हनवटी लागलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आलें नाहीं । तंव हरिला भज रे कांहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why do you place your trust in this body made of wet clay, O mortal? Those fine, sharp eyes will droop and blur in old age. That straight, handsome nose will bend down and touch the chin.

Says Tuka, before that time arrives, worship Hari with whatever you have.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why do you trust this body of wet clay, O man? Those fine, cut eyes will dim and run in old age. That straight, handsome nose will droop and touch the chin. Tuka says: before that day comes, worship Hari with whatever you have.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pressing the brevity of the body against the urgency of practice. He calls the body wet clay to say it has no firmness worth trusting, and he walks through the slow ruin of the very features people prize, the sharp eyes that will blur, the fine nose that will sag to the chin. The stakes are time: the decay is certain and already on its way. So the instruction is to worship Hari now, before age arrives, with whatever one has, rather than waiting for a strength that is leaving.

GATHA 4012

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the age foretold

मराठी मूळ

तुह्मां सांगतो कलयुगा फळ । पुढें होइल ब्रह्मगोळ ॥1॥
 आह्मां ह्मणतील कंटक । ऐसा पाडिती दंडक ॥धु॥
 िस्त्रया पूजुनि सरे देती । भलते िस्त्रयेसि भलते जाती ॥2॥
 श्रेष्ठ वर्ण वेदविद्वांस । अंगीकारी मद्यमांस ॥3॥
 चारी वर्ण अठरा याती । कवळ करिती एक पंक्ती ॥4॥
 ह्मणती अंबेचा क्रीडाकल्लोळ । शिवरूप प्राणी सकळ ॥5॥
 ऐसें होइल शकुन देतो । अगोदर सांगुन जातो ॥6॥
 तुका सद्गुरुदास्य करी । िसिद्ध पाणी वाहे घरी ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I tell you the fruit of this Kali Yuga; ahead, chaos will engulf the world. They will call us troublemakers and establish such corrupt customs.

They will worship women and offer them up; anyone will go with anyone. The highest castes and Vedic scholars will take to meat and liquor.

All four castes and eighteen communities will eat together from one plate. They will say it is all the sport of the Goddess, that every creature is a form of Shiva.

Says Tuka, I give you this omen and tell you in advance. Tuka serves the Sadguru, and by that, perfection flows into his household like water.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I tell you the fruit of this Kali age; ahead there will be chaos in the world. They will call us troublemakers and lay down rules to match. They will worship women and give them away; anyone will couple with anyone, any caste with any caste. The highest castes, the knowers of the Vedas, will take to liquor and meat. All four castes and the eighteen communities will eat together from one plate. They will say it is the Goddess's play, that every creature is a form of Shiva. I give you this as an omen; I tell you beforehand and go. Tuka serves the Sadguru, and at his house the perfected ones carry water.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is foretelling a coming disorder and naming who will be blamed for resisting it. He sketches an age where rules are bent to license, where the learned abandon their discipline for liquor and meat, and where every boundary is dissolved and then justified as the sport of the Goddess or the oneness of all in Shiva. His grievance is with the misuse: high doctrine, that all is divine, turned into a permission slip for appetite. He marks himself and his fellow devotees as the ones such an age will brand troublemakers. He ends by setting his own ground against it: he serves the true Guru, and that service, not the slogans, is what brings the perfected to his door.

GATHA 4013

Social Criticism

Social criticism, selling the sacred

मराठी मूळ

त्या हरिदासांची भेटी घेतां । नकान उभयतासी जातां ॥१॥
 माते परीस थोरी कथा । भाड घेतां न लाजे ॥२॥
 देतां घेतां नरकवासी । उभयतांसी रवरव ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नरकगांवा । जाती हांवा धरोनि ॥३॥
 देव गावा ध्यावा ऐसें जालें । परदेशी नाहीं उगलें ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who take payment to grant audiences with saints send both parties to hell. Greater than a mother is the sacred discourse, yet they are not ashamed to charge a fee.

Both giver and taker become dwellers in hell, suffering in the pit of torment. Says Tuka, they rush eagerly toward the city of hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who take a fee to grant a meeting with the saints send both sides to hell. Greater than a mother is the holy telling, yet they are not ashamed to charge for it. Both the giver and the taker become dwellers in hell; both fall into the screaming pit. Tuka says: they go to the town of hell, and they run there eagerly. It has come to this, that God must be sung and meditated on, yet the stranger is not left alone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is attacking the traffic in holy things, not the things themselves. He says the discourse of God is greater than a mother, and so charging money to arrange a meeting with the saints debases what should be freely given. The verdict falls on both parties, the one who takes the fee and the one who pays it, because both have agreed to

price the priceless. His image of the screaming pit is severe, but the target is the transaction. The self-examination is to ask whether we have learned to put a gate and a fee around what God meant to be open.

GATHA 4014

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the test by fire

मराठी मूळ

वडील आणि धाकुलें । नाहीं ऐसें जालें दुसरें तें ॥1॥
 नाहीं लागत मुळीहूनि । सुहृदजन आणि जननी ।
 लागल्या लागें त्यागें सांडूनि । लोभीये मांडणी संयोगाची ॥ध्रु॥
 शिव बाटला जीवदशे । बहुत ओतत आलें ठसें ।
 हीन जालें भूषणाचें इच्छे । निवडती कैसे गुणागुण ॥2॥
 आतां हे हुतांश तों बरें । अवघे एक च मोहरें ।
 पिटिलियाविण नव्हे खरें । निवडें बरें जातिशुद्ध ॥3॥
 तुका उतावेळ याजसाठीं । आहे तें निवेदीन पोटीं ।
 आवडी द्यावी जी येथें लाटी । तुझी जगजेठी कीर्ती वाखाणीन ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Elder or younger, nothing quite like this has ever been. From the very root, neither kinsmen nor mother are of any use.

Driven by attachment, they abandon all and set up the marketplace of union. Shiva became tainted by worldly existence; many impressions have been stamped upon Him.

The luster of ornaments has dimmed, and how shall virtues and faults be sorted? Now let the fire of truth burn well; let all face the same test. Without being beaten, the truth will not emerge; only then does pure lineage become clear.

Says Tuka, I am eager for this reason: I will offer all I have. Grant me Your love here, O Lord of the world, and I will sing Your glory.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Elder or younger, there has never been anything else like this. From the root, neither kinsmen nor mother are of any use. Driven by attachment, people leave all and set up the marketplace of union; the greedy build their arrangement of meeting. Even Shiva was stained by the state of a living being; many marks have been pressed into Him. The shine of the ornament has gone dull; how then are good and bad to be told apart? Now let the fire of truth burn well, and let all meet one test. Without being beaten, the truth will not come out; only then does the pure metal show clear. Tuka says: for this I am eager. I will lay open what is within me. Grant me Your love here, O Lord of the world, and I will sing Your glory.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is asking to be tested rather than spared. He observes that kin and mother are no help at the root, that attachment drives people into a marketplace of bonds, and that even the high name of Shiva gets tarnished once it is dragged through worldly use. When the ornament has lost its shine, true and false can no longer be told apart

by looking, so he asks for the fire and the hammer. The blow that hurts is the very thing that proves the metal pure. He welcomes it, offering to lay his inner life bare, and asks only for God's love so that he may sing the Lord's glory through the testing.

GATHA 4015

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, carried like a chick

मराठी मूळ

भोगी जाला त्याग । गीती गातां पांडुरंग । इंद्रियांचा लाग । आह्मांवरुनि चुकला ॥१॥
 करुनि ठेविलों निश्चळ । भय नाहीं तळमळ । घेतला सकळ । अवघा भार विठ्ठलें ॥२॥
 तळीं पिक्षणीचे परी । नखें चोंची चारा धरी । आणुनियां घरीं । मुखीं घाली बाळका ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ये आवडी । आह्मीं पांयीं दिली बुडी । आहे तेथें जोडी । जन्मांतरींचें ठेवणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Renunciation came naturally while singing the songs of Panduranga. The grip of the senses has loosened from me.

He has made me steady and free of fear and anxiety; Vitthal has taken up my entire burden. Like a mother bird that holds food in beak and claw, brings it home, and places it in her chick's mouth, so does He care for me.

Says Tuka, with this love we have plunged at His feet. The treasure stored from past births is right there at His feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Renunciation came of itself while I sang of Panduranga. The grip of the senses slipped off me. He has made me still; there is no fear, no restlessness. Vitthal has taken up the whole burden. Like a mother bird that holds food in beak and claw, brings it to the nest, and puts it in her chick's mouth, so He feeds me. Tuka says: with this love we have plunged at His feet. The treasure stored from past births is right there at His feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing a letting-go that arrived without effort. Singing of Panduranga, he found renunciation come on its own and the hold of the senses simply loosen. The relief is total: he is made still, without fear or unease, because Vitthal has lifted his whole burden. His image is tender and helpless at once, a chick fed by the mother bird who carries the food and places it in its mouth, which is to say he is no longer the one providing for himself. The plunge at the feet is glad surrender, and there, he says, the treasure saved up across many births is finally found.

GATHA 4016

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the hollow show

मराठी मूळ

कुंकवाची ठेवाठेवी । बोडकादेवी काशाला ॥1॥
 दिवस गमा भरा पोट । कां गे नेटनेटावा ॥ध्रु॥
 दिमाख हा कोणां दावा । लटकी जीवा चरफड ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे झोंडगीं हो । कुंपदा कां हो कोरडी ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why store vermillion when you have a shaven head, O widowed goddess? Just pass the day, fill your belly; why make such a fuss? Whom are you showing off to? This agitation of the jiva is pointless. Says Tuka, just become a ragpicker; why cry dry tears?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why store away vermillion when your head is shaven, widowed one? Just pass the day and fill your belly; why all this fuss over looking proper? Whom is this display for? This burning of the heart is false. Tuka says: just become a ragpicker; why weep dry tears?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing a show kept up after its meaning is gone. He pictures a widow who hoards the vermillion she can no longer wear, fretting over an appearance that fits nothing in her life, and he asks the blunt question of whom the display is even for. The agitation, he says, is hollow, a heat with no real fire under it. His harshness, telling her to drop the pretense and simply live, is aimed at the empty performance, not at her grief. The mirror for any listener is the fuss we keep up for an audience over things that have already lost their place.

GATHA 4017

Devotion to Vitthal

Clinging to the feet, the Lord loses nothing

मराठी मूळ

तुझें प्रेम माझ्या हृदयीं आवडी । चरण न सोडीं पांडुरंगा ॥1॥
 कासया सिनासि थोरिवां कारणें । काय तुझें उणें होइल देवा ॥ध्रु॥
 चातकाची चिंता हरली जळधरें । काय त्याचें सरे थोरपण ॥2॥
 चंद्र चकोरांचा पुरवी सोहळा । काय त्याची कळा न्यून होय ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज अनाथा सांभाळीं । हृदयकमळीं िस्थर राहें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Your love is the delight of my heart; I will not release Your feet, O Panduranga. Why do You hesitate for the sake of Your dignity? What will it cost You, O Lord? The rain cloud quenches the chataka bird's longing; does its greatness diminish by that? The moon fulfills the chakor bird's delight; does its splendor decrease thereby? Says Tuka, protect me, this helpless one. Remain steady in the lotus of my heart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your love is the delight of my heart. I will not let go of Your feet, Panduranga. Why do You hold back for the sake of Your dignity? What would it cost You, Lord? The rain cloud ends the chataka bird's thirst; does its greatness shrink because of that? The moon fills the chakora bird with delight; does its splendor grow less? Tuka says: protect me, this helpless one. Stay steady in the lotus of my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram holds onto Vitthal's feet and refuses to let go, then argues with the Lord's hesitation. He hears God hanging back as if grace would somehow lower his standing, and he answers that giving costs the giver nothing. The rain cloud quenches the thirsty bird without losing its grandeur; the moon delights the chakora without dimming its light. So God can stoop to one helpless devotee and lose nothing of his greatness. The closing plea names the only request: come and stay fixed in the heart.

GATHA 4018

Ecstasy and Joy

Grace as inheritance, the easy feast

मराठी मूळ

आम्ही आइते जेवणार । न लगे सोसावे डोंगर । सुखाचा वेव्हार । तेणें चि वाढलें ॥१॥
 ठेवा जोडला मिरासी । ठाव जाला पायांपासी । नव्हे आणिकांसी । रीघ तेथें यावया ॥२॥
 बळी दिला जीवभाव । नेणें आणिकांचे नांव । धरिला एक भाव । तो विश्वास फळला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जालों बळी । आह्मी निकट जवळी । बोलिलों तें पाळीं । वचन स्वामी आमचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We are the ones who feast on what is ready; we need not endure mountains of toil. The transaction of joy has only increased by that.

An inheritance has been secured, a place at His feet has been won, where none else may enter. We have offered up our very life-breath and know no other name.

We held to one faith alone, and that trust has borne fruit. Says Tuka, we have made our offering. We are close, right beside Him.

Our Lord keeps the promise He gave us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are the ones who eat what is already cooked. We do not have to cross mountains of toil. The dealing of joy has only grown by that. An inheritance has been won, a place secured at His feet, where no one else can push in. We have given up our very life-breath; we know no other name. We held to one faith alone, and that trust has borne fruit. Tuka says: we have made our offering. We are close, right beside Him. Our Lord keeps the word He gave us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the way of devotion as effortless inheritance, not earned by harsh labor. He is one who simply eats the meal already prepared, not one who must climb mountains of austerity, and joy keeps increasing because of that ease. The price was a different kind: he handed over his own life-breath and his attention, refusing every other name. That single-pointed trust is what bore fruit and won him a fixed place at the feet where no rival can crowd in. The poem ends in confidence that the Lord keeps his promise to those who come this near.

GATHA 4019

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion at the feet, not the face

मराठी मूळ

न लगावी दिठी । माझी तुझे मुखवटी ॥१॥
 आधीं पाउलें पाउलें । ते मी पाहेन तें भलें ॥२॥
 देईन हे काया । वरि सांडणें सांडाया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने देवा । बहु आवडसी जीवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Do not cast my gaze upon Your face, Lord. Let me first behold Your feet, step by step; that alone will satisfy me.
 I will lay down this body, ready to be discarded. Says Tuka, O God, my jiva loves You dearly.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not turn my gaze to Your face, Lord. First let me look at Your feet, step by step; that alone will satisfy me. I will lay down this body, ready to be thrown away. Tuka says: O God, my jiva loves You dearly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks to be kept at the feet rather than lifted to the face. The face is the higher, intimate vision, and he sets it aside, content to gaze at the feet step by step, because that lowliness is itself his devotion. He offers the body freely, treating it as something to be discarded once it has served. The closing line names the bare truth underneath the request: the soul simply loves God, and that love asks for nearness at the feet, not for elevation.

GATHA 4020

Devotion to Vitthal

The simple folk, devotion within reach

मराठी मूळ

कोण आमचीं योगतपें । करुं बापें जाणावीं ॥१॥
 गीत संतसंगें गाऊं । उभीं ठाऊं जागरणीं ॥२॥
 आमुचा तो नव्हे लाग । करुं त्याग जावया ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे इंद्रियांसी । ये चि रसीं रंगवूं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What yoga or austerities are within our reach, we who are simple folk? We will sing in the company of saints and stand awake at the night vigil. Such rigorous striving is not our way, nor can we renounce everything and depart.

Says Tuka, we will color all our senses in this one flavor of devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What yoga or austerities are within our reach, we plain people? We will sing the song in the company of saints, and stand awake through the night vigil. Hard striving is not our way; nor can we renounce everything and go off. Tuka says: we will color all our senses in this one flavor.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses the path of yoga and severe austerity as something beyond ordinary people like himself. In its place he names what such people can actually do: sing with the saints, keep the night vigil, stay together in company. He admits plainly that they cannot renounce the world and walk away into solitude. So instead of starving the senses, he turns them: every sense gets dyed in the single flavor of devotion, which becomes the whole practice.

GATHA 4021

The Power of the Name

The Name, the boat across the ocean

मराठी मूळ

नाम तारक भवसिंधु । विठ्ठल तारक भवसिंधु ॥१॥
 नामधारक तया अरि मित्रु । समता त्यागुनियां क्रोधु ॥२॥
 नामधारक तया । कदापि न घडे विषयाचा बाधु ॥२॥
 ज्या नामें तरले शुकादिक । नारद संत मुनिजन साधु ॥३॥
 जाणूनियां जे नसरें । ते नेणति जैसा गज अंधु ॥४॥
 सहज तुकया । नाम चि जपतां स्वरूपीं वेधु ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Name is the vessel to cross the ocean of worldly existence; Vitthal is the vessel to cross the ocean of worldly existence. One who bears the Name regards friend and foe alike, casting aside anger and abiding in equanimity.

No sensory temptation can ever touch the bearer of the Name. By that Name, Shuka and others were liberated, along with Narada, saints, and sages.

Those who knowingly refuse it are like a blind elephant, stumbling in ignorance. Says Tuka, simply by chanting the Name, one naturally becomes absorbed in the true Self.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Name is the boat that carries you across the ocean of worldly life; Vitthal is the boat that carries you across. One who holds the Name sees enemy and friend as the same, letting go of anger and resting in evenness. No temptation of the senses can ever harm the one who holds the Name. By that Name Shuka and others crossed over, and Narada, and the saints, sages, and seekers. Those who know it and still refuse it are like a blind elephant, stumbling on. Tuka says: simply by repeating the Name, one is naturally drawn into the true Self.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga makes the Name the whole vessel of liberation, identifying it with Vitthal himself. Holding the Name is not a magic charm but a change of heart: the devotee treats friend and foe alike, drops anger, and grows steady, so that no craving can take hold. Tukaram backs the claim by naming those who crossed over by it, from Shuka to Narada and the saints. Then he turns to the willful: those who recognize the Name and still refuse it are like a blind elephant blundering forward. The promise is that mere repetition, kept up, pulls one naturally into one's true nature.

GATHA 4022

The Power of the Name

The Name as family duty, refusing even liberation

मराठी मूळ

आह्मां वैष्णवांचा कुळधर्म कुळींचा । विश्वास नामाचा एका भावें ॥१॥
तरी च हरिचेदास ह्मणवितां श्लाघीजे । निर्वासना कीजे चित्त आधी ॥२॥
गाऊं नाचूं प्रेमें आनंदें कीर्तनीं । भुक्ति मुक्ति दोन्ही न मगों तुज ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे देवा ऐसी यांची सेवा । द्यावी जी केशवा जन्मोजन्मीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Our ancestral duty, the heritage of our Vaishnava clan, is faith in the Name with single-pointed devotion. Only then can one truly claim to be a servant of Hari; first make the mind free of desire.

We will sing and dance with love and bliss in kirtan; we ask You for neither worldly enjoyment nor liberation. Says Tuka, O Keshava, grant us this service of the saints, birth after birth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Our family duty, the inheritance of our Vaishnava line, is faith in the Name with single feeling. Only then can you rightly be called a servant of Hari; first make the mind free of desire. We will sing and dance with love and joy in the kirtan. We ask You for neither worldly pleasure nor liberation. Tuka says: O Keshava, grant us this service, birth after birth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presents devotion to the Name as something inherited, the duty of his Vaishnava clan, held with whole-hearted faith. He sets a condition under the boast: you can only call yourself Hari's servant once the mind has been emptied of desire. Then comes the radical refusal: in the joy of kirtan he wants neither worldly enjoyment nor even liberation, the two prizes most seekers chase. What he asks for instead is the service itself, the singing and dancing before God, and he asks for it not once but in every birth to come.

GATHA 4023

Prayers

The rare human birth, gripping God's waist

मराठी मूळ

पावलों हा देह कागतालिन्यायें । न घडे उपायें घडों आलें ॥1॥
 आतां माझीं खंडीं देह देहांतरें । अभय दातारें देऊनियां॥ध्रु॥
 अंधळ्याचे पाठीं धनाची चरवी । अघटित तेंवि घडों आलें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे योग घडला बरवा । आतां कास देवा न सोडीं मी ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I obtained this human body as if by a stroke of luck; what could not happen by design has come to pass. Now, O generous Lord, end my cycle of body after body by granting me fearlessness.

Like a blind man finding a purse of gold, this impossible thing has happened. Says Tuka, this fortunate union has occurred. Now I will not let go of Your waist, O God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I came into this human body as if by sheer chance, the way a crow lands just as a fruit falls. What could not happen by any plan has happened. Now, generous Lord, end my round of body after body by granting me fearlessness. Like a blind man stumbling onto a pot of gold, this impossible thing has come to pass. Tuka says: a good joining has happened. Now I will not let go of Your waist, O God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram marvels that this human birth, and the meeting with God it allows, came almost by accident, not by his own design. He uses two images of unearned luck: the crow at the falling fruit, and the blind man stumbling on buried gold. Because the chance is so rare and undeserved, he will not waste it. He asks the Lord to break the cycle of repeated bodies by giving him fearlessness, the freedom that ends rebirth. Having found God by luck, he resolves to grip him tight and never let go.

GATHA 4024

Confession and Sin

Confession, the knot that will not loosen

मराठी मूळ

कळे परि न सुटे गांठी । जालें पोटीं कुपथ्य ॥१॥
 अहंकाराचें आंदणें जीव । राहे कींव केली ते ॥ध्रु॥
 हेंकडाची एकी च वोढी । ते ही खोडी सांगती ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे सांगों किती । कांहीं चितीं न राहे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One understands, yet the inner knot does not loosen; the wrong diet has already entered the belly. The ego's dowry holds the jiva captive; where then is the compassion it was promised? Stubbornness pulls in only one direction, and even that fault people will point out.

Says Tuka, how much can I explain? Nothing stays in anyone's mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I understand, yet the knot will not come loose; the wrong food is already in my belly. The ego's dowry holds the jiva captive; where is the mercy that was promised? Stubbornness pulls only one way, and even that fault people keep pointing out. Tuka says: how much can I keep explaining? Nothing stays in the mind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confesses a failure he can see clearly but cannot fix. He knows the knot of attachment is there, yet knowing does not untie it; the harm is already swallowed, like bad food taken in. The ego comes as a dowry the soul cannot return, keeping it bound, so the promised relief never arrives. His own stubbornness drags him in one fixed direction, a fault others notice and name aloud. The poem ends in honest exhaustion: explaining the problem changes nothing, because the teaching will not stay in the mind. It points the reader to watch this same gap in themselves.

GATHA 4025

Social Criticism

Social criticism, speak up against the wicked

मराठी मूळ

सांडावी हे भीड अधमाचे चाळे । मद्यपीर बरळे भलत्या छंदें ॥१॥
 ऐसे तंव तुह्मी नाहीं जी दिसत । कां हें अनुचित वदलेत ॥ध्रु॥
 फांटा जाला त्यासी नाहीं वोढा वारा । वेरसा चि खरा हाटो गुण ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं ज्याच्या बापा ताळा । तो देखे विटाळा संतां अंगीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Abandon the timidity that tolerates the ways of the wicked. A drunkard babbles whatever fancy takes him.

Surely you are not that sort; why then have you spoken such improper words? A spoiled branch catches no breeze; its true nature shows itself everywhere. Says Tuka, one whose own father has no sense of propriety sees impurity in the saints themselves.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Drop the timidity that puts up with the ways of the wicked. A drunkard babbles whatever fancy seizes him. Surely you are not that kind of man; why then did you speak such improper words? A spoiled branch catches no breeze; its real nature shows itself everywhere. Tuka says: a man whose own father has no sense of decency is the one who sees impurity on the bodies of the saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells the listener to stop being so deferential that they tolerate evil; silence in front of the wicked is itself a fault. He compares the offender to a drunkard who blurts out whatever crosses his mind, then presses the person who has spoken badly: you seemed better than this, so why these improper words? The spoiled-branch image says a corrupt nature betrays itself in every direction. The closing line turns the charge sharpest: the man who sneers that the saints are impure is only revealing the indecency bred in his own house. The poem aims at the slandering pattern, urging the hearer not to harbor it.

GATHA 4026

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration of the form, the demanding child

मराठी मूळ

आवडे हें रूप गोजिरें सगुण । पाहातां लोचन सुखावलें ॥१॥
 आतां दृष्टीपुढें ऐसा चि तूं राहीं । जों मी तुज पाहें पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 लाचावलें मन लागलीसे गोडी । तें जीवें न सोडीं ऐसें जालें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी केली जे लडिवाळी । पुरवावी आळी मायबापें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I love this beautiful and gracious form. Beholding it, my eyes are filled with delight.

Now remain before my sight just as You are, so that I may gaze upon You, O Panduranga. My mind has tasted the sweetness and grown eager; it has become inseparable from this love.

Says Tuka, we have been playful children; now, as our parents, fulfill our every whim.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I love this lovely form with all its qualities. When I look at it, my eyes are filled with joy. Now stay just like this before my sight, so that I may keep gazing at You, Panduranga. My mind has tasted the sweetness and grown greedy for it; it has become something I cannot give up while I live. Tuka says: we have been your spoiled children; now, as our mother and father, grant us every whim.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram delights in the visible, qualified form of Vitthal and asks the Lord simply to hold still so he can keep gazing. He admits the look has made his mind greedy: it has tasted sweetness and now cannot let go of it for as long as he lives. Rather than apologize for this hunger, he leans into it, casting himself and his fellow devotees as small children and God as the parent. The plea is the plea of a child: indulge our every whim. The boldness is allowed precisely because the bond is a family one, love claiming its rights.

GATHA 4027

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, seize the boundless joy now

मराठी मूळ

तिळ एक अर्ध राई । सीतबुंद पावे काई । तया सुखा नाही । अंतपार पाहतां ॥१॥
 ह्मणउनी करा लाहो । नका मागें पुढें पाहों । अवध्यामध्ये आहों । सावचित्त तों ॥२॥
 तीर्थो न येती तुळणी । आजिया सुखाची धणी । जे कासी गयेहुनी । जीं आगळीं असती ॥३॥
 येथें धरी लाज । वर्ण अभिमान काज । नाडला सहज । तुका ह्मणे तो येथें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A sesame seed, half a mustard grain, a single drop of dew: even that much of this bliss, when tasted, proves boundless. Therefore seize this opportunity.

Do not look ahead or behind; act while you remain fully aware. No pilgrimage compares to the fullness of this present joy, which surpasses even Kashi and Gaya.

Says Tuka, one who clings to shame, caste-pride, or self-importance here is the one who is naturally lost.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A single sesame seed, half a mustard grain, one drop of dew: even that little of this bliss, once tasted, has no end. So seize the chance. Do not look behind you or ahead; act while you are still fully awake to it. We are all in the middle of it now. No pilgrimage can match the fullness of today's joy, which is greater even than Kashi and Gaya. Tuka says: whoever clings here to shame, to caste-pride, or to self-importance is the one who is simply lost.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says the bliss of devotion is boundless from the very first taste, however tiny that taste seems. Because it is so vast and so present, he urges the hearer to grab it now, not to drift backward into the past or forward into worry but to act while fully aware. He ranks this living joy above the great pilgrimage sites, Kashi and Gaya, since they are distant and this is at hand. The warning lands on what blocks it: shame, pride in caste, and self-importance. The one who hugs those here, in the open invitation of the kirtan, loses the very thing offered to everyone.

GATHA 4028

The Power of the Name

The Name, the one who saves even by a glance

मराठी मूळ

4028. विठोबाचें नाम ज्याचे मुखीं नित्य । त्या देखिल्या पतित उद्धरिलि ॥१॥
 विठ्ठलविठ्ठल भावें ह्मणे वाचे । तरी तो काळाचे दांत ठेंसी ॥२॥
 बहुत तारिले सांगों किती आतां । ऐसा कोणी दाता दुजा नाही ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे म्यां ही ऐकोनियां कीर्ती । धरिला एकांतीं हृदयामाजी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One in whose mouth the name of Vithoba lives daily can uplift even the fallen by his mere sight. One who utters Vitthal, Vitthal with true feeling crushes the very teeth of Death.

So many have been saved; how many more can I describe? There is no other benefactor like Him. Says Tuka, hearing of His fame, I too have embraced Him in the solitude of my heart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who has Vithoba's name always in his mouth uplifts even the fallen by the mere sight of him. One who says Vitthal, Vitthal with true feeling breaks the very teeth of Death. So many have been saved; how many can I count now? There is no other giver like Him. Tuka says: I too, hearing of His fame, have held Him alone in my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga praises both the Name and the one who keeps it constantly. Such a person becomes saving to others: even a glance at him lifts the fallen, and his heartfelt repetition of Vitthal's name shatters the power of Death itself. Tukaram says he cannot even count the many the Name has rescued, and that no other benefactor compares to this Lord. Then he places himself among the saved: having only heard of that fame, he has taken God into the quiet of his own heart and holds onto him there.

GATHA 4029

The Power of the Name

The Name lifts the lowly, not the learned

मराठी मूळ

भोळे भक्तिभाव धरिती मानसीं । त्यासी हृषीकेशी जवळी च ॥१॥
 भाव नाही मनीं अभाविक सदा । त्याचिया मी खेदा काय सांगों ॥२॥
 गणिकेसारिकीं नामें उद्धरीलीं । सज्ञानें पडिलीं खटाटोपीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय शुद्ध माझी जाति । थोर केली ख्याती हरिनामें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those innocent souls who hold sincere devotion in their minds find Hrishiksha always near. Those without faith, forever faithless, their misery is beyond my words.

Courtesans were liberated by the Name alone, while scholars fell into elaborate traps of their own making. Says Tuka, what purity does my caste possess? It is Hari's name that has given me great renown.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The simple souls who hold a sincere heart in their minds, Hrishiksha stays close to them. Those who have no faith in their minds, who are always faithless, what can I say about their misery? Courtesans were lifted up by the Name alone. Scholars fell into their own elaborate traps. Tuka says: what is so pure about my caste? It is Hari's name that has made me known.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets nearness to God by one measure only: a sincere heart, not learning or birth. The unschooled who simply trust find Hrishiksha standing beside them, while the clever who trust nothing build cages of their own making and fall into them. He drives the point home with the sharpest contrast available: courtesans, the most despised, were carried across by the Name, while scholars sank. Then he turns it on himself, refusing any claim to high caste, and says plainly that whatever renown he has comes from Hari's name and not from him. The poem asks you to stop trusting your credentials and start trusting the Name.

GATHA 4030

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the harm of bad company

मराठी मूळ

आड पडे काडी । तरि ते बहुत पाणी खोडी ॥१॥
 दुर्जनाचे संगती । बहुतांचे घात होती ॥२॥
 एक पडे मासी । तरी ते बहु अन्न नासी ॥३॥
 तुका हणणे रांड । ऐसी कां ते व्याली भांड ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A single stick placed crosswise blocks a great flow of water. In the company of the wicked, many are destroyed.

A single fly falling into food spoils the entire meal. Says Tuka, why did that cursed woman bring forth such quarrelsome offspring?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A single stick laid crosswise will hold back a great deal of water. In the company of the wicked, many are destroyed. A single fly falling in spoils a whole plate of food. Tuka says: why did that wretched woman give birth to such a quarrelsome creature?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning how little it takes for one corrupt presence to ruin many. A twig dams a stream; a fly spoils a full meal; in the same way one wicked companion drags down everyone around. The lesson is not really about the stick or the fly but about the company you keep and the disproportion of the damage it does. The closing line is bitter scorn aimed at the troublemaker who poisons a whole circle. Read it as a hard look at how readily a small contamination spreads, and a caution to watch the company we sit in, including our own role in it.

GATHA 4031

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the ghost of Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

पंढरीचें बा भूत मोटें । आल्या गेल्या झडपी वाटे ॥१॥
 तेथें जाऊं नका कोणी । गेले नाहीं आले परतोनि ॥२॥
 तुका पंढरीसी गेला । पुन्हा जन्मा नाहीं आला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The spirit of Pandhari is a mighty one; it seizes all who pass by on the road. Let no one go there, for those who went never came back.

Tuka went to Pandhari and never returned to be born again.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The spirit of Pandhari is a mighty one. It pounces on everyone who comes and goes along the road. Let no one go there. Those who went have not come back. Tuka went to Pandhari, and was not born again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram plays at warning you away from Pandhari with the language of a haunting, but the warning is an invitation in disguise. He calls the presence at Pandhari a great spirit that seizes every passerby, and says darkly that no one who went ever returned. Then he reveals the real meaning: not coming back means not being born again, the end of the cycle of birth and death. So the thing to fear, if you cling to this world, is exactly the thing to want. Going to Pandhari, to Vitthal, is what releases the soul for good.

GATHA 4032

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the merchant of truth

मराठी मूळ

बरवे दुकानीं बैसावें । श्रवण मनन असावें ॥१॥
 सारासाराचीं पोतीं । ग्राहिक पाहोनि करा रितीं ॥२॥
 उगे चि फुगों नका गाल । पूर्ण सांठवावा माल ॥३॥
 सत्य तराजू पै धरा । नका कुडत्रिम विकरा ॥४॥
 तुका जाला वाणी । चुकवुनि चौःयासीच्या खाणी ॥५॥
 काय करुं आतां या मना । न संडी विषयांची वासना ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sit well at your shop. Let there be hearing and reflecting.

Sort the bundles of the essential from the non-essential, sizing up each customer. Do not puff up your cheeks in vain; stock your store with genuine goods.

Hold the scale of truth and do not sell counterfeit wares. Says Tuka, I have become a true merchant, having escaped the mines of eighty-four hundred thousand births.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sit well at your shop. Keep hearing and reflecting. Sort the bundles of the essential from the unessential, and empty them out by sizing up each customer. Do not puff out your cheeks for nothing. Stock your store full with genuine goods. Hold the scale of truth. Do not sell counterfeit wares. Tuka says: I have become a true merchant, having escaped the mines of eighty-four hundred thousand births. What shall I do now with this mind, that will not give up its craving for the things of the senses.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes the spiritual life into a shopkeeper's trade and tells you how to run it honestly. Sitting at the shop is steady practice; hearing and reflecting are the merchant's daily care; sorting the essential from the unessential and reading each customer is discernment. He scorns empty show, the puffed cheeks of the boaster, and insists on a full stock of real goods, a true scale, and no counterfeit. By living this way he says he has become a genuine merchant and escaped the eighty-four lakh forms of rebirth. The last line keeps him honest: even so, the mind still craves the senses, and the trade is not yet finished.

GATHA 4033

Prayers

Prayer, the mind dragging toward ruin

मराठी मूळ

प्राथिनतां ही राहेना । आदरें पतना नेऊं पाहे ॥१॥
 आतां धांवधावें गा श्रीहरी । गेलों वांयां नाहीं तरी ।
 न दिसे कोणी आवरी । आणीक दुजा तयासी ॥२॥
 न राहे एके ठायीं एकी घडी । चित्त तडतडा तोडी ।
 घालूं पाहे बा हे उडी या भवडोहीं ॥२॥
 आशा तृष्णा कल्पना पापिणी । घात मांडला माझा यांणीं ।
 तुका ह्मणे चक्रपाणी । काय अजोनि पाहातोसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even when I plead with this mind, it will not stay; it eagerly drags me toward ruin. O Shrihari, rush to my aid now.

If You do not, I am lost. I see no one else who can restrain it.

It will not rest in one place for a single moment; it tears away from me. It seeks to leap into the deep well of worldly existence.

Desire, craving, and sinful imagination have conspired to destroy me. Says Tuka, O Lord who holds the discus, what are You still waiting to see?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even when I plead with it, this mind will not stay. Eagerly it tries to carry me down to ruin. Now run, run to me, O Shrihari, or else I am lost for nothing. I see no one else who can hold it back. It will not stay in one place for even a moment. It tears my heart this way and that. It wants to leap into this deep well of worldly life. Desire, craving, and sinful imagination, these sinners, have set out to destroy me. Tuka says: O Lord who holds the discus, what are you still waiting to see?

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a cry for rescue from a mind the speaker cannot govern. Tukaram describes the mind as a force that will not stay still and actively hauls him toward his own destruction, leaping for the deep well of worldly existence. He names the conspirators by name: hope, craving, and sinful imagination have ganged up to finish him off, and he confesses he has no power of his own to restrain them. So the only move left is to call on Shrihari to come running. The closing question is almost a reproach, urging the Lord who carries the discus to stop watching and act before it is too late.

GATHA 4034

Sacred Stories

Mythology, Ravana takes nothing across

मराठी मूळ

पाषाण परिस भूमि जांबूनद । वंशाचा संबंध धातयाचा ॥१॥
 सोनियाची पुरी समुद्राचा वेढा । समुदाय गाढा राक्षसांचा ॥२॥
 ऐसी सहस्र त्या सुंदरा कामिनी । माजी मुखरणी मंदोदरी ॥३॥
 पुत्रपौत्राचा लेखा कोण करी । मुख्य पुत्र हरी इंद्रा आणी ॥४॥
 चौदा चौकडिया आयुष्यगणना । बंधुवर्ग जाणा कुंभकर्ण ॥५॥
 तुका ह्याने ज्याचे देव बांदवडी । सांगातें कवडी गेली नाही ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Lanka's foundation was of stone and gold, its lineage that of a noble dynasty. Its golden city was surrounded by ocean, and its populace a mighty host of rakshasas.

A thousand beautiful women graced it, with Mandodari chief among them. Who could count Ravana's sons and grandsons, when his chief son conquered even Indra? His lifespan numbered fourteen times four ages, and his brother was mighty Kumbhakarna.

Says Tuka, yet for him who held even the gods captive, not a single cowrie went with him in the end.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Lanka's stone was touchstone, its earth was gold. Its lineage was that of a noble dynasty. The golden city was ringed by the ocean, and its people a mighty host of rakshasas. A thousand beautiful women were there, and Mandodari was chief among them. Who could count Ravana's sons and grandsons, when his own son conquered even Indra? His lifespan was fourteen times four ages. His brother, you know, was Kumbhakarna. Tuka says: yet for him who held the very gods captive, not a single cowrie went with him in the end.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram heaps up Ravana's glory only to strip it away in one line. He lists the gold and stone of Lanka, its noble line, its ocean wall, its army of rakshasas, its thousand women and chief queen Mandodari, his uncountable descendants, his son who beat Indra, his immense lifespan, his giant brother. Every detail says power, wealth, permanence. Then the turn: this king who held the gods themselves as prisoners carried not one cowrie, the smallest coin, with him when he died. The poem uses the grandest possible example to make the plainest possible point, that nothing of what we amass goes with us, so do not stake your life on it.

GATHA 4035

Worldly Life

Worldly life, you reap what you sow

मराठी मूळ

पापांचीं संचितें देहासी दंडण । तुज नारायणा बोल नाहीं ॥१॥
 पेरी कडू जिरें मागे अमृतफळ । आकान वृक्षफळें कैसीं येती ॥२॥
 सुख अथवा दुःख भोग हो देहेचा । नास हा ज्ञानाचा न करावा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां देवा कां रुसावें । मनासी पुसावें काय केलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The accumulated sins punish the body; no blame attaches to You, O Narayana. One who sows bitter cumin and expects the fruit of nectar: how can sweet fruit come from a bitter tree? Whether pleasure or pain, it is the body's due experience.

Do not let it destroy your wisdom. Says Tuka, why be angry with God now? Ask your own mind what it has done.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The sins you have stored up punish the body. No blame falls on you, O Narayana. If a man sows bitter cumin and then asks for the fruit of nectar, how can sweet fruit come from that? Whether the body meets pleasure or pain, let it be its own experience. Do not let it destroy your wisdom. Tuka says: why be angry with God now? Ask your own mind what it has done.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses to let God be blamed for what we suffer. The body is punished by sins we ourselves accumulated, so the fault is not Narayana's. He drives it home with farming: sow bitter cumin and you cannot harvest nectar; a bitter tree gives no sweet fruit. Pleasure and pain are the body's due, and the real danger is letting them wreck your wisdom by turning you resentful. So the poem closes by redirecting the complaint inward: instead of being angry at God, question your own mind about what it has done. It is a teaching on owning the consequences of one's own acts.

GATHA 4036

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the mother who shelters

मराठी मूळ

लाभ पुढें करी । घात नारायण वारी ॥१॥
 ऐसी भक्ताची माउली । करी कृपेची साउली ॥२॥
 माय बाळकासी । जीव भाव वेची तैसी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाड । नाहीं शरणागता आड ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Narayana places gain before His devotees and wards off their harm. Such is the mother-love of devotion; He shelters them in the shade of His grace.

As a mother gives her very life and jiva for her child, so does He. Says Tuka, there is no obstacle that can bar the way of one who has surrendered.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Narayana puts gain in front of his devotee and turns harm away. Such is the mother-love of devotion. He makes a shade of his grace. As a mother spends her very life and being on her child, so does he. Tuka says: there is no trap, no obstacle, that can block the one who has surrendered.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes how God treats the one who loves him, and the whole image is maternal. Narayana places good before the devotee and wards off what would harm, spreading the shade of his grace over them. The comparison is a mother who pours out her own life and heart for her child, holding nothing back; God's care is that total. The point is that devotion is met by a love that protects, not by indifference. And the closing line gives the assurance: for the one who has truly surrendered, nothing can stand in the way, because the protection is the protector's own doing, not the devotee's strength.

GATHA 4037

Longing and Separation

Longing, take me as your own

मराठी मूळ

आपुलेंसें करुनी घ्यावें । आश्वासावें नाभींसें ॥१॥
 ह्ळनि धरिले पाय । आवो माय विठ्ठले ॥२॥
 कळलासे सीन चिंता । शम आतां करावा ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे जीवीं वसें । मज नसें वेगळे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Make me Your own and comfort me with Your embrace. That is why I have taken hold of Your feet, O Mother Vitthal.

The weary sting of anxiety is known to me now; let there be peace at last. Says Tuka, dwell within my chitta and never be apart from me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Make me your own and take me up. Comfort me with your embrace. That is why I have taken hold of your feet, O Mother Vitthal. You know how worn I am with worry. Now give me peace. Tuka says: dwell within my heart, and never be apart from me.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the plea of a tired devotee asking to be claimed. Tukaram asks Vitthal, whom he addresses as Mother, to make him his own and to comfort him, and he says he has gripped those feet for exactly that reason. He admits openly that anxiety has worn him out, and asks only for peace now, nothing grander. The final request is the deepest one: not a gift or a rescue from outside, but for Vitthal to live inside his heart and never leave. The longing here is for union and constant presence, the end of feeling separate from God.

GATHA 4038

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, you alone are real

मराठी मूळ

तुजविणं कांहीं । िस्थर राहे ऐसें नाहीं ॥१॥
 कळों आलें बहुता रीती । पांडुरंगा माझ्या चित्तीं ॥२॥
 मोकलिली आस । सर्वभावे जालों दास ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तूं चि खरा । येर वाउगा पसारा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without You, nothing remains steady; nothing holds. This I have come to know in many ways, O Panduranga, deep in my chitta.

I have released all other hopes and become Your servant with my whole being. Says Tuka, You alone are real; everything else is a vain display.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Without you, nothing stays steady. Nothing holds. This I have come to know in many ways, O Panduranga, in my heart. I have let go of all hope elsewhere. With my whole being I have become your servant. Tuka says: you alone are real. Everything else is a useless spread.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states the conclusion that drives his surrender. Through many turns of experience he has learned that nothing apart from God holds steady or lasts, and he addresses this knowing directly to Panduranga. Having seen that, he releases every other hope and gives himself entirely as a servant, with his whole being and not in part. The closing claim is the firm ground under it all: God alone is real, and everything else is a vain, scattered display. The poem is the moment when seeking elsewhere stops because the seeker has settled where reality actually is.

GATHA 4039

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the wicked at holy discourse

मराठी मूळ

खोंकरी आधन होय पाकसिद्ध । हें तों घडों कधीं शके चि ना ॥1॥
 खापराचे अंगीं घासितां परिस । न पालटे कीस काढिलिया ॥2॥
 पालथे घागरी रिचवितां जळ । तुका ह्मणे खळ तैसे कथे ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Cooking cannot be done with twigs of thorns; how could that ever work? Rubbing a potsherd against a touchstone will not change it, no matter how you scrape. Says Tuka, pouring water into an upturned pot is what the wicked are like when they come to a sacred discourse.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You cannot finish cooking on a fire of thorny twigs. That can never happen. Rub a potsherd against a touchstone, and however much you scrape it, it does not change. Tuka says: pouring water into an upturned pot is what the wicked are like when they sit at sacred discourse.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing the kind of person on whom holy teaching has no effect. He stacks three images of futile effort: thorny twigs cannot cook a meal, a potsherd against a touchstone never turns to anything precious, and water poured over an upside-down pot simply runs off and nothing is held. Each picture is of an input wasted because the receiver cannot receive. The third is the key: the wicked at a sacred discourse are the upturned pot, soaking up nothing of what is poured. The poem is less an insult than a warning to examine whether we sit there open or sealed shut.

GATHA 4040

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the fawning, stingy man

मराठी मूळ

नागलें देखोनि चांगलें बोले । आपुलें वेचूनि त्याजपुढें खुले ॥1॥
 अधमाचे ओंगळ गुण । उचित नेणें तो धर्म कोण ॥2॥
 आर्तभूता न घली पाण्याचा चुळ । न मागे त्यासी घाली साखर गुळ ॥3॥
 एकासी आड पडोनि होंकरी । एकासी देखोनि लपवी भाकरी ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे ते गाढवपशु । लाभेविण केला आयुष्यनाशु ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Seeing a well-dressed person, the base man speaks sweetly and opens his purse before him. Yet the vile one's habits are ugly; he knows neither propriety nor dharma.

He will not offer even a sip of water to one in need, but will heap sugar and jaggery before one who never asked. He blocks one person rudely while hiding his bread from another.

Says Tuka, such people are mere donkeys; without true gain, they have wasted their entire lives.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Seeing a well-dressed man, the base fellow speaks sweetly and opens his purse before him. The vile one's habits are ugly. He knows neither what is fitting nor what dharma is. He will not pour even a sip of water for one in need, but heaps sugar and jaggery before one who never asked. He blocks one person rudely, and hides his bread when he sees another. Tuka says: such people are mere donkeys, beasts; without any true gain they have wasted their whole lives.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exposes the man whose generosity follows status, not need. He fawns on the well-dressed and opens his purse to them, while refusing a sip of water to someone who is genuinely suffering and lavishing sweets on those who never asked. He rebuffs one person and hides his food from another; his giving is all calculation and show, with no sense of what is fitting or of dharma. Tukaram calls such a life that of a beast, and says its whole length has been spent without earning anything real. The poem points at the pattern of serving power and ignoring need, and asks us to weigh which way our own giving leans.

GATHA 4041

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false teacher

मराठी मूळ

पिंडपोशकाच्या जळो ज्ञानगोष्टी । झणी दृष्टभेटी न हो त्याची ॥1॥
 नाही संतचिन्ह उमटलें अंगीं । उपदेशालागीं पात्र जाला ॥धु.॥
 पोहों सिणलें नये कासे लावितो आणिका । ह्मणावें त्या मूर्खा काय आतां ॥2॥
 सिणलें तें गेलें सिणलियापासीं । जाली त्या दोघांसी एक गति ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे अहो देवा दिनानाथा। दुरुषण आतां नको त्याचें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Cursed be the spiritual talk of one who merely feeds his belly. May I never have to look upon his face.

He bears no mark of saintliness on his person, yet he has set himself up as a teacher. He himself is drowning and cannot swim, yet he ties others to his waist.

What can one say to such a fool? Those who clung to him are lost along with him; both share the same fate. Says Tuka, O Lord of the lowly, let me never have to see such a one again.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Cursed be the holy talk of a man who only feeds his belly. Let me never even catch sight of his face. No sign of saintliness shows on him, yet he has set himself up to teach. He is drowning and cannot swim, and still he ties others to his waist. What can you say to such a fool? Those who clung to him are lost along with him. The two share one fate. Tuka says: O Lord of the lowly, let me never see such a one again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks the man who trades on spiritual words while living for his own appetite. The test he uses is plain: nothing of the saint has actually appeared in this man's life, so his teaching is hollow. The drowning swimmer is the heart of it. A teacher who has not crossed cannot carry anyone across; he only pulls his followers under with him. So the warning runs both ways: examine whether a guide has truly changed, and examine whether you are clinging to someone who is sinking.

GATHA 4042

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the counterfeit saint

मराठी मूळ

संतचिन्हें लेउनि अंगीं । भूषण मिरविती जगीं ॥१॥
 पडिले दुःखाचे सागरीं । वहावले ते भवपुरीं ॥२॥
 कामक्रोधलोभ चित्तीं । वरिवरि दाविती विरक्ती ॥३॥
 आशापाशीं बांधोनि चित्त । ह्मणती जालों आह्मी मुक्त ॥४॥
 त्यांचे लागले संगती । जाली त्यांसी ते चि गति ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे शब्दज्ञानें । जग नाडियेलें तेणें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

They put on the outward marks of saints and parade their ornaments before the world. Yet they have fallen into the ocean of sorrow, swept away by the flood of worldly existence.

Desire, anger, and greed fill their chittas while they display detachment on the surface. With their minds bound by the noose of desire, they declare themselves liberated.

Those who kept their company met the very same fate. Says Tuka, by mere verbal knowledge, the world has been deceived.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They put on the marks of saints and parade the ornaments before the world. Yet they have fallen into the ocean of sorrow, swept away in the flood of worldly life. Desire, anger, and greed fill their minds, while on the surface they show detachment. Their minds are tied in the noose of craving, and still they say, We are free. Those who kept their company came to the same end. Tuka says: by mere word-knowledge, the world has been deceived.

WHAT IT MEANS

This names the gap between the outward show of holiness and the inner state. The marks and ornaments are real to look at, but underneath sit the same desire, anger, and greed that bind everyone else. The sharp point is the claim of freedom: a mind still caught in the noose announces itself as liberated, which is the deception. Tukaram calls it word-knowledge, learning that stays in the mouth and never changes the heart, and he warns that the followers inherit the teacher's bondage. The examination he invites is honest: is the detachment lived, or only displayed.

GATHA 4043

Prayers

Prayer, holding God to his vow

मराठी मूळ

दोष करुनि आह्मी पतित सिद्ध जालों । पावन मागों आलों ब्रीद तुझें ॥1॥
 आतां पतिता तारावें कीं ब्रीद हें सोडावें । यांत जें पुरवे तें चि सांगा ॥ध्रु॥
 उद्धार तुमच्यानें नव्हे हो श्रीहरि। सोडा झडकरी ब्रीद आतां ॥2॥
 तें ब्रीद घेउनी हिंडों दारोदारीं । सांगूं तुझी कीर्ती रे पांडुरंगा ॥3॥
 देवें हारविलें ब्रीद हें सोडिलें । पतितें जिंकिलें आह्मी देवा ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मीं उठलों दैन्यवरि। विचारा श्रीहरी तुह्मी आतां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By committing sins, we have firmly established ourselves as the fallen. We have come to seek purification, relying on Your vow, O Lord.

Now choose: either uplift the fallen, or give up Your vow. Tell us which one suits You better.

If You cannot deliver us, O Shrihari, then abandon Your vow at once. We will take that broken vow and carry it door to door, proclaiming Your fame, O Panduranga.

God has lost; He gave up His vow. The wrongdoers have won; we have defeated God.

Says Tuka, we have risen up against our lowliness. Now consider Your next move, O Shrihari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By our sins we have made ourselves the fallen, proven and complete. We have come to ask for the purifying that Your vow promises. Now choose: either save the fallen, or give up Your vow. Tell us plainly which one suits You. If You cannot lift us up, Shrihari, then drop Your vow at once. We will take that broken vow and go door to door with it, telling everyone Your fame, Panduranga. God has lost; He has given up His vow. The wrongdoers have won; we have defeated God. Tuka says: we have risen up out of our wretchedness. Now think it over, Shrihari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns God's own reputation into a claim he can press. The Lord is famed as the one who lifts the fallen, so Tukaram presents himself as exactly that, fully fallen, and demands that the vow be honored. The boldness is deliberate: either God saves him or God breaks his word, and a God who breaks his word loses his glory before the world. The line about defeating God is not arrogance but the lover's gambit; he stakes everything on the Lord caring more about his promise than about Tukaram's worthiness. It is prayer as a loving challenge, leaning the whole weight of one's hopelessness on God's faithfulness.

GATHA 4044

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the dance of surrender

मराठी मूळ

राम कृष्ण ऐसीं उच्चारितां नामें । नाचेन मी प्रेमें संतांपुढें ॥१॥
 काय घडेल तें घडो ये सेवटीं । लाभ हाणी तुटी देव जाणे ॥२॥
 चिंता मोह आशा ठेवुनि निराळीं । देईन हा बळी जीव पायीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं उरों नेदीं उरी । सांडीन हे थोरी ओवाळोनी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Uttering the names Rama and Krishna, I will dance with love before the saints. Whatever may happen in the end, let it happen; God knows the profit and loss.

Setting aside worry, delusion, and desire, I will lay down this very life at His feet. Says Tuka, I will hold back nothing; I will toss away all pride as an offering.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Saying the names Rama and Krishna, I will dance with love before the saints. Whatever happens in the end, let it happen. God knows the profit and the loss. Setting aside worry, delusion, and desire, I will lay this very life at His feet. Tuka says: I will hold back nothing. I will throw away all my standing as an offering.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes total self-offering through the Name. He sings Rama and Krishna and dances before the saints, refusing to calculate outcomes; the ledger of profit and loss is handed over to God. To dance freely he must first put down the three weights that bind the mind, worry, delusion, and desire. Then comes the full price: not only worry but life itself, and not only life but pride and reputation, all waved away as one waves a lamp in offering. Nothing is kept back, because keeping back anything would still be a calculation.

GATHA 4045

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the Lord who serves

मराठी मूळ

देव धरी नाना सोंगें । नाम श्रेष्ठ पांडुरंग ॥१॥
 तो हा गविळ्याचे घरीं । नाम सारितो मुरारि ॥२॥
 धन्य यशोदेचें प्रारब्ध । नाचे अंगणीं गोविंद ॥३॥
 ऐशा भक्तांसाठीं देवें । नाना धरियेलीं नांवें ॥४॥
 होय दासांचा जो दास । तुका ह्मणे विठ्ठलास ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God takes on many guises; the greatest name is Panduranga. Here He is, in the milkman's house, known by the name Murari.

Blessed is Yashoda's fortune, for Govinda dances in her courtyard. For the sake of such devotees, God has taken on countless names.

Says Tuka, the one who becomes the servant of His servants is Vitthal Himself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God takes on many disguises; the greatest name is Panduranga. Here He is in the milkman's house, going by the name Murari. Blessed is Yashoda's fortune, for Govinda dances in her courtyard. For the sake of such devotees, God has taken on countless names. Tuka says: the one who becomes the servant of His servants is Vitthal Himself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram marvels at how God lowers Himself for love. The one Reality wears many forms and names, and He does it not out of grandeur but to draw near to those who love Him, becoming the child in a cowherd's house, dancing in Yashoda's courtyard. The closing turn is the radical claim: God's greatness shows not in being served but in serving, He makes Himself the servant of His own servants. So Vitthal at Pandhri is the same Lord who stoops lowest. Divine majesty, here, looks like tenderness and willing smallness.

GATHA 4046

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, grace free for the taking

मराठी मूळ

आइत्या भाग्या धणी व्हावे । केनें घ्यावे न सरे तें॥१॥
 केणे आहे पंढरपुरीं । उधाराचें लाभीक ॥२॥
 बाखराची करुनी रीती । भरा पोतीं लवलाहीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने संतांपाडें । करुं पुढें वाखती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One should seize the fortune that comes freely; what is given so readily never runs out. Where else is there such bounty as in Pandharpur, this treasure available on credit? Fill your sacks quickly, as merchants do.

Says Tuka, following the saints, we will share this wealth with those ahead.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Seize the fortune that comes to you free; what is given so freely never runs out. Where else is there such wealth as in Pandharpur, this treasure to be had on credit? Make ready your sacks and fill them fast, the way traders do. Tuka says: following the saints, we will share it with those who come after.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures God's grace as a windfall offered without price and urges people not to let it pass. The marketplace image carries the point: this is wealth available on easy terms, even on credit, so the only foolishness would be to walk away with empty sacks. The urgency, fill them fast, is the urgency of devotion, take while the offer stands. And the closing line widens it past hoarding: in the company of the saints, the wealth gathered is meant to be passed on to those still coming. Grace received freely is meant to be shared freely.

GATHA 4047

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the pilgrim's one prayer

मराठी मूळ

जन्मोजन्मीं दास । व्हावें हे चि माझी आस ॥१॥
 पंढरीचा वारकरी । वारी चुकों नेदीं हरी ॥२॥
 संतसमागम । अंगीं थिरावले प्रेम ॥३॥
 स्नान चंद्रभागे । तुका ह्याने हें चि मागें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My sole desire is to be a servant of God, birth after birth. Let me be a pilgrim of Pandhari, and may Hari never let me miss the annual pilgrimage.

In the company of saints, may love become firmly rooted in my being. Says Tuka, bathing in the Chandrabhaga is all I ask.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To be Your servant, birth after birth, this alone is my desire. Let me be a pilgrim of Pandhari; Hari, never let me miss the pilgrimage. The company of saints, and love grown firm and steady in me. A bath in the Chandrabhaga. Tuka says: this is all I ask.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out the whole of what he wants, and it is strikingly small. He asks not for release or reward but only to keep serving God through every life, and to keep walking the pilgrimage to Pandhari without ever falling out of step. With that he asks for the things that make the path stay alive: the company of saints, love that has put down roots and steadied, and the bath in the river at Pandharpur. The prayer is a refusal of grander ambitions; the devotee's heaven is simply never losing the road to his Lord.

GATHA 4048

Longing and Separation

Longing, the Mother of Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

कां गा कोणी न ह्मणे पंढरीची आई । बोलावितें पाहीं चाल नेटें ॥१॥
तेव्हां माझ्या मना होइल समाधान । जाइल सर्व शीण जन्मांतरिंचा ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे माझी होशील माउली । वोरसोनि घाली प्रेमपान्हा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Will someone not say to me, 'Come, the Mother of Pandhari calls you'? She beckons; look, She calls you to come eagerly. Then my mind will find peace, and the weariness of countless births will vanish.

Says Tuka, You will be my Mother, overflowing with the milk of love and pressing it upon me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Will no one say to me, The Mother of Pandhari is calling you? Look, She beckons; come quickly. Then my mind will find rest, and the weariness of all my births will fall away. Tuka says: You will be my Mother, overflowing, and You will press the milk of love upon me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cries out as a child aching for word that the Mother has called. Here Vitthal at Pandhari is the mother, and the longing is for the summons itself, the message that he is wanted. He names what that call would heal: not just present trouble but the exhaustion carried across many lifetimes, gone the moment he is taken to Her. The closing image is the deepest tenderness, a mother so full of love that she presses her milk on the child unasked. The poem is the helplessness of love that cannot reach God by its own effort and waits to be called home.

GATHA 4049

The Power of the Name

The Name, the whole of scripture

मराठी मूळ

वेद अनंत बोलिला । अर्थ इतका चि शोधिला ॥१॥
विठोबासी शरण जावें । निजनिष्ट नाम गावें ॥२॥
सकळशास्त्रांचा विचार । अंतीं इतका चि निर्धार ॥३॥
अठरापुराणीं सिद्धांत । तुका ह्मणे हा चि हेत ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Vedas have spoken endlessly, but the essence they reveal is just this: take refuge in Vithoba and sing His name with unwavering faith. The conclusion of all the scriptures points to the same truth.

Says Tuka, this very intent is the established teaching of all eighteen Puranas.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Vedas have spoken without end, but the meaning they searched out comes to just this: take refuge in Vithoba, and sing His name with steady, single-hearted faith. The thought of all the scriptures, in the end, settles on this one certainty. Tuka says: this is the very conclusion of the eighteen Puranas.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the whole vast body of scripture down into a single instruction. The Vedas, all the schools of learning, the eighteen Puranas, after every word, point to one thing: surrender to Vithoba and chant His name with unwavering faith. The boldness is in the compression. He is saying the endless argument was never the destination; the destination is simple devotion that anyone can do. For the seeker who feels lost in the mass of teachings, this is mercy: the essence is short, and it is within reach.

GATHA 4050

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the grip of Maya

मराठी मूळ

मायेचा मारिला अंगीं नाहीं घाव । दुःखें तरी लव धडधडी ॥१॥
 न पवे धांवणें न पवे चि लाग । न चलती माग धरावया ॥२॥
 भेणें तरि अंगा लावियेल्या राखा । परी त्यासी वाखा करीतसे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नेदी हाका मारुं देवा । लोकापाठी हेवा लागलासे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Maya has struck, yet there is no wound on the body; still, the slightest pain makes one tremble. One cannot keep up with it, cannot catch it, cannot trace the path to subdue it.

Out of fear, one smears ashes on the body, yet Maya keeps taunting. Says Tuka, Maya does not even let me cry out to God; I am caught up in jealousy and the ways of the world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Maya strikes, yet no wound shows on the body; still the least pain makes one tremble. You cannot run fast enough to escape it, cannot catch it, cannot trace its track to pin it down. Out of fear a man smears ashes on his body, yet Maya keeps mocking him. Tuka says: Maya will not even let me cry out to God; I am caught up in envy and the ways of the people around me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes how illusion holds a person without leaving a mark. Maya wounds but draws no blood, so the hurt cannot be located or fought; you cannot outrun it, seize it, or follow its trail. Even the outward gestures of renunciation, ashes on the body, do not free a man, because the bondage is inward and keeps taunting him. The cruelest part is named last: Maya's tightest grip is that it crowds out the one thing that could break it, the cry to God, by keeping the mind busy with envy and the opinions of others. The self-examination is direct, where does my attention actually go.

GATHA 4051

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, the heart without mercy

मराठी मूळ

धिग तो दुर्जन नाही भूतदया । व्यर्थ तया माया प्रसवली ॥१॥
 कठिण हृदय तया चांडाळाचें । नेणे पराचें दुःख कांहीं ॥२॥
 आपुला का प्राण तैसे सकळ लोक । न करी विवेक पशु जैसा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुखें कापीतसे गळे । आपुलिया वेळे रडतसे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Shame on the cruel one who has no compassion for living beings; his mother gave birth in vain. Hard is the heart of that wretch; he knows nothing of another's pain.

He does not see that his own life-breath is the same as that of all beings. He lacks all discernment, like an animal.

Says Tuka, he happily cuts the throats of others, yet when his own time comes, he weeps.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Shame on the cruel man who has no pity for living beings; his mother bore him for nothing. Hard is the heart of that wretch; he knows nothing of another's pain. He does not see that his own breath of life is the same breath in all beings. He weighs nothing, like an animal. Tuka says: he gladly cuts the throats of others, yet when his own turn comes, he weeps.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures a person by one thing, compassion for living beings, and finds the cruel man failing it completely. The reason he gives is spiritual, not merely sentimental: the same life-breath moves in him and in every creature, so harming another is a kind of blindness to that shared life. To miss this, Tukaram says, is to live without discernment, on the level of an animal. The closing line catches the cruel man's hypocrisy: he inflicts on others exactly the suffering he cannot bear when it turns toward him. The poem points at the pattern of a heart that feels its own pain but is dead to everyone else's.

GATHA 4052

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, the Lord arriving on Garuda

मराठी मूळ

गरुडावरि बैसोनि येतो जगजेठी । त्याचे चरणीं मिठी घालूं चला ॥1॥
 सांवळें रूपडें देखिलें लोचनीं । शंख चक्र दोन्ही शोभताहे ॥ध्रु॥
 पीतांबर झळके हे चि त्याची खूण । वाकी रुणझुण करिताती ॥2॥
 गरुडाचा चपेटा असे नेटें । कस्तुरीमळवट शोभताहे ॥3॥
 पदक एकावळी शोभताहे कंठीं । तुका ह्मणे मिठी घालूं चला ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Riding upon Garuda, the Lord of the world approaches. Come, let us embrace His feet.

That dark, beautiful form is seen by these eyes; the conch and discus shine splendidly in His hands. The yellow garment gleams; this is His mark.

The anklets jingle melodiously. Garuda soars with majestic speed, and the mark of musk paste adorns the Lord's forehead.

A pendant and a single-strand necklace grace His throat. Says Tuka, come, let us embrace Him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Lord of the world comes riding on Garuda. Come, let us clasp His feet. This dark, lovely form is seen by my eyes; the conch and the discus both shine in His hands. The yellow garment gleams: that is His mark. The anklets ring softly. Garuda comes on with strong, swift wings, and the musk paste shines on the Lord's brow. A pendant and a single strand of jewels grace His throat. Tuka says: come, let us hold Him close.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is pure adoration, a devotee watching the Lord arrive and pointing out each beloved detail. Tukaram names the signs by which Vitthal is known: the dark beautiful form, the conch and discus, the yellow silk, the ringing anklets, the musk mark on the brow, the necklace at the throat, all seen as the eagle Garuda sweeps Him near. The poem is built on the repeated call, come, let us embrace His feet, then come, let us hold Him close. The point of the seeing is not to describe but to draw near; every shining detail is an invitation, and the only fit response to the Lord's coming is to run and clasp Him.

GATHA 4053

*The Necessity of Experience**Social criticism, the empty talker*

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं पाक होत उफराटे चाली । बोलिली ते केली व्हावी नीत ॥1॥
 नाहीं मानूं येत वांजटाचे बोल । कोरडे च फोल चवी नाहीं ॥ध्रु॥
 तरुवरा आधीं कोठें आहे फळ । चावटा बरळ ह्मणा त्यासी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे किती ठकलीं बापुडीं । गव्हा आहे गोडी मांडे पुऱ्या ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No cooking is done by walking backwards; what has been spoken must be practiced. The words of one who has no experience carry no weight; they are empty and tasteless.

Where is the fruit before the tree has grown? Call such a person a mere babbler. Says Tuka, how many innocent souls have been deceived this way. Wheat has its own sweetness, but that only shows in the bread and cakes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No food is cooked by walking backwards. What you have said, you must actually do; that is right. The words of a man with no experience carry no weight. They are dry and hollow; they have no taste. Where is the fruit before the tree has even grown? Call such a man a babbler. Tuka says: how many poor, simple souls have been deceived this way. Wheat has its own sweetness, but you taste it only in the bread and the cakes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is testing words against deeds. Talking about the goal does not bring it any nearer, just as cooking is not done by walking backward; a man must practice what he preaches. He warns against the speaker who has never lived what he says: his words are dry, tasteless, and as empty as expecting fruit from a tree that has not yet grown. Such talk has deceived many trusting people. The point is plain: wheat holds real sweetness, but you only know it once it has been ground and baked, and so a teaching is proven only when it is lived.

GATHA 4054

*Ecstasy and Joy**Ecstasy, the gift of love poured out*

मराठी मूळ

जाली हरिकथा रंग वोरसला । उचितासी आला पांडुरंग ॥1॥
 वांटितो हें प्रेम उचिताचा दाता । घेई रे तूं आतां धणीवरि ॥ध्रु॥
 प्रेम देऊनियां अवधीं सुखीं केलीं । जें होतीं रंगलीं विटलीं तीं ॥2॥
 तुकें हें दुर्बळ देखिलें संतीं । ह्मणउनि पुढती आणियेलें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Hari-katha has unfolded and its color has spread. Panduranga has come with His bountiful gift.

He distributes this love as a generous giver; receive it now to your full satisfaction. By giving love, He has made everyone joyful, even those who were weary and indifferent.

Says Tuka, the saints saw this poor one and brought him forward once more.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Hari-katha has begun, and its color has spread over everything. Panduranga has come to the deserving. He shares out this love, the giver who gives to the worthy. Take it now, take it to the full. By giving love, he has made everyone happy; even those who were stained and worn out are glad now. Tuka says: the saints saw how poor and weak I was, and so they brought me forward again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing a gathering where the telling of Hari's story turns into an outpouring of grace. Panduranga himself arrives and gives away love freely, and Tukaram urges the listeners to receive it without holding back. This love reaches even those who came in weary or indifferent, leaving no one untouched. In the last line he places himself among the lowest: it was the saints who noticed how destitute he was and drew him in to receive this gift along with the rest.

GATHA 4055

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, handing over every burden

मराठी मूळ

संकल्पला तुज सकळ ही भाव । कोण एक ठाव उरला तेथें ॥1॥
 इंद्रियव्यापार जेंजें कांहीं कर्म । करितों ते धर्म सकळ तुझे ॥ध्रु॥
 माझें हित फार लागला विचार । तुज सर्व भार चालवणें ॥2॥
 जो कांहीं लौकिक करिसी तो तुझा । अपमान पूजा कांहींतरि ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे मी तों राहिलों निश्चित । तुज कळे हित तैसें करीं ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have offered You all my devotion; what corner remains that is not Yours? Every act of the senses, whatever work I do, all that merit belongs to You. My greatest interest is this one thought: that You must carry my every burden.

Whatever worldly honor or insult comes, it is Yours in any case. Says Tuka, I remain at ease, knowing You will do what is best for me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have given all my devotion to you. What single place is left that is not yours? Whatever the senses do, whatever work I perform, all that merit is yours. My one great concern is this thought: that you must carry my every burden. Whatever honor or insult the world gives me, it is yours either way. Tuka says: I have come to rest, free of worry. You know what is good for me; do as you see fit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays down the whole of his life at God's feet and keeps nothing back for himself. Every action of the senses, every deed and its merit, he assigns to God rather than to his own account. His one remaining wish is that God should carry all his burdens, and he extends this even to public honor and insult, treating both as God's affair and not his own. Having handed everything over, he says he now rests without anxiety, trusting God to do whatever is truly best for him.

GATHA 4056

Confession and Sin

Confession, remorse burns sin away

मराठी मूळ

भय नाहीं भेव । अनुतापीं नव्हतां जीव ॥१॥
 जेथें देवाची तळमळ । तेथें काशाचा विटाळ ॥२॥
 उच्चारितां दोष । नाहीं उरों देत लेश ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने चित्त । होय आवडी मिश्रित ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no fear or dread when the jiva burns with remorse. Where the chitta yearns for God, what impurity can remain? The moment one confesses one's faults, not a trace of them is left.

Says Tuka, the mind becomes blended with loving devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no fear, no dread, when the soul burns with remorse. Where there is a deep longing for God, what defilement can stay? The moment you speak your faults aloud, not a trace of them is left. Tuka says: then the mind becomes mixed through with loving devotion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming what true remorse does. When the soul aches with repentance and longs for God, there is no room left for fear or for stain; the longing itself cleanses. Speaking one's faults openly, confessing them, leaves not a trace behind. And once the faults are gone, the mind is no longer left empty but is steeped through with loving devotion.

GATHA 4057

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the self becomes Hari

मराठी मूळ

ध्यानीं ध्यातां पंढरिराया । मनासहित पालटे काया॥१॥
 तेथें बोला कैची उरी । माझें मीपण जाला हरि ॥२॥
 चित्तचैतन्यीं पडतां मिठी । दिसे हरिरूप अवघी सिष्ट ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सांगों काय । एकाएकीं हरिवृत्तमय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

While meditating upon the King of Pandhاري, both mind and body are transformed. What room is left for words when my very sense of 'I' has become Hari? When consciousness merges into pure awareness, the entire creation appears as Hari's form.

Says Tuka, what more can I say? All at once, everything has become pervaded by Hari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As I meditate on the King of Pandhاري, my body changes along with my mind. What room is left there for words? My own sense of 'I' has become Hari. When the mind embraces pure awareness, the whole creation looks like Hari's own form. Tuka says: what can I tell you? All at once, everything is filled with Hari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what happens in deep meditation on Vitthal, the King of Pandhاري. Mind and body are both transformed, and words fail, because the very 'I' that would speak has dissolved into Hari. When his awareness merges with pure consciousness, the whole world appears as nothing but Hari's form. He ends by admitting that this state is beyond report: in a single moment, everything is steeped in Hari.

GATHA 4058

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, refusing to slander

मराठी मूळ

कोणा ही केंडावें हा आह्मां अधर्म । जोजो पावे श्रम तोतो देव ॥१॥
 ह्मणउनि चित्ता सिकविलें वोजें । आतां हें चि दुजें न बोलावें ॥२॥
 हालविलें जरि परउपकारें । जिद्धे पाप खरें उपाधीचें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जीव प्रारब्धा आधीन । कोण वाहे सीण करुणा शोभे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To slander anyone is a sin in our eyes. Whoever suffers hardship is God to us.

For this reason I have taught my mind its duty: no other word should be spoken. If the tongue moves to criticize, even for another's benefit, it commits the sin of interference.

Says Tuka, every jiva is subject to its own destiny. Who would bear the burden of needless grief? Compassion alone is fitting.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To slander anyone is, for us, a sin. Whoever is in distress is God to us. So I have carefully taught my mind its duty: from now on, speak no other word than this. Even if the tongue moves to criticize for someone else's good, that meddling is a real sin upon it. Tuka says: every soul is bound by its own destiny. Who would carry needless grief? Compassion alone is fitting.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets out a strict rule for his own speech. To run anyone down is a sin in his eyes, and he sees God in everyone who suffers, so he has trained his mind to say nothing else. He goes further: even faultfinding offered as helpful advice is still meddling, and the tongue that does it takes on real guilt. Since each soul carries its own destiny anyway, brooding over others' faults is needless grief; the only fitting response to another person is compassion.

GATHA 4059

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the festival bath cleanses all

मराठी मूळ

देव तिळीं आला । गोडगोड जीव धाला ॥१॥
साधला हा पर्वकाळ । गेला अंतरीचा मळ ॥२॥
पापपुण्य गेलें । एका स्नानें चि खुंटलें ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे वाणी । शुद्ध जनादननीं जनीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God has come in the sesame offering; the jiva is satiated with sweetness. This auspicious moment has borne fruit; the inner impurity is gone.

Sin and merit have both ended; a single holy bath has settled everything. Says Tuka, the tongue has become pure in the celebration honoring Janardana.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God has come into the sesame offering; the soul is filled with sweetness. This holy time has borne its fruit; the impurity within is gone. Sin and merit are both ended; a single sacred bath has settled it all. Tuka says: in the gathering that honors Janardana, the tongue has become pure.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is celebrating a sacred occasion, marked by the sesame offering and the holy bath, in which God himself is present. In that moment the soul is satisfied through and through, and the inner stain is washed away. He says the single sacred bath ends both sin and merit at once, lifting him past the whole ledger of deeds. And in the festival that honors Janardana, even his speech is made pure.

GATHA 4060

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, heaven brought home

मराठी मूळ

काय उणें मज पांडुरंगा पायीं । रिद्धिसिद्ध ठायीं वोळगती ॥1॥
 कोण पाहे सुखा नासिवंताकडे । तृष्णेचें बापुडें नहों आह्मी ॥ ध्रु.॥
 स्वर्गसुखें आह्मीं केलीं पावटणी । पापपुण्यें दोन्ही उलंडिलीं ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे घरीं आणिलें वैकुंठ । वसविली पेठ वैष्णवांची ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What am I lacking at the feet of Panduranga? All powers and perfections wait upon me there. Who would look toward perishable pleasures? We are not the wretches of craving.

We have made heavenly joys our stepping-stones and vaulted beyond both sin and merit. Says Tuka, we have brought Vaikuntha into our very home and established a settlement of Vaishnavas.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What do I lack at Panduranga's feet? All powers and perfections wait upon me there. Who would look toward pleasures that perish? We are not the wretches of craving. We have made the joys of heaven our stepping-stones, and stepped over both sin and merit alike. Tuka says: we have brought Vaikuntha into our own home and settled a whole market town of Vaishnavas.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says that at Vitthal's feet he lacks nothing, for every power and perfection already serves him there. He refuses perishable pleasures and denies being one of craving's wretches. Then he raises the claim higher: even the joys of heaven are only a stair he steps on, and he has stepped clean over both sin and merit, beyond the whole bargain of reward and punishment. The end is bold: Vaikuntha, God's own abode, has been brought into his very home, and around it a whole settlement of devotees has grown up.

GATHA 4061

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the infinite giver

मराठी मूळ

माझें मागणें तें किती । दाता लक्ष्मीचा पति ॥1॥
 तान्हेल्यानें पीतां पाणी । तेणें गंगा नव्हे उणी ॥ ध्रु.॥
 कल्पतरु जाला देता । तेथें पोटाचा मागता ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे संतां ध्यातां । परब्रह्म आलें हाता ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How small is my asking, when the giver is the Lord of Lakshmi Himself? When a thirsty man drinks water, is the Ganga thereby diminished? When the wish-fulfilling tree becomes the giver, who before it is merely a beggar for bread? Says Tuka, by meditating on the saints, the Supreme Brahman comes into one's hands.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How small is my asking, when the giver is the Lord of Lakshmi himself? When a thirsty man drinks his water, the Ganga is not made any less. When the wish-granting tree itself becomes the giver, who would stand before it begging only for a bellyful? Tuka says: by meditating on the saints, the Supreme Brahman comes into your hands.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures his small request against the boundlessness of the one he asks. The giver is the Lord of Lakshmi, so infinitely rich that one man's request takes nothing from him, just as a thirsty drinker does not shrink the Ganga. Before a wish-granting tree, it would be foolish to beg only for food; the giver can grant far more. He closes with where the real treasure lies: by dwelling on the saints, the Supreme Brahman itself comes into one's hands.

GATHA 4062

The Saints

The saints, teaching by living it

मराठी मूळ

अर्भकाचे साटीं । पंतें हातीं धरिली पाटी ॥१॥
 तैसे संत जगीं । क्रिया करुनी दाविती अंगीं ॥२॥
 बालकाचे चाली । माता जाणुनि पाउल घाली ॥२॥
 तुका ह्याणे नाव । जनासाठीं उदकीं ठाव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For the sake of a child, the teacher takes up the writing-slate. In the same way, saints act out their teachings in their own lives for the world to see.

As a mother understands the child's pace and places her footstep accordingly, so do the saints guide us. Says Tuka, the boat exists for the people's sake, to carry them upon the water.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For the sake of a small child, the teacher takes the writing-slate in his own hand. In the same way, saints in this world act out their teaching in their own bodies. As a mother knows the child's pace and places her step to match it, so the saints walk with us. Tuka says: the boat exists for the people's sake, to give them a footing upon the water.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram explains how saints teach. Like a teacher who picks up the slate himself so a child can learn by watching, the saints do not merely instruct in words; they live out the teaching in their own conduct for the world to see. Like a mother who shortens her stride to match her child's small steps, they meet ordinary people where they are.

And like a boat, they exist for others' sake, giving people a footing to cross what they could not cross alone.

GATHA 4063

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, a bond across many births

मराठी मूळ

जन्मोजन्मींची संगत । भेटी जाली अकस्मात ॥१॥
 आतां सोडितां सुटेना । तंतु प्रीतीचा तुटेना ॥२॥
 माझें चित्त तुझ्या पायां । मिठी पडिली पंढरिराया ॥२॥
 तुका ह्याने अंतीं । तुझी माझी एक गति ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A friendship spanning many births has met with a sudden reunion. Now this bond cannot be broken; the thread of love will not snap.

My mind has fallen at Your feet in an embrace, O King of Pandhari. Says Tuka, in the end, Your destiny and mine are one and the same.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A companionship from birth after birth has met again, all at once. Now, even if I try to let go, it will not loosen; the thread of love will not snap. My mind has fallen at your feet and clasped them, O King of Pandhari. Tuka says: in the end, your way and mine are one and the same.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells of a love that feels older than this life, a companionship carried through many births, suddenly renewed in reunion. The bond is now past breaking; even if he tried to release it, the thread of love would hold. His mind has fallen at Vitthal's feet and clings there in embrace. The final line states the whole hope of his devotion: that at the last his destiny and God's will be one and the same.

GATHA 4064

Longing and Separation

Longing, asking the way to the feet

मराठी मूळ

सांग पांडुरंगा मज हा उपाव । जेणें तुझे पाव आतुडति ॥१॥
 न कळे हा निर्धार ब्रह्मादिकां पार । कायसा विचार माझा तेथें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्याने आतां धरुनियां धीर । राहूं कोठवर मायबापा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tell me, O Panduranga, what is the way by which I may reach Your feet? Even Brahma and the other gods cannot fathom Your depths; what place does my feeble reasoning have there? Says Tuka, how much longer must I hold my patience, O my Mother and Father?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tell me, Panduranga, the way by which I may reach your feet. Even Brahma and the gods cannot grasp your depth; what is my poor reasoning worth there? Tuka says: holding my patience now, how long must I wait, O my Mother and Father?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pleading for guidance toward union with God. He knows his own mind cannot find the way, since even Brahma and the high gods cannot fathom God's depth; his small reasoning is helpless there. So he simply asks God to show him the way to his feet. The cry at the end mixes trust with strain: he is holding on to his patience, but he is weary of waiting, and he calls Vitthal his Mother and Father, the one bound to answer a child.

GATHA 4065

Surrender and Acceptance

Grace alone, effort cannot reach God

मराठी मूळ

काय फार जरी जालों मी शाहाणा । तरी नारायणा नातुडसी ॥१॥
 काय जालें जरी मानी मज मन । परि नातुडति चरण तुझे देवा ॥२॥
 काय जालें जरी जालों उदासीन । परि वर्म भिन्न तुझें देवा ॥३॥
 काय जालें जरी केले म्यां सायास । ह्मणवितों दास भक्त तुझा ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुज दाविल्यावांचून । तुझें वर्म कोण जाणे देवा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if I become very learned, O Narayana, I cannot reach You. Even if my own mind respects me, Your feet still elude me, O God.

Even if I become detached, Your secret remains hidden, O Lord. Even if I undertake great efforts and call myself Your servant and devotee, it avails nothing.

Says Tuka, unless You reveal Yourself, who can know Your mystery, O God?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even if I become very learned, O Narayana, I still cannot reach You. Even if my own mind respects me, Your feet still slip away from me, O God. Even if I become detached, Your secret stays hidden, O God. Even if I labor hard and call myself Your servant, Your devotee, it comes to nothing. Tuka says: unless You show Yourself, who can know Your mystery, O God?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is taking apart the idea that you can earn your way to God. He lists the things a seeker is proud of: learning, self-respect, detachment, hard discipline, the title of servant and devotee. One by one he says each of them fails to reach the feet. The point is not that effort is bad, but that it cannot pry open what only God can open. The mystery stays sealed until God Himself reveals it; the last word belongs to grace, not to the seeker's striving.

GATHA 4066

Devotion to Vitthal

Pilgrimage to Pandhari, meeting Brahman

मराठी मूळ

जातां पंढरीच्या मार्गो । काय वणूप सुखा मग ॥१॥
 घडे लाभ लक्षकोटि । परब्रह्मीं होइल भेटी ॥२॥
 नाम गर्जत येती संत । त्यांच्या दर्शनें होईजे मुक्त ॥३॥
 जो अलक्ष्य ब्रह्मादिकां । आला संनिध ह्मणे तुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Walking the road to Pandhari, how can I describe the joy that follows? Gain beyond counting is earned; one meets the Supreme Brahman. The saints come chanting the Name in a roar; by their mere sight one is set free.

He who is beyond the reach of even Brahma has come close. Says Tuka, He stands right here.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Walking the road to Pandhari, how can I describe the joy that follows? The gain is past all counting; one meets the Supreme Brahman. The saints come chanting the Name in a roar, and at the mere sight of them one is set free. Tuka says: He who is beyond the reach of even Brahma and the gods has come near, He stands right here.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praising the pilgrimage to Pandhari as a road whose reward cannot be measured. He says the walk itself ends in meeting the Supreme Brahman, the very absolute that philosophy strains toward. The saints walking the same road, chanting the Name aloud, are themselves freeing: their sight alone releases you. The startling claim he lands is that the God whom even Brahma and the high gods cannot reach has come close and stands right here, on this road, with these pilgrims.

GATHA 4067

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, hold the Name now

मराठी मूळ

सारासार विचार करा उठाउठी । नाम धरा कंठीं विठोबाचें ॥१॥
 तयाच्या चिंतनें निरसलें संकट । तरलों दुर्घट भवसिंधु ॥२॥
 जन्मोनियां कुळीं वाचे स्मरे राम । धरी हा चि नेम अहिनिर्शी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने कोटी कुळें तीं पुनीत । भावें गातां गीत विठोबाचे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Make haste and discern the real from the unreal. Hold the name of Vithoba at your throat.

By contemplating Him, every calamity dissolves, and the impassable ocean of worldly existence is crossed. Having been born in a human family, let the tongue remember Rama; make this your firm resolve, day and night.

Says Tuka, millions of families are purified when one sings the songs of Vithoba with true feeling.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Make haste; weigh the real against the unreal. Hold the name of Vithoba at your throat. By remembering Him, every danger dissolves, and the hard ocean of this world is crossed. You were born into a human family: let your tongue remember Rama. Make this your firm rule, day and night. Tuka says: millions of families are made pure when one sings the songs of Vithoba with true feeling.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is urging the listener to act now, not later. He frames the whole of life as a single discrimination: the real against the unreal, and tells you to settle it quickly and keep the Name on your lips. He names the stakes plainly. The Name dissolves danger and carries you across the ocean of birth and death, which no other means can. The human birth is the rare chance to do this, so make remembrance a fixed daily rule. The closing claim widens the reward: one person singing Vithoba's songs with true feeling purifies not just himself but countless generations of his family.

GATHA 4068

Autobiography

Vow, never sell the discourse

मराठी मूळ

मोल घेऊनियां कथा जरी करीं । तरी भंगो हरी देह माझा ॥१॥
 माझी कथा करा ऐसें ह्याणें कोणा । तरी झडो जाणा जिद्धा माझी ॥२॥
 साहए तूं जालासी काय उणें तुपें । आणीक भूतांपें काय मार्गों ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने सर्व सिद्ध तुझे पायीं । तूं माझा गोसावी पांडुरंगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If I ever take payment for performing a sacred discourse, O Hari, may You destroy this body of mine. If I ever ask someone to arrange my discourse, may my tongue fall off.

You have become my patron; what then is lacking? Why should I beg from any other being? Says Tuka, all perfection lies at Your feet. You are my master, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If I ever take payment for telling the sacred story, O Hari, then break this body of mine. If I ever ask anyone to arrange my discourse, then let my tongue fall off. You have become my support; what then is lacking? Why should I beg from any other being? Tuka says: all fulfillment lies at Your feet. You are my master, O Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is making a vow about how he will and will not live as a singer of God's story. He swears never to take money for the sacred discourse and never to angle for invitations to perform, and he calls down ruin on his own body and tongue if he breaks it. The vow rests on a reason: God Himself has become his support, so there is nothing left to lack and no one else to beg from. Naming Panduranga as his only master, he is rejecting the temptation to turn devotion into a trade. The kirtan is for God, not for a fee or a reputation.

GATHA 4069

The Nature of God

Grace turns knowledge into Brahman

मराठी मूळ

जरि हा हो कृपा करिल नारायण । तरी हें चि ज्ञान ब्रह्म होय ॥१॥
कोठोनियां कांहीं न लगे आणावें । न लगे कोठें जावें तरावया ॥२॥
जरी देव कांहीं धरिल पै चितीं । तरि हे चि होती दिव्य चक्षु ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे देव दावील आपणा । तरि जीवपणा ठाव नाही ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If Narayana chooses to be gracious, then this very knowledge becomes Brahman. Nothing needs to be brought from anywhere; one need not go anywhere to be saved.

If God holds something in His chitta, then these very eyes become divine. Says Tuka, if God reveals Himself, there is no more room for the illusion of separate selfhood.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If Narayana chooses to be kind, then this very knowledge becomes Brahman. Nothing has to be fetched from anywhere; you need go nowhere to be saved. If God holds something in His heart, then these very eyes become divine eyes. Tuka says: if God shows Himself, then there is no room left for separate selfhood.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying that everything turns on God's grace, not on going somewhere or acquiring something. With grace, the ordinary knowledge you already have becomes Brahman itself; nothing needs to be brought from elsewhere and no journey is required for liberation. When God wills it, the same eyes you now have see divinely. The final claim is the sharpest: once God reveals Himself, the sense of being a separate self has no place left to stand. Realization is not an addition; it is the dissolving of the I that thought itself apart.

GATHA 4070

Prayers

Prayer, no other authority over me

मराठी मूळ

पांडुरंगा कृपाळुवा दयावंता । धरिशील सत्ता सकळ ही ॥१॥
कां जी आह्मांवरी आणिकांची सत्ता । तुझासी असतां जविळक ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे पायीं केलें निवेदन । उचित हें दान करीं आतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Panduranga, compassionate and merciful one, You hold all power. Why then should others have authority over us, when You are so near? Says Tuka, I have made my offering at Your feet. Now grant me the gift that is fitting.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Panduranga, kind and merciful one, You hold all power. Why then should others have authority over us, when You are so near? Tuka says: I have made my offering at Your feet. Now give me the gift that is fitting.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying with a quiet challenge inside the prayer. Since Panduranga holds all power and stands so near, he asks why any other force should still rule over him. The unspoken frame is the pull of fate, of worldly masters, of fear; he is asking to be set under God's authority alone. Having placed his whole self at God's feet as an offering, he asks God to answer with the fitting gift. He leaves what is fitting to God, trusting the merciful one to know it better than he does.

GATHA 4071

The Power of the Name

The Name as weapon, the inner war

मराठी मूळ

रात्री दिवस आह्मां युद्धाचा प्रसंग । अंतर्बाह्ये जग आणि मन ॥१॥
जीवा ही आगोज पडती आघात । येऊनियां नित्य नित्य करी ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे तुझ्या नामाचिया बळें । अवघीयांचें काळें केलें तोंड ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Day and night we face the battle within and without: the world and the mind. Blows strike even the very jiva, coming again and again, without ceasing.

Says Tuka, by the strength of Your name, we have blackened the faces of all our enemies.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Day and night we are in the thick of battle, within and without: the world, and the mind. Blows fall even on the very life in us, striking again and again, without stopping. Tuka says: by the strength of Your name, we have blackened the faces of all of them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the spiritual life as constant war, fought on two fronts at once: the outer world and the inner mind. The attacks are relentless and reach all the way down to the living soul, coming again and again with no pause. Against this he names his one weapon, the Name of God, and says its strength has put every assailant to shame, blackening their faces in defeat. The poem points the listener inward: the hardest enemy is the mind, and the answer is not to fight it with the mind but to hold the Name.

GATHA 4072

Surrender and Acceptance

Self-abasement, dust at the saints' feet

मराठी मूळ

होइन खडे गोटे । चरणरज साने मोठे । पंढरीचे वाटे । संतचरणीं लागेन ॥१॥
 आणीक काय दुजें । म्या मागणें तुजपासीं । अविट तें सुख । भय नास नाही ज्यासी ॥२॥
 होइन मोचे वाहणा । पायीं सकळां संतजनां । मांजर सुकर सुणा । जवळी शेष घ्यावया ॥३॥
 सांडोवा पायरी । वाहळ बावी गंगातिरी । होइन तयावरी । संतसज्जन चालती ॥४॥
 लागें संतां पांयीं । ऐसा ठेवीं भलता ठायीं । तुका ह्याने देई । धाक नाही जन्माचा ॥५॥
 आपुलें कारण साधों जी विचार । करावा हा धीर धरुनियां ॥६॥
 काय कराविया आणिका या युक्ति । काय नव्हे भक्ति विठोबाची ॥७॥
 एक पुढें गेले वाट दावूनियां । मारग तो वांयां कोण सांडी ॥८॥
 तुका ह्याने माझी विठोबासी चिंता । भेईना सर्वथा न घडे तें ॥९॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let me become the pebbles and stones, small and great, on the road to Pandhari, so that the feet of saints may touch me. What else do I ask of You? Only that imperishable joy which knows no fear or decay.

Let me become the sandals and shoes on the feet of all the saints, or a cat, a pig, or a dog nearby to eat their leftovers. Let me be a stepping-stone, a well-bucket, a railing by the Ganga, upon which saints and good people walk.

Says Tuka, place me at the saints' feet wherever You will; I have no fear of any birth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let me become the pebbles and stones, small and large, on the road to Pandhari, so the feet of the saints may touch me. What else would I ask of You? Only that unfading joy which knows no fear and no decay. Let me become the sandals and shoes on the feet of all the saints, or a cat, a pig, a dog nearby to eat their leftovers. Let me be a stepping-stone, a well-bucket, a railing by the Ganga, on which saints and good people walk. Tuka says: place me at the saints' feet wherever You will; I have no fear of any birth. Let me secure my own purpose; hold steady and stay patient. What use is there in other devices? Is the devotion of Vithoba not enough? Some have gone ahead and shown the way; who would throw that road away? Tuka says: my care is fixed on Vithoba; I have no fear at all, for what should not happen will not.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays to be made the lowest thing near the saints rather than anything high away from them. He asks to be the road-stones, the sandals, even the animals that eat their scraps, anything that keeps him at their feet. The frame is that nearness to the saints is worth more than any dignity, and the only thing he truly wants is the deathless, fearless joy that company brings. Because of that, he says he no longer dreads being reborn in any form. The second movement turns to resolve: the one needed thing is patience and trust, since Vithoba's devotion is already enough and the saints have walked the road ahead and marked it. He ends without fear, certain that with his care set on Vithoba, nothing that should not happen ever will.

GATHA 4073

Devotion to Vitthal

Refusal of liberation, choosing the saints

मराठी मूळ

कासया व्हावें जीतांचि मुक्त । सांडुनियां थीतें प्रेमसुख ॥1॥
 वैष्णवांचा दास जाला नारायण । काय त्या मिळोन असे काम ॥ध्रु॥
 काय त्या गांठीचें पडलें सुटोन । उगला चि बैसोन धीरु धरीं ॥2॥
 सुख आह्मांसाठीं केलें हें निर्माण । निद।व तो कोण हाणे लाता ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज न लगे सायोज्यता । राहेन या संतां समागमें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why seek to be liberated while still alive, abandoning the settled joy of love? Narayana Himself has become the servant of the Vaishnavas; what remains to be accomplished by joining Him? What is there knotted in your bundle that needs untying? Simply sit still and hold your patience. This bliss was created for our sake; who but a fool would kick it away? Says Tuka, I do not want oneness with God. I would rather remain in the company of these saints.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why want to be liberated while alive, throwing away the settled joy of love? Narayana Himself has become the servant of the Vaishnavas; what is left to gain by merging into Him? What knot in your bundle still needs untying? Just sit still and keep your patience. This joy was made for our sake; who but a fool would kick it away? Tuka says: I do not want oneness with God. I would rather stay in the company of these saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is refusing the prize that most seekers chase. He turns down liberation-in-life and even final union with God, because both would mean leaving the living joy of loving devotion. He points out the reversal at the heart of bhakti: God Himself has become the servant of His devotees, so there is nothing higher to merge into. His advice is to stop straining as if some knot still needs untying, and simply rest in the love already given, a bliss made for the devotee's sake. Ending on the boldest note, he says he wants the company of the saints more than oneness with God itself.

GATHA 4074

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration of Pandhari, every wish fulfilled

मराठी मूळ

आवडे पंढरी भीमा पांडुरंग । चंद्रभागा लिंग पांडुरंग॥१॥
 कामधेनु कल्पतरु चिंतामणी । आवडीची धणी पुरवीती॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे जीवा थोर जालें सुख । नाठवे हे भूक तान कांहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I love Pandhari, the Bhima, and Panduranga. Chandrabhaga is the very emblem of Panduranga.

Like the wish-fulfilling cow, the wish-granting tree, and the wish-yielding gem, they satisfy every desire. Says Tuka, the jiva has found such great joy that it remembers neither hunger nor thirst.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I love Pandhari, the Bhima river, and Panduranga. Chandrabhaga is the very sign of Panduranga. Like the wish-granting cow, the wish-granting tree, the wish-granting jewel, they fulfill every desire to the full. Tuka says: the soul has found such great joy that it remembers no hunger and no thirst.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pours out love for the holy place itself: Pandhari, the river Bhima, the curve called Chandrabhaga, and Panduranga who is their meaning. He compares them to the three great wish-fulfillers of myth, the divine cow, the wish-tree, and the wish-jewel, saying they satisfy every longing completely. The closing line names the effect on the devotee: the joy is so great that the soul forgets hunger and thirst altogether. The place and its God are not a means to something else; resting in them, the ordinary cravings simply fall silent.

GATHA 4075

Surrender and Acceptance

Trust, God as tender Mother

मराठी मूळ

लाडें भाकितों करुणा । तूं रे उदाराचा राणा ॥1॥
 करिसी आमुचा सांभाळ । तूं रे माउली स्नेहाळ ॥२॥
 नाहीं चिंता रे आह्मांसी । तूं चि भार चालविसी ॥3॥
 आह्मी जालों उदासीन । तूं चि करिसी जतन ॥4॥
 आह्मां नाहीं जीवनास । तूं चि पुरविसी घास ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे भलते सर्वे । जातां मार्गे मार्गे धांवे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With fond pleading I call out to You, O King of generosity. You look after us, O compassionate Mother.

We have no worry at all, for You Yourself carry our every burden. We have become carefree, and You Yourself watch over us.

We lack even our daily sustenance, and You Yourself provide each morsel. Says Tuka, wherever we wander, You come running close behind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With fond pleading I call out to You, O King of the generous. You take care of us, O loving Mother. We have no worry at all, for You carry our whole burden. We have grown carefree, and You Yourself watch over us. We have nothing to live on, and You Yourself provide each mouthful. Tuka says: wherever we wander, You come running close behind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks in the voice of a child who has handed everything over. He calls God both King of the generous and loving Mother, and on that ground refuses all worry: the burden is God's to carry, not his. The frame is total dependence, freely chosen; having no resources of his own, he trusts God to supply each day's morsel. The final image lands the trust as tenderness, God following the wandering child everywhere, running close behind so he is never lost. Surrender here is not grim resignation but the ease of a child safe in a mother's keeping.

GATHA 4076

Devotion to Vitthal

Refuge, strength from God's feet

मराठी मूळ

आह्मां हें सकळ । तुझ्या पायांचें चि बळ ॥१॥
 करुं अमृताचें पान । दुजें नेणों कांहीं आन ॥२॥
 जयाचा जो भोग। सुख दुःख पीडा रोग ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । तुझे पायीं माझा ठेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All our strength comes from the power of Your feet. We drink the nectar of that alone and know no other thing.

Whatever joy or sorrow, affliction or illness comes, is each one's own portion to bear. Says Tuka, O God, my treasure lies at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All that we have is the strength of Your feet alone. We drink the nectar of that one thing and know nothing else. Whatever comes, joy or sorrow, affliction or illness, is each one's own portion to bear. Tuka says: O God, my treasure is laid up at Your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram traces every bit of his strength back to a single source, the feet of God, and says he drinks that one nectar and wants nothing besides. He then sets the troubles of life in their place: joy and sorrow, pain and sickness are each person's own allotment, to be borne rather than fought. The frame is acceptance grounded in refuge; because his real treasure is kept safe at God's feet, the shifting fortunes of the body do not touch what matters. He is not denying that pain comes, only refusing to let it be the center.

GATHA 4077

Worldly Life

Warning, the divided heart

मराठी मूळ

प्रपंच परमार्थ संपादोनि दोन्ही । एक ही निदानीं न घडे त्यासी ॥१॥
 दोहीं पेंवावरी ठेवूं जातां हात । शेवटीं अपघात शरीराचा ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे तया दोहींकडे धका । शेवटीं तो नरकामाजी पडे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who tries to succeed at both worldly life and spiritual life together will accomplish neither in the end. Reaching for two granary bins at once leads to an accident of the body.

Says Tuka, such a person is shoved from both sides and finally falls into hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you try to win at worldly life and the spiritual life both at once, you will not finish either one. Reach for two granary bins at the same time, and in the end your body comes to harm. Tuka says: such a person is shoved from both sides, and at last he falls into hell.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning against the half-and-half life that keeps one foot in the world and one foot on the path. He says you cannot complete both at once; whoever tries finishes neither. His image is a man reaching for two grain bins together: he loses his balance and falls. The claim is sharp. To divide the heart this way is not safety but ruin, because the man pulled both directions ends up shoved from both sides into the worst place. The point is to choose, not to hedge.

GATHA 4078

The Power of the Name

The Name, the one true comfort

मराठी मूळ

संसारा आलिया एक सुख आहे । आठवावे पाय विठोबाचे ॥१॥
 येणें होय सर्व संसार सुखाचा । न लगे दुःखाचा लेश कांहीं ॥२॥
 घेईल तयासी सोपें आहे सुख । बोलिलेलें मुखें नारायण ॥३॥
 सांगितली सोय करुणासागरें । तुह्मां कांहो बरें न वाटतें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तेणें उपकार केला । भोळ्या भाविकाला तरावया ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having come into this world, there is one true comfort: remembering the feet of Vithoba. By this, all of worldly life becomes joyful and not a trace of suffering remains.

This happiness is available to whoever takes it; simply speak Narayana with the mouth. The ocean of compassion has shown the way.

Why does it not feel right to you? Says Tuka, He has done a great favor for the faithful, to carry them across.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Having come into this world, there is one comfort: remember the feet of Vithoba. By this, all of worldly life turns to joy, and not a trace of suffering is left. This happiness is there for whoever will take it; only speak Narayana with your mouth. The ocean of compassion has shown the way. Why does it not seem good to you? Tuka says: He has done this favor for the faithful, to carry them across.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names the single comfort available to anyone born into this life: keep Vithoba's feet in mind. He insists the practice is easy and open to all; you need only say the Name, Narayana, with your mouth, and worldly life turns sweet with no suffering left. The way has been shown freely by God, the ocean of mercy, so the saint is puzzled, almost grieved, that people still hold back from it. The closing line frames the whole thing as a gift: God laid out this simple path on purpose, to ferry the faithful across the world they are drowning in.

GATHA 4079

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, fearless in God

मराठी मूळ

आह्मां भय धाक कोणाचा रे पाहें । काळ मशक काय मानव हे ॥१॥
 आह्मांसी ते काय चिंता या पोटाची । माउली आमुची पांडुरंग ॥२॥
 काय करावी हे कोणाची मान्यता । करितां अनंता कोण वारी ॥३॥
 नाहीं शीण आह्मां जालें कवतुक । पुनीत हे लोक करावया ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे खातों आनंदाचे लाडू । नका चरफडूं घ्या रे तुह्मी ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whom should we fear? What is Death to us but a mosquito? What are mere mortals to us? What worry do we have about our bellies? Panduranga is our Mother. Whose approval do we need? When the Infinite One blesses us, who can stop us? We feel no weariness; it has all become a delight, for we are here to purify these people.

Says Tuka, we feast on the sweets of bliss. Stop fretting and take your share.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whom should we fear? What is Death to us but a mosquito? What are mere men? Why should we worry about this belly? Panduranga is our Mother. Whose approval do we need? When the Infinite One acts, who can stop it? We feel no weariness; it has all become play, for we are here to make these people pure. Tuka says: we are eating the sweets of bliss. Stop fretting; come and take your share.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from a state where every ordinary fear has dropped away. Death, other people, even the daily anxiety over food, none of it can touch one whose Mother is Panduranga. He needs no one's approval, because when the Infinite One is at work no one can obstruct it. He reframes his own labor as effortless play, undertaken not for himself but to purify those around him. The last line turns to the listener with an open hand: he is feasting on joy, so stop your anxious fretting and come share in it.

GATHA 4080

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the counterfeit exposed

मराठी मूळ

तांबगी हें नाणें न चले खऱ्या मोलें । जरी हिंडविलें देशोदेशीं ॥१॥
 करणीचें कांहीं न मने सज्जना । यावें लागे मना वृद्धांचिया ॥२॥
 हिरयासारिका दिसे शिरगोळा । पारखी ते डोळां न पाहाती ॥३॥
 देऊनियां भिंग कामाविलें मोतीं । पारखिया हातीं घेतां नये ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय नटोनियां व्यर्थ । आपुलें हें चित्त आपणा ग्वाही ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A copper coin will not pass for true currency, no matter how far you carry it. Actions that do not satisfy the wise are worthless; one must win the approval of the elders.

Glass may look like a diamond, but experts will not give it a second glance. A false pearl made with a coating cannot pass through a jeweler's hands.

Says Tuka, what use is dressing up in vain? Your own conscience is your true witness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A copper coin will not pass as real money, no matter how far you carry it across the land. Whatever the good do not accept counts for nothing; you must win the mind of the elders. Glass can look like a diamond, but the expert will not even glance at it. Coat a bead in foil and call it a pearl; it cannot pass through the jeweler's hands. Tuka says: what use is dressing yourself up in vain? Your own heart is your witness.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tests false piety the way a market tests coin and gem. A copper piece, glass cut like a diamond, a foiled bead sold as a pearl: each may travel far and fool the crowd, but it fails the one who actually knows. So with a man's conduct; the approval of the wise and the elders is the assay that matters, not the size of the audience taken in. The point lands inward: there is no use dressing up an empty life, because your own conscience already knows what you are, and it is the witness you cannot bribe.

GATHA 4081

The Moral Ideal

Moral counsel, keep your own ground

मराठी मूळ

चिंता मिळे त्याचा संग रुचिकर । क्षोभवितां दूर तों चिं भलें ॥१॥
 ऐसी परंपरा आलीसे चालत । भलत्याची नीत त्यागावरी ॥२॥
 हो कां पिता पुत्र बंधु कोणी तेही । विजाति संग्रहीं धरूं नये ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सत्य पाळावें वचन । अन्यथा आपण करूं नये ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The company that agrees with the mind is pleasant; when it provokes, it is best kept at a distance. Such has been the way passed down through ages: one must renounce whatever crosses one's path of goodness.

Be it father, son, or brother, one should not harbor the company of those of contrary nature. Says Tuka, one must keep one's word of truth and never behave otherwise.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Company that suits your mind is pleasant; when it provokes you, it is best kept far off. This is the way handed down through the ages: turn away from anyone who crosses your path of good. Be he father, son, or brother, do not keep close company with one whose nature runs against yours. Tuka says: hold to your word of truth, and never act otherwise.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gives practical counsel on the company one keeps. Good company steadies the mind; company that agitates it should be kept at a distance, and this, he says, is the wisdom passed down through generations. He pushes the rule to its hard edge: even father, son, or brother is no exception if their nature pulls you off the path of goodness. Kinship does not override the soul's direction. The closing measure of the whole thing is simple integrity: keep your word, stay true, and never let circumstance bend you into acting otherwise.

GATHA 4082

The Moral Ideal

Moral counsel, the inner witness

मराठी मूळ

आपुली कसोटी शुद्ध राखी कारण । आगीनें भूषण अधिक पुट ॥१॥
 नाहीं कोणासवें बोलणें लागत । निश्चितीनें चित्तसमाधान ॥२॥
 लपविलें तें ही ढेंकरें उमटे । खोटियाचें खोटें उर फोडी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने निंदा स्तुति दोन्ही वाव । आपुलाला भाव फळा येतो ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Maintain your own purity for a good reason; fire only enhances the luster of gold. There is no need to argue with anyone; certainty and contentment come from inner conviction.

What is hidden within is revealed by a belch; the falsehood in a false man breaks through on its own. Says Tuka, both praise and blame are hollow. One's own inner faith is what bears fruit.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Keep your own testing pure, for good reason; fire only deepens the shine of gold. Then you need argue with no one; certainty itself gives the heart its peace. What you hide inside still surfaces, the way a belch gives you away; the falseness in a false man bursts his own chest open. Tuka says: praise and blame are both empty. It is your own inner faith that bears the fruit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram urges you to keep yourself genuine, comparing the tested soul to gold, which only grows brighter in the fire of trial. If you are real within, you need not argue your case to anyone; inner certainty is its own peace. He warns that what is concealed always leaks out, like a belch betraying what was swallowed, and the falseness in a pretender finally breaks him from inside. The conclusion sets the true measure: other people's praise and blame are both hollow, and only your own inward faith actually bears fruit.

GATHA 4083

The Moral Ideal

Moral counsel, gladness at another's ruin

मराठी मूळ

आणिकांच्या घातें मानितां संतोष । सुखदुःख दोष अंगीं लागे ॥1॥
 ऐसें मनीं वाहूं नयेती संकल्प । करूं नये पाप भांडवल ॥ध्रु॥
 क्लेशाची चितीं राहाते कांचणी । अग्नींत टाकोनी ठाव जाळी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे येणें घडे पुण्यक्षय । होणार तें होय प्रारब्धें चि ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Taking pleasure in the ruin of others brings both joy and sorrow as flaws upon oneself. One should not entertain such thoughts in the mind or make sin one's capital.

The thorn of malice lodges in the chitta; like throwing something into fire, it burns away one's own ground. Says Tuka, by this, one's merit is destroyed. Whatever was destined happens by fate alone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you find pleasure in another's downfall, both the joy and the sorrow, the fault, cling to your own body. Do not carry such designs in your mind; do not make sin your stock in trade. The thorn of spite that stays in the heart is like throwing fire down: it burns the very ground you stand on. Tuka says: by this your merit is spent. Whatever is to happen happens by destiny alone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram examines the quiet pleasure people take in seeing an enemy ruined. He says the fault of it sticks to you, not to them; to plot another's harm is to make sin your working capital. The malice you keep in your heart is like setting a fire under yourself; it consumes your own footing. And it is wasted besides, because it burns away your accumulated merit while changing nothing: what is destined will happen by fate regardless. The teaching points not at the rival but at the spiteful impulse, which only injures the one who holds it.

GATHA 4084

Social Criticism

Social criticism, devotion that wants

मराठी मूळ

अज्ञानाची भक्ति इच्छती संपत्ती । तयाचिये मती बोध केंचा ॥1॥
 अज्ञानाची पूजा कामिक भावना । तयाचिया ध्याना देव केंचा ॥ध्रु॥
 अज्ञानाचें कर्म फळीं ठेवी मन । निष्काम साधन तया केंचें ॥2॥
 अज्ञानाचें ज्ञान विषयावरी ध्यान । ब्रह्म सनातन तया केंचें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे जळो ऐसियांचे तोंड । अज्ञानाचें बंड वाढविती ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The devotion of the ignorant craves only wealth. How can wisdom dawn in such a mind? The worship of the ignorant is driven by desire.

How can God be present in such meditation? The karma of the ignorant fixes its mind on results. How can selfless practice come to such a one? The knowledge of the ignorant is fixed on sense-objects.

How can the eternal Brahman come to such a one? Says Tuka, let the mouths of such people burn. They only spread the riot of ignorance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The devotion of the ignorant craves wealth; how could understanding dawn in such a mind? The worship of the ignorant is moved by desire; how could God live in such meditation? The work of the ignorant keeps its eye on the reward; how could selfless practice come to him? The knowledge of the ignorant is fixed on the things of the senses; how could the eternal Brahman come to him? Tuka says: let such mouths burn. They only swell the riot of ignorance.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays bare a devotion that is really self-seeking. The ignorant man prays for wealth, worships out of desire, works only for the fruit, and calls his sense-bound thinking knowledge; in each case the saint asks how God or wisdom could possibly enter so blocked a heart. The whole structure is a mirror for self-examination: it asks the listener to notice which of these motives is secretly his own. The harsh closing curse is aimed not at any single person but at the pattern itself, the loud false teaching that spreads ignorance instead of dispelling it.

GATHA 4085

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the gilded hypocrite

मराठी मूळ

गुळें माखोनियां दगड ठेविला । वर दिसे भला लोकाचारी ॥१॥
 अंतरीं विषयाचें लागलें पें पिसें । बाहिरल्या वेषें भुलवी लोकां ॥२॥
 ऐसिया डांभिकां कैची हरिसेवा । नेणे चि सद्गवा कोणे काळीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे येणें कैसा होय संत । विटाळलें चित्त कामक्रोधें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He has coated a stone with jaggery and set it out; on the surface it looks fine to the world. But within, the madness of sensory pleasures has taken hold; he deceives people with his outward garb.

How can such a hypocrite serve Hari? He has never known genuine devotion. Says Tuka, how can such a one become a saint when his mind is polluted with lust and anger?

IN PLAIN WORDS

He has smeared a stone with jaggery and set it out; on the surface it looks fine, fit for the world's customs. But inside, the madness for sense-pleasure has gripped him; with his outward dress he fools the people. How can such a fraud do the service of Hari? He has never once known true devotion. Tuka says: how can such a man become a saint, when his heart is fouled with lust and anger?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips the disguise off religious pretense. His image is a plain stone coated in jaggery: sweet and respectable on the outside, worthless within. So with the hypocrite whose pious costume hides a mind eaten by craving; the costume deceives the crowd but not the truth. The saint asks plainly how such a man could serve Hari or be counted a saint while lust and anger still pollute his heart. The criticism is aimed at the pattern of outward show over inner cleanness, and it presses the listener to ask whether his own piety is more than a coating.

GATHA 4086

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the squandered birth

मराठी मूळ

आयुष्य वेचूनि कुटुंब पोसिलें । काय हित केलें सांग बापा ॥१॥
 फुकाचा चाकर जालासी काबाडी । नाहीं सुख घडी भोगावया ॥२॥
 दुर्लभ मनुष्यजन्म कष्टें पावलासी । दिला कुटुंबासी कामभोग ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसें आयुष्य नासिलें । पाप तें सांचिलें पतनासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You spent your entire life nourishing your family; tell me, father, what good did it do you? You became a free laborer, a drudge, without a moment's happiness to enjoy. This rare human birth you won through great effort, and you gave it over to family and sensual pleasure.

Says Tuka, you have squandered your lifespan like this, only heaping up sin to hasten your fall.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You spent your whole life feeding your family; tell me, father, what good did it do you? You became a free servant, a drudge, without one hour of happiness to enjoy. This rare human birth you won with great pain, and you handed it over to family and the pleasures of the body. Tuka says: you have wasted your lifespan this way, only piling up the sin that hastens your fall.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confronts a man at the end of an ordinary working life. He spent every year of it providing for his household, and the saint asks him bluntly what he gained for himself: nothing but the lot of an unpaid drudge, with no real happiness in it. The stakes are the birth itself. A human life, hard to obtain, is the one chance to seek God, and this man traded it for family duty and bodily pleasure. The verse is a shaking-awake: a life poured out only on the world is not merely empty but actively ruinous, heaping up the consequences that drag the soul down.

GATHA 4087

The Saints

Saints, become one to find one

मराठी मूळ

अनंत लक्षणें वाणितां अपार । संताचें तें घर सांपडेना ॥१॥
 जये घरीं संत राहती आपण । तें तुह्मां ठिकाण आतुडेना ॥२॥
 ठिकाण धरुनी पाहवे ते संत । उगा च अकांत करुं नये ॥३॥
 संत होऊनियां संतांसी पाहावें । तरि च तरावें तुका ह्मणे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The virtues of the saints are infinite and beyond description; their true dwelling cannot be found. The place where saints choose to reside is beyond your reach.

Hold firmly to your own ground and seek out the saints from there; do not make a pointless commotion. Says Tuka, one must become a saint oneself in order to truly see the saints, and only then can one be saved.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The marks of the saints are endless, beyond all telling; their true house cannot be found. The place where the saints themselves live, you will not stumble upon. Hold your own ground and look for the saints from there; do not raise a pointless commotion. Tuka says: you must become a saint yourself to truly see the saints, and only then are you carried across.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says the saints cannot be located the way one finds a house on a map; their qualities are beyond counting and their real dwelling is not a place you can blunder into. So the seeker's frantic searching outside is a pointless commotion. The instruction is to hold steady on your own inner ground and seek from there. The deep claim comes last: like is recognized by like, so you can only truly see a saint by becoming one yourself, and it is that inner transformation, not the finding of an address, that ferries you across.

GATHA 4088

Longing and Separation

Longing, sleepless for the Name

मराठी मूळ

संतांचा पढीयावो कैशापरि लाहो । नामाचा आठवो कैसा राहे ॥१॥
 हे चि थोर चिंता लागली मनासी । निजतां निद्रेसी न लगे डोळा ॥२॥
 जेवितां जेवणीं न लगे गोड धड । वाटतें काबाड विषयसुख ॥३॥
 ऐसिया संकटीं पाव कृपानिधी । लावीं संतपदीं प्रेमभावं ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मीं नेणों कांहीं हित । तुजविण अनाथ पांडुरंगा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How may I earn the companionship of saints? How may the remembrance of the Name stay with me always? This great anxiety has seized my mind; even at night, sleep does not come. While eating, nothing tastes good; sensory pleasure feels like drudgery.

In such distress, come to my rescue, O treasure of mercy, and attach me to the feet of saints with bonds of love. Says Tuka, I know nothing of what is good for me. Without You, I am an orphan, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How am I to win the company of the saints? How can the remembrance of the Name stay with me always? This one great anxiety has seized my mind; when I lie down, sleep will not come to my eyes. At meals nothing tastes sweet or right; the pleasures of the senses feel like drudgery. In such distress, come to my rescue, treasure of mercy; bind me to the feet of the saints with love. Tuka says: I know nothing of what is good for me. Without You I am an orphan, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the cry of holy longing turned inward as restlessness. Tukaram cannot rest until he gains the company of saints and a remembrance of the Name that never slips; the wanting keeps him from sleep and takes the savor out of food, while ordinary pleasures now feel like a burden. He turns the whole ache into a prayer, asking the merciful Lord to rescue him and tie him with love to the saints' feet. The closing confession names the stakes honestly: he does not even know what is truly good for him, and without Panduranga he is simply an orphan, helpless and unclaimed.

GATHA 4089

The Saints

Pandhari, the leveling of caste

मराठी मूळ

पंढरीचा वास धन्य ते चि प्राणी । अमृताची वाणी दिव्य देहो ॥१॥
 मूढ मतिहीन दुष्ट अविचारी । ते होती पंढरी दयारूप ॥२॥
 शांति क्षमा अंगीं विरक्ति सकळ । नैराश्य निर्मळ नारी नर ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं वर्णा अभिमान । अवघे जीवनमुक्त लोक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Blessed are those souls who dwell in Pandhari. Their speech is nectar and their bodies are divine.

Even the dull, the dim-witted, the wicked, and the thoughtless become forms of compassion in Pandhari. Serenity, forgiveness, detachment, and purity fill their beings, both men and women.

Says Tuka, there is no pride of caste among them. All are living liberated souls.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Blessed are the souls who live in Pandhari. Their speech is nectar; their bodies are divine. Even the dull, the dim-witted, the wicked, the thoughtless, in Pandhari they become forms of mercy. Peace and forgiveness fill their bodies. The women and the men are pure, and they want nothing. Tuka says: among them there is no pride of caste. All of them are people set free while still alive.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming what the holy ground of Pandhari does to the people who live in it. He says the place itself remakes them: even the dull and the cruel are turned into forms of compassion, their bodies divine and their speech sweet as nectar. He fills them with peace, forgiveness, purity, and the freedom of wanting nothing. The sharp claim sits in the last line: among these people there is no pride of caste, and every one of them, woman or man, is already liberated, not after death but now, alive. The pull of Pandhari dissolves the very rankings the world lives by.

GATHA 4090

The Necessity of Experience

Knowledge versus lived experience

मराठी मूळ

देखीचें तें ज्ञान करावें तें काई । अनुभव नाही आपणासी ॥1॥
 इंद्रियांचे गोडी ठकलीं बहुतें । सोडितां मागुतें आवरेना ॥धु.॥
 युक्तीचा आहार नीतीचा वेव्हार । वैराग्य तें सार तरावया ॥2॥
 नाव रेवाळतां घाला घाली वारा । तैसा तो पसारा अहंतेचा ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे बुद्ध आपुले अधीन । करी नारायण आतुडे तों ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Of what use is knowledge gained only from observation, without personal experience? Many have been deceived by the allure of the senses; once released, they cannot be reined in again. A measured diet, righteous conduct, and detachment are the essentials for crossing over.

When a boat is rocked, the wind strikes blow after blow; such is the storm of egoism. Says Tuka, keep the intellect under your own control and strive until Narayana is attained.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What use is the knowledge you get only from watching, when you have no experience of your own? The sweetness of the senses has cheated many. Once you let it loose, it will not be reined in again. A measured diet, honest dealing, dispassion: these are what carry you across. When a boat is rocked, the wind strikes it blow on blow. The sprawl of the ego is just like that. Tuka says: keep your mind under your own command, and strive until Narayana is reached.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is drawing a hard line between knowing about the path and walking it. Knowledge gathered by watching others is useless, he says, if you have no experience of your own; many have been deceived by the pleasure of the senses, which cannot be reined back once let loose. What actually carries a person across is plain and practical: a measured diet, honest conduct, and dispassion. He pictures the ego as a wind battering a rocked boat, blow after blow. So he ends with the instruction: keep your own mind under your control, and do not stop striving until Narayana himself is reached.

GATHA 4091

Prayers

Prayer, all beings are God

मराठी मूळ

नर नारी बाळें अवघा नारायण । ऐसें माझें मन करीं देवा ॥१॥
 न यो काम क्रोध द्वेष निंदा द्वंद । अवघा गोविंद निःसंदेह ॥२॥
 करोनियां साहए पुरवीं मनोरथ । व्हावें कृपावंत तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Men, women, and children are all Narayana; make my mind see this, O Lord. Let neither lust, anger, hatred, slander, nor conflict arise in me; let everything be Govinda beyond all doubt.

Be my ally, fulfill my chitta's desire, and be gracious to me. Says Tuka, this is my prayer.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Men, women, children: all of them are Narayana. Make my mind see this, O God. Let no lust, no anger, no hatred, no slander, no quarrel rise in me. Let everything be Govinda, with no doubt left. Be my help; fulfill the longing of my heart. Be gracious to me, Tuka says.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is asking God for a single change of sight: that he may see Narayana in every person, in men, women, and children alike. He knows he cannot manage this on his own, so he prays for the mind itself to be remade. The plea is double: clear out lust, anger, hatred, slander, and quarrel, and let everything without exception appear as Govinda, beyond any doubt. He closes by asking God to be his ally, to fulfill his heart's one desire, and to show him grace. The whole abhanga is a request to be given the eyes that see God everywhere.

GATHA 4092

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the flatterer who forgets God

मराठी मूळ

आपुल्या पोटासाठीं । करी लोकांचिया गोष्टी ॥१॥
 जेणें घातलें संसारीं । विसरला तो चि हरी ॥२॥
 पोटा घातलें अन्न । न ह्मणे पतितपावन ॥३॥
 मी कोठील आणि कोण । हें न कळे ज्यालागून ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे नरस्तुति । करितो भाट त्रिजगतीं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For the sake of his own belly, he gossips about others. He has forgotten Hari, the very one who placed him in this world.

When food is placed in his belly, he does not even say 'Purifier of the Fallen.' He does not know who he is or where he came from. Says Tuka, he goes about praising mortals like a court bard in all three worlds.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For the sake of his own belly, he tells tales about other people. The very Hari who placed him in this world, that one he has forgotten. Food goes into his belly, and he never says, Purifier of the fallen. Who he is, where he came from: this he does not know. Tuka says: he goes about praising mortals like a court bard, through all three worlds.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing the man who lives by flattering others for his own gain. To fill his belly he gossips and tells tales, and in doing so he has forgotten the very Hari who put him into this life. He eats his food without once naming the Lord, the Purifier of the fallen; he has no idea who he is or where he came from. Tukaram fixes the pattern in a single image: such a man is a court bard, wandering the three worlds singing the praises of mere mortals instead of God. The warning is for anyone who spends their voice on flattering people while staying silent toward the One who gave them everything.

GATHA 4093

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the empty preacher

मराठी मूळ

स्वयें आपण चि रिता । रडे पुढिलांच्या हिता ॥१॥
 सेकीं हें ना तेंसें जालें । बोलणें तितुकें वायां गेलें ॥२॥
 सुखसागरीं नेघे वस्ती । अंगीं ज्ञानपणाची मस्ती ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे गाढव लेखा । जेथें भेटेल तेथें ठोका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He himself is empty within, yet he weeps for the welfare of others. In the end, neither this nor that was accomplished; all his words went to waste.

He will not take up residence in the ocean of bliss, yet he parades the arrogance of spiritual knowledge. Says Tuka, count him a donkey. Wherever you find him, give him a good thrashing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He himself is empty inside, yet he weeps over the good of others. In the end it came to neither this nor that; all his talking went to waste. He will not take up his dwelling in the ocean of bliss, yet he wears the swagger of spiritual knowing. Tuka says: count him a donkey. Wherever you meet him, give him a good thrashing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is unmasking the man who preaches to others while empty within himself. He weeps and worries over everyone else's welfare, but has nothing inside, so in the end nothing comes of it and all his words are wasted. He refuses to actually dwell in the ocean of bliss that he talks about, yet he carries himself with the arrogance of one

who knows. The blunt last line is satire aimed at the posture, not the person: such a one is no better than a donkey, and the swagger deserves to be beaten out of it. The point turns back on us: do not parade a knowing you have not lived.

GATHA 4094

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the renunciant for fame

मराठी मूळ

जर्गी कीतिन व्हावी । ह्मणोनी जालासी गोसावी ॥१॥
 बहुत केलें पाठांतर । वर्म राहिलेंसे दूर ॥२॥
 चित्तीं नाहीं अनुताप । लटिकें भगवें स्वरूप ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You became a renunciant so that you might gain fame in the world. You have memorized much, but the essence remains far away.

There is no remorse in your chitta; your saffron robes are a lie.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You became a renunciant so the world would give you fame. You memorized a great deal, but the heart of it stayed far away. There is no remorse in your mind. Your saffron robe is a lie.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is confronting the person who took up renunciation as a way to be admired. He says it plainly: you put on the holy life for fame, not for God. You have memorized scriptures and recitations by the heap, yet the essence, the inner point of it all, has stayed far from you. Without true remorse in the mind, the outer dress means nothing. So he calls the saffron robe itself a lie, because the costume of holiness is worn over an unchanged heart. The reproach asks each of us whether our outer marks of devotion match anything inside.

GATHA 4095

Worldly Metaphors

The seal of Vithoba over caste

मराठी मूळ

प्राक्तनाच्या योगें आळशावरी गंगा । स्नान काय जगा करूं नये ॥१॥
 उभी कामधेनु मागिलें अंगणीं । तिसी काय ब्राह्मणीं वंदूं नये ॥२॥
 कोडियाचे हातें परिसें होय सोनें । अपवित्र ह्मणोन घेऊं नये ॥३॥
 यातिहीन जाला गांवींचा मोकासी । त्याच्या वचनासी मानूं नये ॥४॥
 भावारूढ तुका मुद्रा विठोबाची । न मनी तयांचीं तोंडें काळीं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If the Ganga flows toward a lazy man by destiny, should one not bathe in it? If a wish-fulfilling cow stands in the backyard, should a Brahmin not bow to it? If a touchstone turns something to gold in a leper's hand, should one refuse it as impure? If a of lowly station man becomes the village headman, should his command not be obeyed? Says Tuka, the seal of Vithoba is upon me, borne aloft by faith. Those who refuse to honor it have blackened faces.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If by destiny the Ganga flows up to a lazy man, should the world not bathe in it? If the wish-granting cow stands in the back courtyard, should a Brahmin not bow to her? If gold is made by a touchstone held in a leper's hand, should you refuse it as impure? If a man of low birth becomes the headman of the village, should his word not be obeyed? Tuka says: the seal of Vithoba is set on me, and faith holds me up. Those who will not honor it, their faces are blackened.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up four cases to break the rule that worth follows birth or status. If the Ganga reaches even a lazy man, the wish-cow stands in a back yard, a touchstone turns iron to gold in a leper's hand, or a low-born man rises to headman, the gift and the authority are real no matter the vessel that carries them; only a fool refuses them as impure. He turns this on himself: the seal of Vithoba is stamped on him and faith lifts him up, so his own low standing in the world's eyes counts for nothing. The closing line says those who scorn that mark for the sake of his birth are the ones disgraced, their faces blackened. Honor the divine wherever it appears, not the social label on the one who bears it.

GATHA 4096

Faith and Trust

Faith, the child's claim on God

मराठी मूळ

बोलिलों उत्कर्षा । प्रेमरस दाशत्वे ॥१॥
 साच करिता नारायण । जया शरण गेलों तो ॥२॥
 समर्थ तो आहे ऐसा । धरिली इच्छा पुरवी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे लडिवाळाचें । द्यावें साचें करुनियां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have spoken boldly, intoxicated by the devotion of servitude. Narayana, to whom I have surrendered, makes it all come true.

He is powerful enough to fulfill every desire one holds. Says Tuka, the longing of a loving child must be fulfilled in earnest.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have spoken boldly, drunk on the sweetness of being his servant. Narayana, the one to whom I surrendered, makes my words come true. He is strong enough for this; the desire I held, he fulfills it. Tuka says: what a fondly loved child asks for must be made to come true.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is owning his bold speech and naming where its confidence comes from. He has spoken out daringly, drunk on the joy of being God's servant, and he is sure Narayana, the one he surrendered to, will make his words come good. The ground of that certainty is simple: God is powerful enough to fulfill any longing held before him. The closing image is intimate and almost demanding: a beloved child's wish has to be granted. Tukaram claims exactly that footing with God, the trusting boldness of a child who knows the parent will not refuse.

GATHA 4097

The Nature of God

The Name, his power over death

मराठी मूळ

विचा केला ठोबा । ह्यणोनि नांव तो विठोबा ॥१॥
 कां रे नेणां त्याचें नांव । काय वेदासि नाहीं ठाव ॥२॥
 शेष स्तुती प्रवर्तला । जिह्वा चिरुनि पलंग जाला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे सत्ता । ज्याची काळाचिये माथा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He stood upon a brick, and so His name became Vithoba. Why do you not know His name? Is there no place for it in the Vedas? Shesha began to praise Him, splitting his tongue into a thousand hoods.

Says Tuka, His authority reigns even over the head of Death.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He made his stand on a brick, and so his name became Vithoba. Why do you not know his name? Is there no place for it in the Vedas? Shesha set about praising him, and split his tongue into many hoods. Tuka says: his rule reaches even to the head of Death.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is teaching the Name and the greatness behind it. He recalls the story that the Lord stood waiting on a brick at Pandhari, and from that his name became Vithoba; then he challenges the listener, how can you not know this name, when even the Vedas hold a place for it? He says the serpent Shesha exhausted himself in praise until his tongue split into many hoods, an image of praise that can never finish. The closing claim is the largest: this Lord's authority reaches over the very head of Death. The Name we treat as small carries power that nothing, not even death, stands above.

GATHA 4098

*The Necessity of Experience**Self-knowledge cannot be told, only shared*

मराठी मूळ

भ्रतारअंगसंगें सुखाची वेवस्था । आधीं तों सांगतां नये कोणा ॥१॥
 तथापि सांगणें कुमारिकेपाशीं । ते काय मानसीं सुख मानी ॥२॥
 तैसा आत्मबोध आधीं बोलों नये । बोलासी तो काय सांपडेल ॥३॥
 तथापि सांगणें बहिर्मुखापाशीं । तो काय संतोषासी मूळ होय ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे संत सुखाचे विभागी । ब्रह्मानंद जर्गी साधुरूपें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The bliss of union with one's beloved cannot be described beforehand to anyone. Yet even when one tells an unmarried girl about it, does she truly feel that joy in her heart? In the same way, the knowledge of the Self should not be spoken of prematurely; can it be captured in words alone? Even so, telling an outward-facing person about it will not make him the source of true contentment.

Says Tuka, the saints share in the bliss of the Self; Brahmananda walks the world in the form of holy beings.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The joy of union with one's beloved cannot be described beforehand to anyone. Even if you tell it to an unmarried girl, does she feel that joy in her heart? In the same way, the knowledge of the Self should not be spoken of before its time. Can it be caught in words at all? And even if you tell an outward-turned person, will that make him the source of true contentment? Tuka says: the saints share in this joy of the Self. The bliss of Brahman walks the world in the form of the holy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is explaining why the knowledge of the Self cannot simply be handed over in speech. He uses a frank human comparison: the bliss of union with one's beloved cannot be told in advance, and describing it to an unmarried girl gives her no taste of it. Self-knowledge is the same; it should not be spoken of prematurely, and words can never truly hold it, least of all for a person whose attention is turned outward. So where does it actually pass from one to another? In the company of the saints, who themselves share in that bliss. He ends with the point of the whole poem: the joy of Brahman does not live only in scripture but moves through the world in living, holy people, and that is where it is caught.

GATHA 4099

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the lawlessness of the age

मराठी मूळ

कलयुगामाजी थोर जालें बंड । नष्ट लोक लंड जाले फार ॥1॥
 न धरिती सोय न पुसती कोणा । येतें जैसें मना तैसें चाले ॥ध्रु॥
 सज्जनाचा वारा टेकें नेदी द्वारा । ऐसिया पामरा तारी कोण ॥2॥
 विश्वास तयाचा बैसेना कोठें ही । स्तुति निंदा पाहीं जीवीं धरी ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे कैसें केलें नारायणें । जाणावें हें कोणें तयाविण ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the Kali Yuga, great disorder has arisen. Wicked and brazen people have multiplied.

They follow no guidance and ask no one; they act on whatever enters their minds. They will not let the breeze of a good person touch their door; who can save such wretches? Trust cannot be placed in them anywhere; they cherish both praise and blame equally.

Says Tuka, how strange is this creation of Narayana. Who but He can understand it?

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the Kali age a great disorder has risen up. Wicked and brazen people have grown many. They keep to no right way and ask no one; whatever comes into the mind, that is how they go. They will not let the breeze of a good man touch their door. Who can carry such wretches across? No trust will settle on them anywhere; they hold praise and blame as one and the same in their hearts. Tuka says: what a thing Narayana has made. Who but he could understand it?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is lamenting the moral chaos he sees in the present age. He describes people grown wicked and shameless in great numbers, who follow no settled way and consult no one, acting only on whatever impulse rises in the mind. They will not even let the breeze of a good person reach their door, shutting out the one influence that might save them; trust cannot rest on them, and they treat praise and blame as equal, indifferent to either. The point lands on self-examination: these are not distant monsters but the patterns of a heart closed to good company and ungoverned by any inner standard. Tukaram hands the riddle back to God, wondering how such a creation came to be and admitting that only Narayana can understand it.

GATHA 4100

Worldly Metaphors

Social criticism, the man who steals credit

मराठी मूळ

आपुली बुटबुट घ्यावी । माझी परताप घ्यावी ॥1॥
 आपुला मंत्र नव्हे बरा । माझा बईल चुकला मोरा ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐशा नरा । परिस न झोंबे खापरा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He wants to keep his own faults to himself and have my accomplishments credited to him. His own mantra does not work, yet he says my bull missed the peacock.

Says Tuka, a touchstone will not cling to a potsherd, no matter what such a man does.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He wants to keep his own faults to himself and have my good work handed over to him. His own charm does not work, yet he says my bull missed the peacock. Tuka says: with a man like this, a touchstone will not cling to a potsherd.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing the man who hoards his own faults while claiming another's merit. He keeps his shortcomings hidden and tries to have Tukaram's accomplishments credited to himself; his own efforts come to nothing, yet he turns and blames Tukaram for missing the mark. The closing proverb names the pattern: a touchstone will not cling to a broken shard of clay. Just as a touchstone cannot turn worthless pottery into gold, no real worth will fasten onto a man of this character, however he postures. The warning is against the habit of grabbing credit and shifting blame, which leaves a person unchanged no matter what he claims.

GATHA 4101

True Worship

The Name, fearless kirtan

मराठी मूळ

भावभक्तिवादे करावें कीर्तन । आशाबधी मन करुं नये ॥1॥
 अन्न पाणी धन द्रव्य नारायण । विठ्ठला वांचून बोलूं नये ॥धु॥
 सप्रेम करावें देवाचें कीर्तन । भय द्या सोडून शरीराचें ॥2॥
 तरी मग जोडे विठ्ठलनिधान । केलिया कीर्तन सिद्ध पावे ॥3॥
 देव जोडिलिया तया काय उणें । तुका ह्मणे मन धीट करा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Perform kirtan with sincere devotion and feeling. Do not let the mind become bound by desire.

Food, water, wealth, and riches are all Narayana; speak of nothing but Vitthal. Perform God's kirtan with genuine love, abandoning all fear for the body.

Then the treasure of Vitthal is won; kirtan performed this way reaches perfection. Says Tuka, when God is won, what can be lacking? Make your mind bold.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sing kirtan with sincere feeling and love. Do not let your mind be bound by desire. Food, water, wealth, and riches: all of it is Narayana. Speak of nothing but Vitthal. Sing God's kirtan with love, and let go of all fear for the body. Then the treasure of Vitthal is won; kirtan done this way reaches its fulfillment. When God is won, what could be lacking? Tuka says: make your mind bold.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out how kirtan is to be done and what it asks of you. Sing with real feeling, not with a mind hooked on what you want, and treat everything you depend on, food and water and money, as Narayana, while letting your speech rest on Vitthal alone. The hard turn is the body: love must drop its fear for it, because clinging to the body keeps the mind small. Do this and the whole treasure is yours, and with God won, nothing is left to lack. So his last word is not gentle but a command to the timid heart: make your mind bold.

GATHA 4102

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, merit ripens the mind

मराठी मूळ

चोरासी चांदणें वेश्येसी सेजार । परिसेंसी खापर काय होय ॥१॥
दुधाचे आधणीं वैरिले पाषाण । कदा काळीं जाण पाकनव्हे ॥२॥
तुका ह्याने जरि पूर्वपुण्यें िसिद्ध । तरि च राहे बिद्ध संतसंगीं॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Moonlight is wasted on a thief, and a courtesan's bed on a potsherd; a touchstone cannot change a potsherd into gold. Stones placed in boiling milk will never cook, no matter how long you wait.

Says Tuka, only if past merit is ripe does the mind come to rest in the company of saints.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Moonlight is wasted on a thief. A courtesan's bed is wasted on a potsherd. A touchstone cannot turn a potsherd into gold. Put stones in boiling milk and they will never cook, however long you wait. Tuka says: only if past merit is ripe does the mind come to rest in the company of saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strings together images of the wrong thing meeting the wrong receiver: light on a thief who fears it, a touchstone helpless against a potsherd, stones that will not soften in milk. The point is that the best gift does nothing if the one receiving it has no capacity to take it in. He then turns this to the inner life: keeping company with saints is the same kind of gift, and the mind only settles there when something in you is already ripe. He calls that ripeness past merit, naming a sober truth that the receiver, not just the giver, decides whether grace lands.

GATHA 4103

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, teaching wasted on the fool

मराठी मूळ

रोगिया मिष्टान्न मर्कटा चंदन । कागासी लेपन कर्पूराचें ॥१॥
निर्नासिका जैसा नावडे आरिसा । मूर्खालागीं तैसा शास्त्रबोध ॥२॥
दास तुका ह्मणे विठ्ठलउदारे । अज्ञानअंधारें दूरी केलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Rich food is wasted on a sick man, sandalwood on a monkey, and a camphor paste on a crow. A mirror is hateful to one who has lost his nose; so too is scriptural teaching to a fool.

Says Tuka, the generous Vitthal has driven away the darkness of ignorance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Rich food is wasted on a sick man. Sandalwood is wasted on a monkey. Camphor paste is wasted on a crow. A mirror is hateful to a man who has lost his nose. So is scriptural teaching to a fool. Tuka, the servant, says: the generous Vitthal has driven away the darkness of ignorance.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up images of good things offered to those who cannot use them, ending with the sharpest one: a mirror hated by the man with no nose, because it only shows him what he lacks. To the fool, scripture is the same; its teaching only irritates, since he has no eye to receive it. The point is aimed at a pattern, the closed mind that resents the very thing that could free it, not at sneering. Tukaram then turns it on himself in gratitude: he was that darkness, and the generous Vitthal drove it away.

GATHA 4104

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, guard the essence

मराठी मूळ

मथनासाठीं धर्माधर्म । त्याचें वर्म नवनीत ॥१॥
तें चि तें घाटूं नये । आलें जाय नासूनि ॥२॥
सांभाळावें वरावर । वर्म दूर न वजावें ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे घालें पोट । मग बोटचांचणी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Dharma and adharma are like the churning; the butter is their inner essence. That essence should not be handled carelessly; it spoils if it comes and goes.

Guard it carefully, layer upon layer; do not let the essence drift far. Says Tuka, first fill the belly, then pick at the crumbs.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Dharma and adharma are like the churning. The butter is their inner essence. That essence should not be handled carelessly; it comes and it spoils. Guard it carefully, layer upon layer. Do not let the essence drift far. Tuka says: first fill the belly, then pick at the crumbs.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the churning of milk as a picture of weighing right and wrong: the labor of sorting dharma from adharma yields one fine thing, the butter, which is the real essence underneath. That essence is delicate; handle it roughly and it spoils, so it must be kept close and guarded, never allowed to drift out of reach. His closing image is homely and practical: take the substantial nourishment first, then bother with the scraps. The teaching is to seize and protect the core truth and not lose it in fussing over the details around it.

GATHA 4105

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, all in Your hands

मराठी मूळ

माझा घात पात अथवा हित फार । अवघा विचार तुझ्या हातीं ॥१॥
 ठेवुनि जीव भाव तुझ्या ठायीं चित्त । राहिलों निवांत पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 चित्ताचा चाळक बुद्धीचा जनिता । काय नाहीं सत्ता तुझे हातीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय करिसी तें पाहीन । ठेविसी राहीन सुखें तेथें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My ruin or my great welfare, every consideration is in Your hands. Having placed my life, my devotion, and my mind in You, I remain at peace, O Panduranga.

You are the mover of the mind and the father of the intellect; is there anything beyond Your power? Says Tuka, I will watch whatever You do with me. Wherever You place me, I will stay there happily.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My ruin or my great good: every reckoning of it is in Your hands. I have placed my life, my devotion, and my mind in You, and I rest at peace, O Panduranga. You are the one who moves the mind and fathers the intellect. Is anything beyond Your power? Tuka says: I will watch whatever You do with me. Wherever You place me, I will stay there happily.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a poem of handing everything over. Tukaram says his harm and his welfare alike are no longer his to manage; the whole accounting belongs to Panduranga, and having given his life, his feeling, and his mind, he can finally rest. His reason is that God already runs the very mind and intellect that would otherwise do the worrying, so nothing lies outside that power. The result is a settled trust without conditions: he will simply watch what God does and stay content wherever he is placed. The peace is not passive resignation but the relief of a mind that has stopped fighting for control.

GATHA 4106

The Saints

The saints, dust as holy water

मराठी मूळ

संतपाउलें साजिरीं । गंगा आली आह्मांवरी ॥१॥
 जेथें पडे रजधुळी । तेथें करावी अंघोळी ॥२॥
 स्वेतबंद वाराणसी। अवघीं तीर्थों तयापासीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धन्य जालों । संतसागरीं मिळालों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The beautiful feet of the saints have brought the Ganga flowing over us. Wherever the dust of their feet falls, there one should bathe.

The holy city of Varanasi, and all the sacred waters, reside near them. Says Tuka, blessed am I, for I have merged into the ocean of the saints.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The beautiful feet of the saints have brought the Ganga flowing over us. Wherever the dust of their feet falls, there one should bathe. Varanasi and all the holy waters live near them. Tuka says: blessed am I, for I have merged into the ocean of the saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the geography of pilgrimage inside out. The sacred river does not wait at a distant place; it flows wherever the saints walk, so the true bathing ground is the dust of their feet right here. Varanasi and every holy water already dwell beside them, which means the company of the saints is itself the pilgrimage. He ends in plain gratitude: to be among them is not to visit the ocean but to dissolve into it. The claim is that nearness to living holy people outweighs any famous shrine.

GATHA 4107

Faith and Trust

Faith, God as parent

मराठी मूळ

न घडे मायबापें बाळकाचा घात । आपणादेखत होऊं नेदी ॥१॥
 कां मी मनीं चिंता वाहूं भय धाक । काय नव्हे एक करितां तुज ॥२॥
 वर्म जाणे त्याच्या हिताचे उपाय । तान भूक वाहे कडिये खांदीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तूं गा कृपावंत भारी । ऐसें मज हरी कळों आलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A mother and father would never harm their child; they would not let harm come even before their own eyes. Then why should I carry worry, fear, and dread in my mind? Is anything impossible for You? A parent knows the remedies for the child's welfare, carrying its hunger and thirst upon hip and shoulder.

Says Tuka, You are exceedingly compassionate, O Hari. This I have come to understand.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A mother and father would never harm their child. They would not let harm come to it before their own eyes. So why should I carry worry, fear, and dread in my mind? Is anything impossible for You? A parent knows the remedies for the child's welfare, and carries its hunger and thirst on hip and shoulder. Tuka says: You are exceedingly compassionate, O Hari. This I have come to understand.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram argues himself out of fear by picturing God as a parent. No mother or father lets their child come to harm in front of them, so his own dread is misplaced and even insulting to that care. He notes that a parent not only protects but knows the cure for what ails the child and carries its hunger and thirst as its own. The point is that anxiety is faithlessness; it acts as if God were less attentive than an ordinary parent. His conclusion is quiet certainty: he has come to understand that Hari's compassion is greater than he feared, so the worry can be set down.

GATHA 4108

The Power of the Name

The Name, the sword of peace

मराठी मूळ

करावें कीर्तन । मुखीं गावे हरिचे गुण ॥१॥
मग कांहीं नव्हे बाधा । काम दुर्जनाच्या क्रोधा ॥२॥
शांतिखड्ग हातीं । काळासी ते नागविती ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे दाता सखा । ऐसा अनंतासारखा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Perform kirtan and sing the virtues of Hari. Then no harm can come from lust, the wicked, or anger.

Those who hold the sword of peace in hand can outwit even Death. Says Tuka, there is no friend and benefactor like the Infinite One.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sing kirtan, and let your mouth sing the virtues of Hari. Then no harm can come to you, not from lust, not from the wicked, not from anger. Those who hold the sword of peace in hand strip even Death of its power. Tuka says: there is no giver and friend like the Infinite One.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes the Name a defense. Once the mouth is busy singing Hari's praises, the usual attackers, lust, wicked people, and anger, find no opening to wound you. He gives the singer a paradoxical weapon: a sword of peace, which disarms even Death, the one enemy no ordinary blade can touch. The stakes are large: kirtan is not decoration but protection against everything that ruins a life. He closes by naming why this works, that the Infinite One is a friend and giver beyond any other, so leaning on that Name is the safest stance there is.

GATHA 4109

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, glory beyond writing

मराठी मूळ

तुझी कीर्ती सांगों तुजपुढें जरी । ब्रह्मांडीं ही हरी माईना ते ॥१॥
 मेरुची लेखणी सागराची शाई । कागद हा मही न पुरे चि ॥२॥
 अनंत अपार आपंगिले भक्त । माझें चि संचित ओडवेना ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझां बोल नाहीं देवा । पामरें म्यां सेवा केली नाहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If I were to recount Your glory before You, O Hari, even the universe could not contain it. If Mount Meru were the pen, the ocean the ink, and the earth the paper, still it would not suffice.

Countless devotees have You embraced; only my own accumulated merit falls short. Says Tuka, there is no fault in You, O God. It is this pitiable one who has failed to serve You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If I tried to recount Your glory to Your face, O Hari, the whole universe could not hold it. If Mount Meru were the pen, the ocean the ink, and the earth the paper, even that would not be enough. You have taken in countless, boundless devotees; only my own store of merit falls short. Tuka says: there is no fault in You, O God. It is this poor wretch who has not served You.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reaches for the largest measures he can name, the universe, Meru as a pen, the ocean as ink, and finds them all too small to write God's glory. Against that boundlessness he sets a single shortfall, and he is careful to locate it correctly. God has gathered in countless devotees without limit; if Tukaram has not been gathered, the lack is not in God's reach but in his own thin store of merit. So he refuses to blame heaven for any distance he feels. The fault, he insists, is entirely his own failure to serve, a deliberate humility that keeps the door open rather than shutting it in resentment.

GATHA 4110

The Nature of God

Nature of God, grace over effort

मराठी मूळ

काय साधनाच्या कोटी । केल्या आटी होती त्या॥१॥
 देव कृपा करी जरी । होय उजरी स्वरूपीं ॥ध्रु॥
 केले होते चिंता श्रम । उपरम न होतां ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे कळों आलें । सर्व जालें आपरूप ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What use are millions of spiritual practices and strivings? If God is gracious, illumination dawns within the Self. All the anxiety and labor one has endured come to rest only when He grants His grace.

Says Tuka, now I understand: everything has become a revelation of the Self.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What use are millions of practices and strivings? They only wear you out. If God shows grace, the light dawns within the Self. All the worry and the labor went on without rest until then. Tuka says: now I understand. Everything has become the Self's own form.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram weighs effort against grace and finds effort, by itself, exhausting and empty. Countless disciplines only grind a person down; the actual opening, the light within, comes when God is gracious. He admits that all his own anxiety and toil never came to rest while he was relying on them. The realization that ends the poem reframes everything: once grace dawns, he sees that all of it, the whole world, was always the Self's own form. The point is not that practice is worthless but that it cannot manufacture what only grace reveals.

GATHA 4111

The Power of the Name

The Name, the song enough

मराठी मूळ

तुज काय करुं मज एक सार । अमृतसागर नाम तुझें ॥१॥
 काय येणें उणें आह्मां तयापोटीं । गोवितां हे कंठीं कामधेनु ॥ध्रु॥
 नोळखे तानुलें माय ऐसी कोण । वोरसे देखून शोक त्याचा ॥२॥
 जो नाहीं देखिला याचक नयनीं । तो पावे घेउनि लज्जा दान ॥३॥
 नामासाठीं प्राण सांडियेला रणीं । शूर ते भांडणीं न फिरती ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी गातां गीतीं भला । भेटूनी विठ्ठला काय चाड ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What shall I offer You? I have one treasure: Your name, an ocean of nectar. What could be lacking when we tie this wish-fulfilling cow to our necks? What kind of mother does not recognize her hungry child? She overflows with milk upon seeing its distress.

He who has never seen a supplicant before His eyes gives with such bashful generosity. Warriors who gave their lives on the battlefield for the sake of the Name never turned back.

Says Tuka, when we sing Your songs so well, what further need is there to meet Vitthal in person?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What shall I give You? I have one treasure: Your name, an ocean of nectar. What could we lack with this wish-granting cow tied at our throat? What mother does not know her hungry child? She overflows with milk the moment she sees its distress. He who never saw a beggar before His eyes gives, and gives bashfully. Warriors who threw away their lives in battle for the Name never turned back. Tuka says: when we sing Your songs well, what need is left to meet Vitthal in person?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks what a poor man could possibly offer God and answers that he already holds the one treasure, the Name, an ocean of nectar and a wish-granting cow worn at the throat. He stacks up reasons it is enough: God responds like a mother whose milk lets down at the mere sight of her child's hunger, giving even before being asked and almost shy in His generosity. He recalls warriors who died for the Name and never retreated, showing how total a hold it can take. The startling close is his claim that singing the songs well makes meeting Vitthal in the flesh almost beside the point, because the Name already delivers the whole of God.

GATHA 4112

Autobiography

Autobiography, the saints lifted me

मराठी मूळ

कृपेचे सागर हे साधुजन । तिहीं कृपादान केलें मज॥1॥
 बोंबडे वाणीचा केला अंगीकार । तेणें माझा िस्थर केला जीव ॥२॥
 तेणें सुखें मन िस्थर जालें ठायीं । संतीं दिला पायीं ठाव मज ॥३॥
 नाभी नाभी ऐसें बोलिलों वचन । तें माझें कल्याण सर्वस्व ही ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The saints are oceans of grace. They bestowed their merciful gift upon me.

They accepted my faltering, lisping speech, and by that my jiva was steadied. With that happiness, my mind became firm in its place; the saints granted me a spot at their feet.

I stammered "Name, Name" as my only utterance, and that became my salvation and everything. Says Tuka, I am brimming with bliss. Let us raise the constant chorus of the Name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The saints are oceans of grace. They gave me their merciful gift. They accepted my faltering, lisping speech, and by that my soul was steadied. With that happiness my mind grew firm in its place; the saints gave me a spot at their feet. I could only stammer "Name, Name," and that became my whole salvation. Tuka says: I am brimming with bliss. Let us raise the Name's unbroken chorus.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells how the saints rescued him. They are oceans of grace, and their gift to him was simple acceptance: they took in his clumsy, lisping speech instead of despising it, and that welcome alone steadied his wavering soul. Given a place at their feet, his mind settled and grew firm. He had nothing eloquent to offer, only the stammered cry of the Name, yet that became his entire salvation. The poem ends in overflow, with Tukaram so full of bliss that he calls everyone to keep the chorus of the Name unbroken.

GATHA 4113

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the house where peace lives

मराठी मूळ

भक्तीचें वर्म जयाचिये हातीं । तया घरी शांति दया ॥१॥
 अष्टमासिद्ध वोळगती द्वारीं । न वजती दुरी दवडितां॥२॥
 तेथें दुष्ट गुण न मिळे निशेष । चैतन्याचा वास जयामाजी ॥३॥
 संतुष्ट चित्त सदा सर्वकाळ । तुटली हळहळ त्रिगुणाची ॥४॥
 तुका ह्याने येथें काय तो संदेह । आमचें गौरव आह्मी करूं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the home of one who holds the secret of devotion, there dwell peace and compassion. The eight mystic powers wait at his door and will not leave even when driven away.

No evil quality can enter where pure consciousness resides. The mind is content at all times; the agitation of the three gunas has been severed.

Says Tuka, what doubt can remain here? We shall celebrate our own glory.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the house of one who holds the secret of devotion, peace and compassion live. The eight mystic powers wait at his door. Drive them away, and they will not go far. No evil quality can enter there. Pure consciousness lives in that place. The mind is content, always, at every hour. The ache of the three gunas has been cut. Tuka says: what doubt is left here? We will sing our own glory.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what devotion does to a person from the inside. He says the one who carries the secret of bhakti becomes a house where peace and compassion settle, and where the very powers that others chase, the eight siddhis, hang about the door uninvited and refuse to leave. The point is not the powers but the indifference to them: when consciousness itself is at home in you, no wicked quality can find a foothold, and the restless pull of

the three gunas, the whole machinery of craving and reaction, goes quiet. The closing boast is deliberate. Having given himself away to God, he claims the right to celebrate the glory that is now his, because it is no longer separate from God's.

GATHA 4114

Faith and Trust

Faith, only the real holds

मराठी मूळ

साच हा विठ्ठल साच हें करणें । संत जें वचनं बोलिलेले ॥१॥
 साच तें स्वहित साच ते प्रचित । साच वेद नीत सांगतील ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे घेती साच साच भावें । लटिकें वर्म ठावें नाहीं त्यांसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Vitthal is real, and real is the practice that the saints have spoken of in their words. Real is one's own welfare, real is direct experience, and real is what the Vedas truthfully declare.

Says Tuka, those who receive with genuine faith find the truth. Those who deal in falsehood do not know the secret.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Vitthal is real. This practice is real, the practice the saints spoke of in their words. Your own welfare is real. Direct experience is real. What the Vedas truly declare is real. Tuka says: those who take it up with real faith receive the truth. Those who deal in falsehood do not know the secret.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is drawing a single line through everything that matters and calling it real. Vitthal is real, the saints' instruction is real, one's own true good is real, and so is the firsthand experience that confirms it and the truth the Vedas declare. He is insisting that these are not opinions to weigh but facts to stand on. The test he names is faith: what you receive depends on what you bring, and the one who comes with genuine sincerity finds the truth, while the one who trades in pretense stays locked outside the secret.

GATHA 4115

Worldly Life

Withdrawal, the company that wears

मराठी मूळ

संगें वाढे सीण न घडे भजन । त्रिविध हें जन बहु देवा ॥१॥
 याचि दुःखें या जनाचा कांटाळा । दिसताती डोळां नानाछंद ॥२॥
 एकविध भाव राहावया ठाव । नेदी हा संदेह राहों चित्तीं ॥३॥
 शब्दज्ञानी हित नेणती आपुलें । आणीक देखिलें नावडे त्या ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां एकलें चि भलें । बैसोनि उगलें राहावें तें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the company of worldly people, weariness grows and devotion does not happen. The people of this world are of three kinds, O God.

It is this very sorrow over people that makes me weary of them; their endless whims fill my eyes. There is no place for single-pointed devotion to remain; doubt does not allow it to settle in the mind.

The book-learned do not know their own good, nor do they like what they see in others. Says Tuka, now it is best to be alone, to sit quietly by oneself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In company, weariness grows and devotion does not happen. The people of this world are of three kinds, O God. It is this very sorrow over people that wearies me of them. Their endless whims are before my eyes. There is no room left for single-pointed love to stay. Doubt will not let it settle in the mind. The book-learned do not know their own good, and they do not like what they see in others. Tuka says: now it is best to be alone, to sit quietly by oneself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is telling God why he is pulling back from people. He has found that crowded company drains him and crowds out devotion, because the endless whims and divisions of others keep his mind unsettled and leave no room for single-pointed love to take root. He is hardest on the merely book-learned, who miss their own good and cannot bear what they see in others, naming a pattern, not despising the persons caught in it. The conclusion is a deliberate retreat: better to sit alone and quiet than to lose the one thing in the noise of many.

GATHA 4116

The Necessity of Experience

Realization, the show and the real

मराठी मूळ

तुझे वर्म आह्वां कळों आलें सुखें । संतांचिया मुखें पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 अवघा चि नट वाउगा पसारा । चेईला तूं खरा तूं चि एक ॥२॥
 ह्यणउनि देहबुद्ध नासिवंता । नातळे या चित्ता नेदावया ॥३॥
 सोय हे लागली पुढिलांची वाट । पावले जे नीट तुजपाशीं ॥४॥
 तुका ह्यणे नाहीं कोणासवें काज । बोलायाचें मज अंतरीचें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Your secret has become happily known to me through the mouths of the saints, O Panduranga. This entire spectacle is a mere show, a vain display.

You alone are the real one who has truly awakened. Therefore I will not let the perishable body-consciousness touch my mind.

I have found the path of those who went before, those who reached You directly. Says Tuka, I have no business with anyone else. What I must speak is from the depths of my heart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your secret has come to me, happily, through the mouths of the saints, O Panduranga. The whole thing is a stage, an empty display. You are the real one, awake. You alone are the one. So I will not let perishing body-consciousness touch my mind. I will not give it room. I have found the path of those who went before, those who reached straight to You. Tuka says: I have no business with anyone else. What I have to say is from inside my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says the saints handed him the secret, and the secret undoes the world he was taking seriously. He now sees the whole spread of things as a staged show, a vain display, with only one waking reality behind it, which is Panduranga. From this he draws a practical rule: he refuses to let body-consciousness, the sense of being this perishable self, touch his mind at all. Following the straight path the earlier saints walked to God, he renounces every other concern, and the closing line marks that this is not theory borrowed from others but something spoken from his own inner depth.

GATHA 4117

The Necessity of Experience

Liberation, the root cut

मराठी मूळ

पुण्यपापा ठाव नाहीं सुखदुःखा । हानिलाभशंका नासलिया ॥1॥
जिंता मरण आलें आप पर गेलें । मूळ छेदियेलें संसाराचें ॥ध्रु॥
अधिकार जाती वर्णधर्मयाती । ठाव नाहीं सत्यअसत्याशी ॥2॥
जन वन भिन्न आचेत चळण । नाहीं दुजेपण ठाव यासी ॥3॥
तुका ह्यणें देह वाईलें विठ्ठलीं । तेव्हां च घडली सर्व पूजा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no place for merit or sin, pleasure or pain, once the fear of loss and gain is destroyed. Living death has come: self and other are gone, and the very root of worldly existence has been cut.

Authority, caste, and creed lose their ground; truth and falsehood themselves have no place. Town and forest, stillness and motion, are no longer separate; there is no room for duality.

Says Tuka, when the body was offered to Vitthal, all worship was at once complete.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no place for merit or sin, none for pleasure or pain, once the fear of loss and gain is gone. Living, death has come. Self and other are gone. The root of worldly life is cut. Authority, caste, the duties of birth, all lose their ground. Truth and falsehood have no place. Town and forest, stillness and motion, are no longer two. There is no room left for duality. Tuka says: when the body was given to Vitthal, all worship was complete at once.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what is left after the self dies while the body still lives. Once the fear of loss and gain dissolves, the whole grid of opposites loses its hold: merit and sin, pleasure and pain, self and other, even the social map of caste and authority and the line between true and false. He says town and forest, stillness and motion, are no longer separate, because duality itself has no foothold anymore. The radical claim is in the last line: he did not perform countless rites; he simply gave the body to Vitthal, and in that single act of surrender every form of worship was already finished.

GATHA 4118

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, only the place of a servant

मराठी मूळ

संकोचतो जीव महत्वाच्या भारें । दासत्व चि बरें बहु वाटे ॥१॥
 कळावी जी माझी आवडी हे संतां । देणें तरि आतां हें चि द्यावें ॥ध्रु॥
 तुमचे चरण पावविलों सेवा । ह्मणउनि हेवा हा चि करीं ॥२॥
 विनउनी तुका वंदितो चरण । लेखा रजरेण चरणींचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The jiva shrinks under the weight of greatness; servitude feels far better. May the saints know my longing.

If anything is to be given me, let it be this: the privilege of serving at your feet. Therefore this alone is my aspiration.

Says Tuka, humbly I bow at your feet. Count me as the dust beneath your steps.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The jiva shrinks under the weight of greatness. To be a servant feels far better. Let the saints know this longing of mine. If anything is to be given to me now, give only this. You brought me to the service of your feet. So this alone is what I covet. Tuka says: humbly I bow at your feet. Count me as the dust of the dust at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is refusing greatness and asking for the lowest place instead. He says the soul cannot bear the burden of being made great; what feels right, what it can carry, is the place of a servant. So when he asks the saints to grant his one desire, the desire is not power or honor but the privilege of serving at the feet he has already been brought to. He ends by asking to be counted as the dust beneath the dust of those feet, which is the whole prayer: let me be small enough to belong here.

GATHA 4119

Faith and Trust

Faith, the near and the far shore

मराठी मूळ

देव केंचा तया दुरी । भाका बरी करुणा ॥१॥
 आळवित्या न लगे धर । माय जाणे रे भातुकें ॥२॥
 नावे तरी ज्याचा भार । पैल पार जवळी त्या ॥३॥
 आतां परदेशी तुका । जाला लोकांवेगळा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How can God be far from one whose call is sincere? A mother knows the child's little desires without being told. The boat carries whatever burden is placed upon it; the far shore is near for the one who boards.

Says Tuka, now Tuka has become a stranger to this world, set apart from all people.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How can God be far from the one whose call is sincere? A mother knows her child's small wants before they are spoken. The boat carries whatever weight is put on it. For the one who steps aboard, the far shore is near. Tuka says: now Tuka has become a stranger, set apart from all people.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is answering the fear that God is distant. He says distance is not the issue when the call is sincere, just as a mother reads her child's small needs without being told. The boat image makes the same point about effort: you do not swim the river, you board, and then whatever burden you carry the boat carries, and the far shore that looked impossible is suddenly close. The last line names the cost and the freedom together: leaning wholly on God has made him a stranger to ordinary people, set apart, which he reports without complaint.

GATHA 4120

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the man who is no man

मराठी मूळ

भक्ति ज्याची थोडी । पूर्ण विषयांची गोडी ॥१॥
 तो नर चि नव्हे पाहीं । खर जाणावा तो देहीं ॥२॥
 भजन पूजन ही नेणे । काय स्वरूपासी जाणे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्याला । भोवंडून बाहेर घाला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One whose devotion is meager and whose relish for sensory pleasures is full is no true human being. Know him to be a donkey in a human body.

He knows neither worship nor prayer; how then can he know the Self? Says Tuka, spin him around and throw him out.

IN PLAIN WORDS

His devotion is small. His relish for sense-pleasures is full. Look: he is no man at all. Know him to be a donkey in a human body. He does not know worship or prayer. How then would he know the Self? Tuka says: spin him around and throw him out.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is taking the measure of a life and finding it empty. The person he draws is unbalanced in a precise way: almost no devotion, full appetite for the senses, and on that count he says the human shape is wasted, a beast wearing a man's body. The reason follows: someone who has never even taken up worship or prayer has no way to reach the Self at all. The harsh closing line is aimed at the pattern of a wholly self-indulgent, godless life, and read against oneself it is a warning: do not be the figure that gets spun around and put out.

GATHA 4121

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, grand kin and an empty bowl

मराठी मूळ

समुद्र हा पिता बंधु हा चंद्रमा । भगिनी ते रमा शंखाची या ॥१॥
 मेहुणा जयाचा द्वारकेचा हरि । शंख दारोदारीं भीक मागे ॥२॥
 दुष्ट हें जाणावें आपुलें स्वहित । तुका ह्मणे मात ऐसी आहे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The ocean is the conch's father, the moon is its brother, Lakshmi born of the ocean is its sister. Its brother-in-law is Hari of Dwaraka.

Yet the conch goes begging from door to door. Says Tuka, know this about wicked fate. Despite great connections, one may still beg.

Such is the way of the world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The ocean is the conch's father. The moon is its brother. Lakshmi, born of the ocean, is its sister. Its brother-in-law is Hari of Dwaraka. Yet the conch goes from door to door, begging. Tuka says: know what is truly good for you. Such is the way of things.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the conch to mock the false security of connections. By birth the conch has the grandest family imaginable: the ocean for a father, the moon for a brother, Lakshmi for a sister, and Krishna of Dwaraka, who blows the conch, for a brother-in-law. And still it ends up begging at every door, because lineage and high relations do not feed you. The lesson is turned back on the listener: stop leaning on impressive associations and attend to your own real good, since this is simply how the world goes.

GATHA 4122

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, time is eating the days

मराठी मूळ

भवाचिया संगें बहु च नाडिले । किळकाळें पाडिले तोंडघसीं ॥१॥
 तया भवसंगें गुंतलासी वायां । धन पुत्र जाया भुलों नको ॥२॥
 जेजे घडी जाय तेते काळ खाय । प्राण्या तरणोपाय काय केला ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे करीं सर्व ही तूं त्याग । अपाअ हें सर्वांग जगदीशीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Worldly attachment has cheated many; time has dashed them face-first to the ground. You are entangled in vain in this worldly attachment.

Do not be deluded by wife, children, and wealth. With each passing moment, Death devours you.

O creature, what means of salvation have you prepared? Says Tuka, renounce everything and offer your whole being to the Lord of the world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Worldly attachment has cheated many. Time has thrown them face-down on the ground. You are tangled in that attachment for nothing. Do not be fooled by wealth, by son, by wife. Every passing moment, death eats it. O creature, what have you done to save yourself? Tuka says: give it all up. Offer your whole being to the Lord of the world.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is shaking a complacent listener awake. He points to the wreckage already made: countless people cheated by worldly attachment and slammed face-first to the ground by time, and warns that the things you cling to, wealth, son, wife, are the very hooks. Then he names the clock: every moment that passes is being eaten by death, so the comfort of having time is an illusion. The blunt question, what have you actually done to be saved, leaves only one answer he will accept: let go of all of it and hand your whole self over to God.

GATHA 4123

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the sick man and the medicine

मराठी मूळ

रुचे सकळा मिष्टान्न । रोग्या विखाच्या समान ॥१॥
 तरि कां तया एकासाठीं । काम अवघें करणें खोटीं ॥२॥
 दर्पण नावडे एका । ठाव नाहीं ज्याच्या नाका ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे खळा । उपदेशाचा कांटाळा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Rich food is relished by all, but to a sick man it is like poison. Should all fine food be condemned for the sake of that one person? A mirror is hateful to the one who has no nose.

Says Tuka, the wicked are allergic to good counsel.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Everyone enjoys rich food. To a sick man it is like poison. So should all good food be condemned for that one man's sake? A mirror is hateful to the one who has no nose. Tuka says: the wicked have no taste for good counsel.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is explaining why some people recoil from teaching, without letting the teaching take the blame. Rich food is good and most people relish it; if a sick man cannot stomach it, the fault is in his sickness, not in the food, and you would not condemn the food because of him. The mirror is sharper: a man with no nose hates the mirror because it shows him the lack, not because the mirror is wrong. So when the wicked cannot bear good counsel, the aversion exposes their own condition, and the point turned inward is to ask whether it is the medicine you are refusing or your own sickness you are protecting.

GATHA 4124

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, stay awake, the thief is near

मराठी मूळ

जागा घरटी फिरे तस्कराची दिवसाराती । नीदसुरें नाडिलीं असो मागों किती ॥1॥

हाट करी सकळ जन । वस्तु करा रे जतन ॥ध्रु॥

हुशार ठायीं । निजनिजेलिया पाहीं ॥2॥

सावचित्त असे खरा । लाभ घेउन जाये घरा ॥3॥

तराळ राळ बोंबें उतराई । राखा आपुलिया भाई ॥4॥

हरिच्या नामीं घालूं जागा । तुका ह्मणे हुशार गा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The thief's gang prowls day and night around the house. Those who sleep carelessly have been robbed.

How long shall we keep asking? The marketplace is bustling with all kinds of people; guard your goods carefully. Be vigilant where you rest and sleep.

The truly alert one takes his profit and goes home safely. Protect your own share amidst the noise and commotion.

Says Tuka, let us stay awake in Hari's name. Be alert.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The thief's gang circles the house, day and night. Those who sleep carelessly have been robbed. How long shall we keep asking? The whole world is a busy market. Guard your goods. Be alert wherever you rest, even as you fall asleep. The truly watchful one takes his profit and goes home. Keep your own share safe in the noise. Tuka says: let us stay awake in Hari's name. Be alert.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns daily life into a marketplace where you can be robbed in your sleep. The thieves circling the house, day and night, are the senses and the pull of the world, and the careless sleeper who loses everything is the soul that drifts through life unguarded. He presses the urgency: this is a crowded, bustling market, so watch your goods and stay alert even as drowsiness comes. The reward is for the vigilant trader who pockets his real profit and reaches home safe, and the way to stay awake, the one safeguard he names, is to keep the mind fixed on Hari's name through all the noise.

GATHA 4125

The Saints

Adoration, the saints lift the lowly

मराठी मूळ

संतांनीं सरता केलों तैसेपरी । चंदनीं ते बोरी व्यापियेली ॥१॥
गुण दोष याती न विचारितां कांहीं । ठाव दिला पायीं आपुलिया ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे आलें समर्थाच्या मना । तरि होय राणा रंक त्याचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The saints made me worthy, just as a thorn-bush is transformed by the proximity of sandalwood. Without considering my virtues, faults, or caste, they gave me a place at their own feet.

Says Tuka, when it pleases the powerful one, even his pauper becomes a king.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The saints made me worthy. I was a thorn-bush, and the nearness of sandalwood passed into me. They did not weigh my virtues, my faults, or my caste. They gave me a place at their own feet. Tuka says: when it pleases the powerful one, even his pauper becomes a king.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying that his worth came from outside himself, given by the saints. He pictures himself as a worthless thorn-bush that takes on fragrance only because sandalwood grows beside it; the change is borrowed, not earned. The point lands when he says the saints never checked his merit, his sins, or his caste before taking him in: their grace ignores exactly the things that the world uses to rank a man. The closing line names the stakes plainly: a great one's favor can raise a beggar to a throne, so everything depends on being claimed, not on deserving it.

GATHA 4126

Prayers

Prayer, a child asking to be carried

मराठी मूळ

चितीं तुझे पाय डोळां रूपाचें ध्यान । अखंड मुखीं नाम वणावे गुण ॥१॥
 हें चि एक तुझां देवा मागणें दातारा । उचित तें करा माझा भाव जाणूनि ॥२॥
 खुंटली जाणीव माझें बोलणें आतां । करुं यावी तैसी करावी बाळकाची चिंता ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां नको देऊं अंतर । न कळे पुढें काय बोलों विचार ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Your feet in my chitta, the vision of Your form in my eyes, Your name unbroken on my tongue, singing Your virtues always. This is my only prayer to You, O generous Lord.

Grant what is fitting, knowing my devotion. My knowledge has reached its limit; I cannot say more now.

Care for me as one cares for a child. Says Tuka, do not withdraw from me now. I do not know what I may say next, O Lord.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your feet in my mind. The vision of your form in my eyes. Your name unbroken on my tongue, your virtues always sung. This is the one thing I ask of you, generous Lord. Do what is fitting; you know my heart. My knowing has run out. I have nothing more to say. Care for me the way one cares for a child. Tuka says: do not withdraw from me now. I do not know what I will say next, Lord.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying for a single condition of life and then handing over the rest. He asks only that his mind, his eyes, and his tongue stay fixed on God; that one request replaces every other want. Then he admits the limit of his own understanding and stops choosing for himself, telling God to do whatever is fitting because God already knows his devotion. The closing image is the heart of it: he asks to be tended like a small child who cannot manage on its own, and begs God not to pull away, since he no longer trusts even his own next words.

GATHA 4127

The Saints

Adoration, the saints are all my wealth

मराठी मूळ

संतांच्या पादुका घेईन मोचे खांदीं । हातीं टाळ दिंडी नाचेन पुढें ॥१॥
 भजनविधी नेणें साधन उपाय । सकळ सिद्धि पाय हरिदासांचे ॥२॥
 ध्यानगति मति आसन समाधि । हरिनाम गोविंदीं प्रेमसुख ॥३॥
 नेणता निर्लज्ज नेणें नादभेद । सुखें हा गोविंद गाऊं गीतीं ॥४॥
 सर्व जोडी मज गोत आणि वित्त । तुका ह्मणे संतमहंतपाय ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will carry the sandals of the saints on my shoulders and dance ahead of the procession, cymbals in hand. I know no method of worship, no spiritual practice.

All perfection lies in the feet of Hari's servants. Meditation, concentration, posture, and samadhi are all found in the love of Govinda's name.

Ignorant and shameless, I know no musical refinement; I will simply sing Govinda's song with joy. Says Tuka, the feet of the great saints are all my wealth, my kin, my treasure.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will carry the sandals of the saints on my shoulder. With cymbals in my hand I will dance ahead of the procession. I know no rule of worship, no method, no means. All perfection is in the feet of Hari's servants. The way of meditation, the right mind, the posture, the deep absorption: these are all in Govinda's name, in the joy of love. I am ignorant and shameless. I know nothing of musical refinement. I will simply sing this Govinda's song with joy. Tuka says: the feet of the great saints are all my kin and all my treasure.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is refusing the whole apparatus of technique and putting everything on devotion to the saints. He casts himself as a man with no training, who carries the saints' sandals and dances before the procession because that is all he can offer. Where others seek perfection through meditation, posture, and samadhi, he says all of it is already contained in the love of God's name. He even owns his lack of musical skill and his shamelessness, refusing to be embarrassed, because the singing matters and the polish does not. The last line names what has replaced family and property for him: the feet of the saints are now his kin and his wealth.

GATHA 4128

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the bondsman in the saints' courtyard

मराठी मूळ

हरिजनीं प्राण विकली हे काया । अंकिला मी तया घरीं जालों ॥१॥
 ह्मणियें सत्वर करीन सांगतां । घेईन मी देतां शेष त्यांचें ॥२॥
 आस करुनियां राहेन अंगणीं । उचिष्टाची धणी घ्यावयासी ॥३॥
 चालतां ते मागाअ चरणीचे रज । उडती सहज घेइन आतां ॥४॥
 दुरि त्यांपासूनि न वजें दवडितां । तुका ह्मणे लाता घेइन अंगीं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have sold my life and body to the servants of Hari; I have become a bondsman in their household. Tell me what to do and I will do it at once.

Whatever remains of their meal, I will gladly receive. I will wait hopefully in their courtyard just to have my fill of their leftovers.

As they walk ahead, I will catch the dust rising naturally from their feet. I will not go far from them even if they drive me away.

Says Tuka, I will take their kicks upon my body.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have sold my life and my body to the servants of Hari. I have become a bondsman in their house. Tell me, and I will do it at once. Whatever is left of their meal, I will take. I will wait in their courtyard, hoping, to get my fill of their leftovers. As they walk, I will catch the dust that lifts from their feet. I will not go far from them, even if they drive me off. Tuka says: I will take their kicks upon my body.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes total self-surrender to the saints in the most degrading terms he can find, and means every one of them. He says he has sold himself into bondage in their household and will obey any order at once. Then he reaches for the lowest place a person can take: eating their leftovers, waiting in the courtyard, gathering the dust off their feet. The final line refuses even self-respect as a limit; he will stay close and take their blows rather than leave, because being near them at any cost is worth more to him than dignity.

GATHA 4129

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the longing fulfilled

मराठी मूळ

पुण्य फळलें बहुतां दिवसां । भाग्यउदयाचा ठसा । जाला सन्मुख तो कैसा । संतचरण पावलों ॥१॥
 आजि फिटलें माझें कोडें । भवदुःखाचें सांकडें । कोंदाटलें पुढें । ब्रह्म सावळें ॥२॥
 आलिंगणें संतांचिया । दिव्य जाली माझी काया । मस्तक पाया । वरी त्यांच्या ठेवितां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धन्य झालों । सुखें संतांचिया धालों । लोटांगणीं आलों । पुढें भार देखोनी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The merit of many days has borne fruit. The mark of fortune's dawn has appeared.

How beautifully has this come about: I have reached the feet of the saints. Today my longing is fulfilled and the stranglehold of worldly sorrow is broken.

The dark and beautiful Brahman has gathered before me. By the embrace of the saints, my body has become divine.

Placing my head upon their feet has transformed me. Says Tuka, I am blessed; I am sated by the joy of the saints. I have come and prostrated before them, seeing their splendor.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The good of many days has borne fruit. The mark of fortune's dawn has shown itself. How has this happened: I have reached the feet of the saints. Today my longing is answered. The chokehold of worldly sorrow is broken. The dark and beautiful Brahman stands gathered before me. By the saints' embrace, my body has become divine. I laid my head on their feet, and it changed me. Tuka says: I am blessed. I am full with the joy of the saints. I came and threw myself down before them, seeing their weight of glory.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming a moment of arrival and crediting it to long-stored merit finally ripening. He had longed to reach the feet of the saints, and now that it has happened, the grip of worldly grief loosens all at once. The turn is that meeting the saints is the same as meeting God: the dark, beautiful Absolute stands before him in their

company. He says their embrace made his very body sacred and laying his head at their feet transformed him, so the explainer is that for him the saints are not separate from the God he sought. The end is pure gratitude: he falls full-length before them, overwhelmed by what he sees.

GATHA 4130

Prayers

Prayer, the Name dissolves all difference

मराठी मूळ

ठाव देऊनिया राखें पायापासीं । मी तों आहे रासी पातकाची ॥१॥
 पातकाची रासी ह्यणतां लागे वेळ । ऐके तो कृपाळ नारायण ॥२॥
 नारायणनामं अवघें सांग जालें । असंग चि केलें एकमय ॥३॥
 एकमय जालें विठोबाच्या नामें । भेदाभेद कर्म आणिक कांहीं ॥४॥
 तुका ह्यणे चितीं चिंतिलें जें होतें । तें होय आपैतें नामें याच्या ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Grant me a place and keep me near Your feet, though I am a heap of sin. To call me a heap of sin takes time to explain, but the compassionate Narayana listens.

Through Narayana's name, everything was made whole, all separateness dissolved into oneness. Everything has become one through Vithoba's name; distinctions of difference and karma have vanished.

Says Tuka, whatever was wished for in the chitta comes to pass of its own accord through this Name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Give me a place and keep me near your feet, though I am a heap of sin. To count out my sins would take a long time, but the compassionate Narayana listens. Through Narayana's name everything was made whole. The separate was made into one thing. It became one through Vithoba's name. Difference and sameness, karma, and all the rest: gone. Tuka says: whatever the heart wished for comes to pass of its own accord through this Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks for a place at God's feet while openly admitting he is nothing but a pile of sin, and rests his whole case on God's mercy rather than his record. The hinge is that his sins are too many to recount, yet the compassionate Narayana hears him anyway, so listening, not deserving, is what saves. He then claims the Name's power directly: it makes the broken whole and collapses every division, including the distinctions of difference, sameness, and karma that the mind lives by. The last line states the reward plainly: through the Name, the heart's true desire is fulfilled by itself, without his contriving it.

GATHA 4131

Faith and Trust

Faith, fearless in God's strength

मराठी मूळ

आतां आह्मां भय नाहीं बा कोणाचें । बळ विठोबाचें जालें असे ॥१॥
 धीर दिला आह्मां येणें पांडुरंगें । न पांगों या पांगें संसाराच्या ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझा कैवारी हा देव । नाहीं भय भेव त्याच्या संगें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now we fear no one, for Vithoba's strength is ours. This Panduranga has given us courage; we will not scatter in the snares of worldly life.

Says Tuka, this God is my champion. In His company, there is no fear or dread.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now we fear no one. Vithoba's strength has become ours. This Panduranga has given us courage. We will not be scattered in the snares of worldly life. Tuka says: this God is my champion. In his company there is no fear and no dread.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is declaring a fearlessness that is not his own but borrowed from God. The ground of it is plain: Vithoba's strength has become his, so there is no one left to be afraid of. He names the danger he has escaped, the snares of worldly life that scatter a person, and says the courage Panduranga gave him holds him together against it. The close states the reason once more: with God as his champion at his side, fear and dread simply have no place.

GATHA 4132

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the relief of devotion

मराठी मूळ

भक्ति आह्मी केली सांडुनी उद्वेग । पावलों हें सांग सुख याचें ॥१॥
 सुख आह्मां जालें धरितां यांचा संग । पळाले उद्वेग सांडूनिया ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुख बहु जालें जिवा । घडली या सेवा विठोबाची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We took up devotion, casting off our torment, and gained this joy from it. Joy has come to us by holding their company, and all distress has fled.

Says Tuka, great happiness has come to the soul, for we have been granted the service of Vithoba.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We took up devotion and threw off our distress. From it we have come into this whole joy. Joy came to us by holding his company. The distress fled and was left behind. Tuka says: great happiness has come to my soul, for the service of Vithoba has fallen to me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the simple exchange that devotion made for him: he set down his agitation and received joy in its place. The point is that the joy was not generated by effort but came through keeping company with God, and once that company was held, the distress did not linger but ran off on its own. He counts being given the service of Vithoba as the cause of it all. The explainer is that for Tukaram, serving God is not a burden added to life but the very thing that lifts the burden off.

GATHA 4133

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, learning without a steadied mind

मराठी मूळ

शास्त्रज्ञ हो ज्ञाते असती बहुत । परि नाहीं चित्त हाता आलें ॥1॥
 क्षणा एका साटीं न धरवे धीर । तेणें हा रघुवीर अंतरतो ॥ध्रु॥
 तोळाभर सोनें रतिभार राई । मेळविल्या पाहीं नास होतो ॥2॥
 हरीचे अंकित असती विरळागत । तयांसी अच्युत कृपा करी ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय धुडवण्या गोष्टी । जंव नाहीं गांठी चित्त आलें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Many scholars know the scriptures well, yet the mind has not come under control. For want of patience even for a single moment, Raghuveera slips away.

A measure of gold mixed with even a speck of impurity is ruined when inspected. Those who are truly pledged to Hari are very rare.

To them alone does the imperishable Lord show His grace. Says Tuka, what use is idle talk? Until the mind is firmly grasped, nothing avails.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There are many who know the scriptures well, yet the mind has not come into their hands. They cannot hold steady even for a single moment, and by that the Raghuveera slips away. A measure of gold, mixed with even a speck of impurity, is found ruined when it is tested. Those truly pledged to Hari are very few. To them alone the imperishable Lord gives his grace. Tuka says: what use is talk that only stirs up dust? Until the mind itself is in your grasp, nothing holds.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning that scriptural learning is worthless without a mastered mind. Many scholars know the texts, he says, yet have no control over their own attention, and the moment they cannot hold steady, God slips out of reach. His image of gold makes the standard exact: even a tiny impurity ruins the whole measure when it is

assayed, so partial devotion does not pass. He observes that the truly committed are rare and that grace is given to them alone, then turns the warning on idle discussion itself. The self-examination he points to is plain: stop talking and ask whether you actually hold your own mind, because nothing else counts until you do.

GATHA 4134

True Worship

True worship, chanting without conduct

मराठी मूळ

इंद्रियांसी नेम नाही । मुखीं राम ह्यणोनि काई ॥1॥

जेविं मासीसंगें अन्न । सुख नेदी तें भोजन ॥ध्रु॥

कीर्तन करावें । तैसें करुनी दावावें ॥2॥

हें तों अंगीं नाहीं चिन्हें । गाडलें वेश्येच्या ढव्यानें ॥3॥

तुका ह्यणे नका रागा । संत शिवूं नेदिती अंगा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the senses are not disciplined, what use is it to chant Rama with the mouth? It is like food cooked with a fly in it; such a meal gives no satisfaction. One should perform kirtan and live accordingly, demonstrating it by one's own conduct.

These marks are absent from your person; it is as if you have been singing from a deceiver's songbook. Says Tuka, do not be angry; the saints will not let such a one come near.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the senses keep no discipline, what is the use of saying Rama with the mouth? It is like food cooked with a fly in it; that meal gives no pleasure. You should do kirtan, and then live it out, showing it by what you do. These marks are not on your body; you have sung as if from a deceiver's songbook. Tuka says: do not be angry. The saints will not let such a one touch them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is attacking the pattern of chanting God's name while the life behind it stays undisciplined. His test is conduct: the name on the tongue means nothing if the senses run loose, just as a meal is spoiled past eating by a single fly. Real kirtan, he says, must be matched by a life that proves it, and when those marks are missing the singing is borrowed and false, like songs taken from a cheat's book. He turns to such a person directly but tells them not to take it as personal contempt; the warning is about the gap between word and deed, and the consequence is plain, that the saints keep their distance from a life that does not match its own praise.

GATHA 4135

*The Power of the Name**The Name, refusing heaven for the Name*

मराठी मूळ

न लगे देवा तुझें आह्मांसी वैकुंठ । सायुज्याचा पट न लगे मज ॥1॥
 देई तुझें नाम मज सर्वकाळीं । मागेन वनमाळीहें चि तुज ॥ध्रु॥
 नारद तुंबर उद्धव प्रल्हाद । बळी रुक्मांगद नाम ध्याती ॥2॥
 सिद्ध मुनिगण गंधर्व किन्नर । करिताती गजर रामनामें॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे हरी देई तुझें नाम । अखंडित प्रेम हें चि द्यावें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I do not want Your Vaikuntha, O Lord. The garment of union with the Absolute is not for me.

Give me Your name for all time; this alone I will ask of You, O Vanamali. Narada, Tumbara, Uddhava, Prahlada, Bali, and Rukmangada all meditate on the Name.

Siddhas, sages, gandharvas, and kinnars raise the chant of Rama's name. Says Tuka, O Hari, give me Your name. Grant me this unbroken love and nothing else.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I do not want your Vaikuntha, Lord. The robe of union with the Absolute is not for me. Give me your name for all time. This alone I will ask of you, Vanamali. Narada, Tumbara, Uddhava, Prahlada, Bali, and Rukmangada all meditate on the Name. The siddhas, the company of sages, the gandharvas, the kinnaras, all raise the cry of Rama's name. Tuka says: Hari, give me your name. Grant me this unbroken love, and nothing else.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses the highest rewards a devotee can be offered and asks for one thing only. He turns down Vaikuntha and even sayujya, the merging into the Absolute that scriptures treat as the final goal, calling that union a garment he does not want. What he wants instead is God's name held always, and that is his entire request. He backs it by naming the great devotees and the heavenly hosts who themselves choose to chant the Name rather than rest in liberation, so his choice stands in good company. The close states the price and the prize together: he asks for the Name and an unbroken love for it, and refuses everything else.

GATHA 4136

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the grace received in full

मराठी मूळ

पावलों प्रसाद इच्छा केली तैसी । जालें या चित्तासी समाधान ॥१॥
 मायबाप माझा उभा कृपादानी । विटे सम जोडूनि पादांबुजें ॥२॥
 सांभाळासी येऊं नेदी च उणीव । अधिकारगौरव राखे तैसें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सर्व अंतर्बाह्य आहे । जया तैसा राहे कवळूनी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have received the grace I wished for; my mind is now at peace. My Mother and Father stands as a generous giver, His lotus feet joined together upon the brick.

He comes to my care and never allows any want. He preserves my dignity as it ought to be.

Says Tuka, He is within and without, embracing each one as that one needs.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have received the grace I wished for. My mind is now at peace. My Mother and Father stands here giving grace, his lotus feet set level together on the brick. He sees to my care and lets no want come near. He keeps my dignity as it should be kept. Tuka says: he is within and without, holding each one close in the way that one needs.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is reporting a prayer answered and the settled peace that follows. The grace he asked for has come, and his restless mind has finally come to rest. He calls Vithoba his Mother and Father, standing on the brick at Pandhari with feet joined, and says this parent attends to him so completely that no lack is allowed to reach him. He notes too that God guards his standing, keeping his honor intact rather than only meeting his needs. The closing thought is the frame the poem leaves unspoken: this God is present inside and outside alike, and embraces each person exactly according to what that person requires.

GATHA 4137

Ecstasy and Joy

Reunion, the meal of love

मराठी मूळ

होतें तैसें पायीं केलें निवेदन । अंतरलों दिन बहुत होतों ॥१॥
 संबोखुनी केलें समाधान चित्त । वोगरुणि भात प्रेमरस ॥२॥
 नामरत्नमणी करूनी भूषण । अळंकारमंडण माळा दिली ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुखें जालों निरामय । नामीं नामसोय निमग्नता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

As I was, so I offered myself at His feet. I had been starved of Him for many long days.

He consoled me and settled my mind, serving me a meal of love. He adorned me with the jeweled garland of the Name as my ornament and decoration.

Says Tuka, I have happily become free of all ailment, immersed in the Name, absorbed in the Name's own way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As I was, just so, I offered myself at his feet. I had been kept from him for many days. He comforted me and settled my mind. He served me a meal of love. He made the jewel of the Name into an ornament for me. He gave me a garland to adorn me. Tuka says: I have become well and free of all sickness. I am sunk in the Name, lost in the Name's own way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as one taken back after a long separation. He does not clean himself up first; he comes to Vitthal's feet exactly as he is, after many empty days. The Lord answers not with rebuke but with care: he calms the restless mind and feeds it on love, then dresses the devotee in the Name as if in jewels and a garland. The result is health, the end of the ache that the separation was. To be cured here is simply to be wholly absorbed in the Name, with no part of the self left outside it.

GATHA 4138

The Necessity of Experience

Ecstasy, the mind absorbed

मराठी मूळ

स्थिरावली वृत्त पांगुळला प्राण । अंतरींची खुण पावूनियां ॥१॥
 पुंजाळले नेत्र जाले अधोन्मीळत । कंठ सद्गदित रोमांच आले ॥२॥
 चित्त चाकाटलें स्वरूपा माझारी । न निघे बाहेरी सुखावलों ॥३॥
 सुनीळ प्रकाश उदैजला दिन । अमृताचें पान जीवनकळा ॥४॥
 शशिसूर्या जाली जीवें ओंवाळणी । आनंदा दाटली आनंदाची ॥५॥
 तुका ह्याने सुखें प्रेमासी डुलत । वीरालों निश्चिंत निश्चितीनें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mind's activity has stilled; the breath has grown quiet, having received the inner sign. The eyes have grown luminous and half-closed; the throat is choked with emotion, and the hair stands on end.

The mind is stunned, absorbed within the true form; it does not come back out, for it has found its joy. A deep blue radiance has dawned; the nectar of the life-force flows.

The sun and moon have been offered as oblation to the jiva; bliss is brimming over with bliss. Says Tuka, swaying happily in love, I rest in perfect and certain peace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The mind's motion has stopped. The breath has gone still. The inner sign has been received. The eyes shine and are half closed. The throat chokes with feeling. The hair stands up. The mind is stunned inside the true form. It does not come back out. I am at rest in joy. A deep blue light has dawned like daybreak. I drink the nectar, the power of life. Sun and moon are waved as a lamp before this life. Bliss is crowded full of bliss. Tuka says: I sway in love, happy. I have dissolved into a peace that is sure and without doubt.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the body and mind in the grip of what he has long sought. The signs are the classic marks of devotional rapture: stilled breath, half-closed shining eyes, a choked throat, hair on end. He names what causes them: the mind has fallen still inside the divine form itself and will not return to ordinary life, because it has found its joy there. A deep blue radiance dawns, the very color of the Lord, and the whole world, even sun and moon, is offered like a small lamp waved before this living presence. The poem ends not in agitation but in a settled, doubtless peace.

GATHA 4139

Longing and Separation

Longing, the silent Lord

मराठी मूळ

बोध्यअवतार माझिया अदृष्टा । मौन्य मुखें निष्ठा धरियेली ॥१॥
लोकांचियेसाठीं शाम चतुर्भुज । संतांसवें गुज बोलतसां ॥२॥
आलें कलियुग माझिया संचिता । डोळां हाकलितां न पडेसी ॥३॥
म्यां च तुझें काय केलें नारायणा । कां नये करुणा तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By my destiny, this teaching incarnation has sealed its lips in silence. For the sake of the world, You are the dark four-armed Lord, speaking Your secrets with the saints.

The Kali Yuga has dawned according to my own past deeds; even when I search with my eyes, You do not appear. What have I done to You, O Narayana? Says Tuka, why does compassion not come?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By my own bad fortune, the teaching Lord has gone silent, his mouth shut, holding to stillness. For the rest of the world you are the dark four-armed one, and you speak your secrets with the saints. The Kali age has come because of what I myself have stored up; though I beat my eyes searching, you do not appear to me. What have I done to you, Narayana? Tuka says: why does your compassion not come to me?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram complains of a God who answers others but stays silent to him. He turns the blame inward at first: it is his own destiny and his own past deeds that have shut the Lord's mouth and brought on this dark age for him alone. He sees Narayana speaking freely with the saints and showing his form to the world, yet for Tukaram there is only silence and an empty search. The poem is not contempt but a wounded question to a beloved who seems to withhold: I cannot find what I have done to deserve this; why does your mercy not come? It names the stake of all longing, the fear that one is being passed over.

GATHA 4140

The Power of the Name

The Name, ever on the lips

मराठी मूळ

मुखीं विठ्ठलाचें नाम । मग कैचा भवभ्रम ॥1॥
 चालतां बोलतां खातां । जेवितां निद्रा करितां ॥ध्रु॥
 सुखें असों संसारीं । मग जवळी च हरि ॥2॥
 मुक्तिवरील भक्ति जाण । अखंड मुखीं नारायण ॥3॥
 मग देवभक्त जाला । तुका तुकीं उतरला ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With Vitthal's name on the tongue, where is there room for worldly delusion? Walking, talking, eating, feasting, or sleeping, keep His name always. Dwell happily in the world, and Hari will be right beside you.

Devotion that surpasses even liberation means keeping Narayana unbroken on the lips. Then the devotee has become one with God.

Says Tuka, he has passed the final test.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With Vitthal's name in the mouth, where is the muddle of this world? While walking, talking, eating, feasting, or sleeping, keep it. Live happily in the world, and then Hari is right beside you. Know this: the devotion that is higher than liberation is to keep Narayana unbroken in the mouth. Then one has become God's devotee. Tuka says: Tuka has weighed true on the scale.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes the practice almost absurdly simple: keep Vitthal's name in the mouth and the confusion of worldly life loses its grip. He insists this is not a withdrawal from ordinary life but something carried right through it, through every act from eating to sleeping. He even ranks it: this unbroken remembrance is worth more than liberation itself, because it makes God present at your side instead of merely freeing you. The closing image is a scale; Tuka has been weighed and found true, the test of a real devotee passed by this one constant thing.

GATHA 4141

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the one thing known

मराठी मूळ

प्रेम जडलें तुझे पायीं । आणीक न सुचे मजला कांहीं ॥1॥
 रात्रीदिवस तुझें ध्यान । तें चि माझें अनुष्ठान ॥ध्रु॥
 नामापरतें नेणें दुजें । ऐसें कळलें मजला निज ॥2॥
 तुका ह्याने अंतकाळीं । आह्यां सोडवीं तात्काळीं ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My love is fastened at Your feet; nothing else comes to my mind. Day and night I meditate on You; that alone is my spiritual practice.

I know no other thing besides the Name; this I have come to know as my deepest truth. Says Tuka, at the hour of death, deliver me without delay.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My love has fastened on your feet. Nothing else occurs to me. Night and day I think of you. That alone is my practice. I know nothing else but the Name. This I have come to know as my own truth. Tuka says: at the hour of death, set me free at once.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reports a love that has narrowed his whole attention to one point. His mind no longer wanders to other things, because it is fixed on the Lord's feet day and night, and he treats this constant attention itself as his entire spiritual discipline. He claims to know nothing besides the Name, and he calls this his deepest, most personal truth rather than a borrowed teaching. The poem ends by naming the stake: he asks that at the final moment, the hour of death, this love be honored and he be released without delay.

GATHA 4142

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the feet are all pilgrimage

मराठी मूळ

तुझे पाय माझी काशी । कोण जाय माझें काशी॥१॥
 तुझें रूप तें चि ध्यान । तें चि माझें अनुष्ठान ॥२॥
 तुझे चरण ते चि गया । जालें गयावर्जन देहा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने सकळ तीर्थ । तुझें पायीं वसती येथें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Your feet are my Kashi; who needs to go to any other Kashi? Your form is my meditation; that is my daily practice. Your feet are my Gaya; by them, the body's pilgrimage to Gaya is fulfilled.

Says Tuka, all the sacred places dwell right here at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your feet are my Kashi. Why should anyone go to some other Kashi? Your form is my meditation. That alone is my practice. Your feet are my Gaya. By them the body's pilgrimage to Gaya is done. Tuka says: all the holy places dwell here, at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram collapses the whole map of sacred geography into the Lord's feet. Pilgrims travel to Kashi for liberation and to Gaya to release the dead; he says he needs neither journey, because both shrines are already present in Vitthal. Gazing on the Lord's form is the only meditation he keeps, and bowing to his feet completes every rite the

far places promise. The claim is radical and meant to be: the body's restless search for holy ground ends where the devotee already stands, since all the sacred sites live at those feet.

GATHA 4143

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the bored worldling

मराठी मूळ

क्षुधा तृषा कांहीं सर्वथा नावडे । पहावया धांवें कोल्हांटासी ॥१॥
 कथेसी साक्षेपें पाचारिला जरी । ह्मणे माझ्या घरीं कोणी नाही ॥२॥
 बलत्कारीं जरी आणिला कथेसी । निद्रा घे लोडेंसी टेंकूनियां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे थुंका त्याच्या तोंडावरी । जातो यमपुरी भोगावया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He ignores hunger and thirst entirely, yet runs to watch a street performer. If he is earnestly called to a sacred discourse, he says there is no one at home.

If he is dragged by force to the discourse, he leans against a pillow and falls asleep. Says Tuka, spit upon the face of such a one. He is headed to Yama's city to suffer there.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Hunger and thirst he ignores completely, yet he runs to watch a street acrobat. If he is sincerely called to the sacred story, he says there is no one home. If he is dragged to the discourse by force, he leans on a cushion and falls asleep. Tuka says: spit on the face of such a one. He is going to Yama's city to suffer there.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws a sharp portrait of a man whose appetites tell on him. He will forget food and drink to gawk at a passing entertainer, but when invited to hear God's story he pretends to be out, and if forced to attend he props himself up and sleeps through it. The harsh line, spit on his face, is aimed at the pattern, not at a single soul to be despised: the readiness to spend oneself on idle spectacle while treating the one thing that matters as a chore. The warning is meant to make the listener test his own attention, since this neglect, Tukaram says, leads to suffering in the realm of death.

GATHA 4144

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the easiest ladder

मराठी मूळ

श्रीराम सखा ऐसा धरीं भाव । मीपणाचा ठाव पुसीं मना ॥1॥
 शरण निरंतर ह्मण तूं गोविंदा । वाचे लावीं धंदा नारायण ॥ध्रु॥
 यापरि सोपान नाहीं रे साधन । वाहातसें आण तुझी मना ॥2॥
 नको कांहीं करूं अळस अंतरीं । जपें निरंतर रघुपती ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे मोठा लाभ नरदेहीं । देहीं च विदेही होती नामें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Hold the conviction that Rama is your true friend, and erase the seat of ego from your mind. Say Govinda ceaselessly as one who has surrendered, and set your tongue to the work of chanting Narayana.

There is no easier practice than this, O mind; I swear this to you. Do not allow any laziness within.

Chant Raghupati without ceasing. Says Tuka, the greatest gain in human birth is this: through the Name, one becomes liberated even while in the body.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Hold this conviction: Shri Rama is my friend. Wipe out the seat of I-ness in your mind. Say it forever, surrendered: you, Govinda. Set your tongue to the work of Narayana. There is no easier step than this, no practice like it; I swear this to you, O mind. Do not be lazy within at all. Repeat Raghupati without stopping. Tuka says: the great gain of human birth is this, that by the Name one becomes free even while still in the body.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram urges the mind toward the simplest possible path. The first move is inward: take Rama as your true friend and erase the place where the ego sits. The rest is the tongue's labor, the ceaseless saying of Govinda, Narayana, Raghupati in an attitude of surrender. He vows there is no easier ladder than this and warns against the one real obstacle, the inner laziness that lets the practice slip. The stake he names is the highest one available to a human being: through the Name a person can become liberated, videha, free, while still living in the body.

GATHA 4145

Prayers

Prayer, the rescuer of others

मराठी मूळ

सर्वापरी तुझे गुण गाऊं उत्तम । तुझेठायीं प्रेम राहो माझें ॥1॥
 माउलीपरिस आहेसी उदार । तरि कां निष्ठ मन केलें ॥धु॥
 गजेंद्राकारणें केलें त्वां धांवणें । तरि कां निर्वाण पाहातोसी ॥2॥
 प्रल्हादास कष्टीं रिक्षलें तों देवा । तरि कां केशवा सांडी केली ॥3॥
 अन्यायी अजामेळ तो जाला पावन । ऐसें हें पुराण हाका मारी ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझे थोर अपराध । नाम करी छेद क्षणमात्रें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

May I sing Your finest virtues in every possible way. May my love for You remain steady.

You are more generous than a mother; why then have You made my mind so stubborn? For Gajendra's sake, You came running; why then do You watch my ordeal and wait? You rescued Prahlada from torment, O God; why then have You abandoned me? The sinful Ajamila was made pure; so the Puranas cry out. Says Tuka, my offenses are great, yet Your name cuts them away in an instant.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In every way let me sing your virtues well. Let my love for you stay steady. You are more generous than a mother; why then have you made my mind so hard? For the elephant king you came running; why then do you watch my crisis and wait? You saved Prahlada from his torment, God; why then have you cast me off, Keshava? The lawless Ajamila was made pure; the old story cries this aloud. Tuka says: my offenses are great, yet your Name cuts them off in a single moment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pleads by holding up the Lord's own record. He asks only to keep singing and to keep loving, then presses the contrast: a God kinder than a mother seems to have left his mind stubborn and dry. He recites the famous rescues, the elephant Gajendra pulled from the crocodile, the boy Prahlada saved from torment, the sinner Ajamila made pure, and turns each into a question, why them and not me. The argument lands on grace itself: his sins may be great, but if the Name purified even Ajamila, then it can cut his away in an instant too. The complaint is really an appeal to the mercy he is sure is there.

GATHA 4146

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the undivided mind

मराठी मूळ

आतां वांटों नेदीं आपुलें हें मन । न सोडीं चरण विठोबाचे ॥1॥
 दुजियाचा संग लागों नेदीं वारा । आपुल्या शरीरावरुनियां ॥ध्रु॥
 यावें जावें आह्मीं देवा च सांगातें । मागूनी करीत हें चि आलों ॥2॥
 काय वायां गेलों तो करुं उद्वेग । उभा पांडुरंग मागें पुढें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे प्रेम मागतों आगळें । येथें भोगूं फळें वैकुंठीचीं ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now I will not let my mind be divided. I will not release the feet of Vithoba.

I will not let the breeze of any other's company touch my body. Coming and going, I will always walk with God; this is what I have been doing all along.

Says Tuka, if we have not gone to waste, why should we fret? Panduranga stands before us and behind us. I ask for a love beyond measure; let me taste the fruits of Vaikuntha right here.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I will not let this mind of mine be divided. I will not let go of Vithoba's feet. I will not let the wind of any other's company touch my body. Coming and going, I keep company with God alone; this is what I have been doing all along. Why should I fret that I have been wasted? Panduranga stands behind me and before me. Tuka says: I ask for a love beyond measure. Let me taste the fruits of Vaikuntha right here.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram resolves to keep his whole attention on one object. He refuses to split his mind or loosen his hold on Vithoba's feet, and he will not even let the influence of other company brush against him. His one companion in all his coming and going is God, and he notes this has long been his way. He sets aside the worry of having wasted his life by pointing to a Lord who guards him front and back. What he asks for is not heaven later but more love now, enough that the fruits of Vaikuntha are tasted here in this life.

GATHA 4147

The Power of the Name

The Name, the precious moment

मराठी मूळ

आतां आह्मां हें चि काम । वाचे स्मरुं रामराम ॥1॥
 ऐसी मोलाची हे घडी । धरुं पायांची आवडी ॥ध्रु॥
 अमृताची खाणी । तये ठायीं वेचूं वाणी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे पांडुरंगा । माझ्या जीवींच्या जिवलगा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now this alone is my work: to remember Rama, Rama with my tongue. This moment is precious; let me hold fast to my love for His feet.

The tongue is a mine of nectar; let me spend my speech only there. Says Tuka, O Panduranga, O dearest beloved of my jiva.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now this alone is my work: with my tongue to remember Rama, Rama. This moment is precious; let me hold to my love for the feet. The tongue is a mine of nectar; there let me spend my speech. Tuka says: O Panduranga, dearest beloved of my life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reduces his entire occupation to one task, the tongue's repetition of Rama's name. He treats the present moment as something costly and not to be squandered, to be filled instead with love for the Lord's feet. The tongue, he says, is a mine of nectar; spent on the Name it yields what is sweetest, so he will spend his speech nowhere else. The poem closes by naming the one it is addressed to, Panduranga, called the most beloved of his very life, so that all this remembering is plainly an act of love.

GATHA 4148

Devotion to Vitthal

Pilgrimage, dancing at Pandharpur

मराठी मूळ

आतां जावें पंढरीसी । दंडवत विठोबासी ॥१॥
 जेथें चंद्रभागातिरीं । आह्मी नाचों पंढरपुरीं ॥२॥
 जेथें संतांची दाटणी । त्याचें घेऊं पायवणी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी बळी । जीव दिधला पायां तळीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now let us go to Pandhari and bow before Vithoba. There on the banks of the Chandrabhaga, we shall dance in Pandharpur.

Where the saints gather in great throngs, let us take the holy water that has touched their feet. Says Tuka, we are strong, for we have laid down our lives beneath His feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now let us go to Pandhari and bow flat before Vithoba. There on the bank of the Chandrabhaga, we dance in Pandharpur. Where the saints are gathered thick, let us take the water that has washed their feet. Tuka says: we are the strong ones, for we have laid down our life beneath his feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls the listeners with him on pilgrimage to Pandharpur, the home of Vithoba. The journey ends in worship and in joy: a full prostration before the Lord, then dancing on the bank of the river Chandrabhaga. He looks forward to the crowd of saints there and counts it a privilege to receive the water that has touched their feet,

treating their company as itself holy. The closing turns the world's idea of strength upside down: the truly strong, he says, are those who have surrendered completely, who have laid their very life down beneath the Lord's feet.

GATHA 4149

Prayers

Bold pleading, holding the rope of the Name

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी नरका जातां काय येइल तुझ्या हाता । ऐसा तूं अनंता विचारीं पां ॥1॥
 तुज शरण आलियाचें काय हें चि फळ। विचारा दयाळ कृपानिधी ॥ध्रु॥
 तुझें पावनपण न चले आह्मांसीं । ऐसें हृषीकेशी कळों आलें ॥2॥
 आह्मी दुःख पावों जन्ममरण वेथा । काय तुझ्या हाता येत असे ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुह्मी खादली हो रडी । आह्मी धरली सेंडी नाम तुझें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If I go to hell, what comes into Your hands, O Infinite Lord? Consider this. Is this the fruit of having surrendered to You? Think on it, O Compassionate One, O Treasure of mercy.

Has Your power of purification no effect upon us? So it seems, O Hrishiksha. If we suffer and endure the agonies of birth and death, what good does it do You? Says Tuka, You have been defeated, O Lord. We have held onto the end of the rope of Your name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If I go to hell, what comes into Your hands, O Infinite One? Think about that. Is this the fruit of having come to You for refuge? Consider it, O merciful One, O treasure of mercy. Your power to make the impure clean does not work on us. That much I have come to see, O Hrishiksha. We suffer; we bear the pain of birth and death. What good does that bring You? Tuka says: You have eaten dirt; You are shamed. We have grabbed hold of the tuft of Your name and we will not let go.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram argues with God like a debtor who knows his creditor's reputation is on the line. He took refuge in the Lord; if he is still dragged through hell and through birth and death, then it is not only his loss but God's, because God is the one called the purifier of the fallen. So he asks bluntly: what do You gain by letting me suffer? The mood is daring, almost teasing, but the ground under it is total dependence: he has nothing to bargain with except his grip on the Name, and he announces he will not loosen that grip whatever happens.

GATHA 4150

Longing and Separation

Daring argument, let the saints judge

मराठी मूळ

पांडुरंगे पाहा खादलीसे रडी । परिणाम सेंडी धरिली आह्मी ॥1॥
 आतां संतांनीं करावी पंचाईत । कोण हा फजितखोर येथें ॥ध्रु॥
 कोणाचा अन्याय येथें आहे स्वामी । गर्जतसों आह्मी पातकी ही ॥2॥
 याचें पावनपण सोडवा चि तुम्ही । पतितपावन आह्मी आहों खरें ॥3॥
 आह्मी तंव आहों अन्यायी सर्वथा । याची पावन कथा कैसी आहे ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी मेलों तरी जाणा । परि तुमच्या चरणा न सोडावें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Look, Panduranga has been defeated. In the end, it is we who held the rope's end.

Now let the saints hold court and decide: who is the one put to shame here? Whose injustice is at work, O Lord? Even we wrongdoers proclaim it aloud. Your claim of purifying the fallen has been exposed; we, the fallen, are the true deliverers.

We are guilty, to be sure. But how genuine is Your claim of being the savior? Says Tuka, even if we perish, know this: we shall never let go of Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Look, Panduranga has eaten dirt; He is shamed. In the end it is we who held on to the tuft. Now let the saints sit and judge this case: who is the one disgraced here? Whose is the wrong, O Lord? We cry out that we are the sinners. It is Your own claim to purify the fallen that has been put to the test; we, the fallen, are the real saviors here. We are guilty through and through, true. So how does Your story of saving stand? Tuka says: even if we die, know this. We will not let go of Your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stages a courtroom and asks the assembly of saints to decide who has lost face. His logic turns the usual roles upside down: he freely admits he is a sinner, so if he is not saved the failure falls on God, whose whole name is the one who lifts up the fallen. By holding on no matter what, the sinner is the one keeping the relationship alive, which is why he half-jokingly calls himself the savior. Underneath the playful reversal is fierce loyalty: he would rather die at the Lord's feet than release them, and he is betting that God cannot afford to let a clinging devotee fall.

GATHA 4151

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the belly-filling false guru

मराठी मूळ

घालूनियां मध्यावर्ती । दाटुनि उपदेश देती ॥१॥
 ऐसे पोटभरे संत । तयां कैचा भगवंत ॥२॥
 रांडापोरांतें गोविती । वर्षासन ते लाविती ॥३॥
 जसे बोलती निरोपणीं । तैसी न करिती करणी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तया । तमोगुण्याची क्रिया ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

They place people in their midst and forcefully press their teachings upon them. Such are these saints who fill only their bellies; how can they know God? They entangle wives and children, extracting annual subscriptions from them.

They do not practice what they preach. Says Tuka, theirs is the way of darkness and ignorance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They set a man in the middle and press their teaching on him by force. Such are these belly-filling saints; what God can they have? They snare wives and children and fix a yearly fee on them. What they say in their sermons, they do not do in their deeds. Tuka says: theirs is the work of darkness and dullness.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks the religious teacher who has made piety a business. The signs are exact: he corners people and pushes initiation on them, he ropes in whole households, and he collects a standing subscription from them. The real charge is the gap between word and act, the preacher who never lives what he preaches; a man so busy filling his stomach cannot be carrying God. By calling it the work of *tamas*, dullness and darkness, Tukaram names the pattern rather than one man, and the listener is left to test his own teachers, and himself, against the same measure of word matched to deed.

GATHA 4152

Renunciation

Renunciation, the lone fearless seeker

मराठी मूळ

वैभव राज्य संपत्ती टाकावी । उदरार्थ मागावी माधोकरी ॥१॥
 आपुलें तें आधीं करावें स्वहित । ऐसी आहे नीत स्वधर्माची ॥२॥
 वर्ण कुळ जाति याचा अभिमान । तजावा सन्मान लौकिकाचा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे राहे एकाकी निःशंक । देउनियां हाक कंठीं काळ ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One should renounce power, kingdom, and wealth, and beg for alms from door to door. First attend to your own spiritual welfare; such is the law of one's true dharma.

Abandon pride of caste, clan, and lineage, and reject the honor of worldly reputation. Says Tuka, dwell alone and fearless, placing the noose of Death around your own neck as a garland.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Throw away splendor, kingdom, and wealth; beg from door to door for the food of your belly. First do your own true good. That is the law of one's own dharma. Pride of caste, of family, of birth: leave it. Give up the honor of worldly name. Tuka says: live alone and without fear, with the call already given, with Death as a garland at your throat.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out the path of the renouncer in plain steps. Let go of power and possessions, accept the begging bowl, and put your own liberation first, since that, not duty to the world, is what your truest dharma asks. Then drop the inner possessions too: pride of caste and lineage and the craving for a good reputation. The last line is the hardest: live alone and unafraid, having already accepted death so fully that you wear it around your neck like an ornament. Only one who has made peace with dying can be this free.

GATHA 4153

The Necessity of Experience

Self-inquiry, the Eye behind the eyes

मराठी मूळ

हातपाय मिळोनि मेळा । चला ह्मणती पाहों डोळां॥१॥
देखणी नव्हे देखती कैसे । सकळांचा देखणा डोळा चि असे ॥२॥
डोळ्याचा डोळा पाहों गेला । तुका ह्मणे तो पाहों ठेला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The hands, feet, and all the limbs gathered together and said, "Come, let us go and see with our own eyes." But the eyes are not the true seer; how then do they see? The one who truly sees is the eye behind all eyes. Says Tuka, the eye that went to see the Eye of all eyes was itself absorbed in the seeing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The hands and feet and the rest gathered together and said, come, let us go and see with our eyes. But the eyes are not the seer; how do they see at all? The one who sees in everyone is the single seeing Eye. Tuka says: the eye that went to look at the Eye of all eyes stood still in the looking.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the act of seeing into a riddle about who the real perceiver is. The limbs set out to see God, trusting the eyes, but the eyes are only instruments; they do not see by themselves. Behind every pair of eyes there is one Seeing, the awareness that looks through all of them. When the small eye finally goes to look at that Eye, it cannot stand apart and observe it; it is absorbed, the watcher dissolves into what it was watching. He is pointing past the senses to the witnessing consciousness that no sense can ever turn around and catch.

GATHA 4154

True Worship

True worship, the two feet of devotion

मराठी मूळ

मुखें संति इंद्रियें जती । आणिक नेणे भाव भक्ती ॥१॥
 देवा हे चि दोन्ही पदें । येर गाइलीं विनोदें ॥२॥
 चित्ताचें आसन। तुका करितो कीर्तन ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Restraining the mouth is saintliness; restraining the senses is austerity. Beyond these, one need know no other devotion or feeling.

These are the two feet of true worship, O God. Everything else is sung only for amusement.

Says Tuka, the seat of kirtan is the seat of the mind itself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To hold the mouth still is sainthood; to hold the senses still is austerity. Beyond these, know no other feeling, no other devotion. O God, these are the two feet of true worship. Everything else is sung only for sport. Tuka says: the seat of kirtan is the mind itself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips worship down to two disciplines: guarding the tongue and reining in the senses. He calls these the two feet on which real devotion stands, and dismisses the rest as decoration, things sung for entertainment rather than truth. The closing line moves worship inward: kirtan, the singing of God's praise, does not finally happen in the throat or the hall but on the seat of the mind. If the mind is not gathered and quiet, the outward song is only sport; the real practice is the steadying of attention itself.

GATHA 4155

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, longing fulfilled at His face

मराठी मूळ

धांवोनियां आलों पहावया मुख । गेलें माझें दुःख जन्मांतरिचें ॥१॥
 ऐकिलें ही होतें तैसें चि पाहिलें । मन िस्थरावलें तुझ्या पायीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझी इच्छा पूर्ण जाली । कांहीं न राहिली वासना हे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I came running to see Your face, and the sorrow of countless births was dispelled. What I had heard was exactly what I now beheld.

My mind became steady at Your feet. Says Tuka, my desire is completely fulfilled. No trace of longing remains.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I came running to see Your face, and the sorrow of my many births fell away. What I had heard, just that I now saw. My mind has come to rest at Your feet. Tuka says: my wish is wholly fulfilled. Not a trace of craving is left.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the moment of arrival after long seeking. Tukaram rushes to the darshan of God's face, and in that sight the grief carried across countless lifetimes simply drops. What he had only heard described in others' words he now confirms with his own eyes, and the proof steadies a mind that had never been still. The poem ends in complete rest: every desire is satisfied because the one desire has been met, and when the deepest longing is filled there is nothing further left to want.

GATHA 4156

Autobiography

Autobiography, breaking with the world for His feet

मराठी मूळ

गावलोकिकाहीं लावियेलें पिसें । काय सांगों ऐसें तुजपासीं ॥1॥
 तोंड काळें केलें फिरविलें मज । नाहीं धरिली लाज पांडुरंगा ॥ध्रु॥
 काय तुजपासीं सांगों हें गाढाणें । मग काय जिणें तुझें माझें ॥2॥
 कोणासाठीं आतां करावा संसार । केली वारावार आपणें चि ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी मोडिला घरचार । धरियेला धीर तुझ्या पायीं ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The village and the world have driven me mad. How can I tell You what has happened? They have blackened my face and turned me around.

They show no shame, O Panduranga. What complaint shall I bring before You? If I do, what life remains for You and me together? For whose sake should I continue this worldly life? I have been shamed again and again by my own doing.

Says Tuka, I have broken with my household. My resolve rests firmly at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The village and the world have made me out to be mad. What can I tell You of this? They blackened my face and turned me about. They felt no shame, O Panduranga. What complaint shall I bring to You? If I do, what life is left for You and me? For whose sake should I keep this worldly life going now? I have brought ruin on myself, again and again, by my own hand. Tuka says: I have broken up my household. I have set my firm trust at Your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells how the world treated him once he turned wholly to God: it called him mad, shamed him publicly, humiliated him without shame. Yet he refuses to lodge a real complaint, because a quarrel over insults would only put distance between him and the Lord. He asks for whom he should keep up ordinary worldly life at all, and

admits the break was his own doing, repeated by choice. The poem ends with the decision made: he has dismantled his home and household ties and placed all his steadiness in God's feet, accepting the world's scorn as the price of that refuge.

GATHA 4157

The Moral Ideal

Moral protest, Narayana in every body

मराठी मूळ

जीवें जीव नेणे पापी सारिका चि । नळी दुजयाची कापूं बैसे ॥१॥
 आत्मा नारायण सर्वा घटीं आहे । पशुमध्ये काय कळों नये ॥२॥
 देखत हा जीव हुंबरे वरडत । निष्ठाचे हात वाहाती कैसे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तया चांडाळासी नर्क । भोगिती अनेक महादुःखें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The sinful one does not recognize that every being shares the same life-breath. Like a parrot, he sits ready to snip another's stem.

Narayana, the Self, dwells in every body. Should this not be evident even among animals? The living creature howls and bellows in plain sight, yet the merciless hands keep working.

Says Tuka, such wretches will endure countless torments in hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The sinner does not feel that every life is one life like his own. Like a butcher he sits down to cut another's throat. The Self, Narayana, lives in every body. Should this not be known even among the animals? Right before his eyes the creature lows and cries out, yet how do these merciless hands keep moving? Tuka says: such a wretch goes to hell. He suffers many great agonies there.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram condemns cruelty to living beings by grounding it in non-duality. The killer's blindness is that he cannot feel another's life as the same life that beats in him. But the same Self, named Narayana here, dwells in every body, and that includes the animal he is about to slaughter. The poem stares at the scene without flinching: the creature bellows and weeps in plain sight, and still the hands do not stop. Tukaram aims his warning at the hardness that lets a person ignore obvious suffering, and he insists such hardness has a cost, calling it a road into great torment.

GATHA 4158

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, where feeling is, God comes

मराठी मूळ

मनीं भाव असे कांहीं । तेथें देव येती पाहीं ॥१॥
 पाहा जनाई सुंदरी । तेथें देव पाणी भरी ॥२॥
 शुद्ध पाहोनियां भाव । त्याचे हृदयीं वसे देव ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे विठोबासी । ठाव देई चरणापासीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where there is true feeling in the mind, there God comes, without question. Look at the devout Janai: God Himself carried water for her.

Seeing pure devotion, God takes up residence in that mind. Says Tuka, give Vithoba a place at your feet in your own mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where there is some true feeling in the mind, there, see, God comes. Look at Janai, the lovely one: there God Himself drew water for her. Seeing feeling that is pure, God lives in that heart. Tuka says: give Vithoba a place near His own feet, in you.

WHAT IT MEANS

The teaching here is that God responds to the heart, not to display. Wherever genuine feeling rises in the mind, God draws near, and Tukaram offers the saint Janai as proof: her love was so real that the Lord Himself stooped to carry water for her. Purity of devotion is what makes a heart fit for God to dwell in. The closing line turns it into instruction for the listener: make room within yourself for Vithoba, set Him at His own feet inside you, and the same nearness that came to Janai becomes possible.

GATHA 4159

The Nature of God

Nature of God, refuge of the helpless

मराठी मूळ

भागल्याचें तारुं शिणल्याची साउली । भुकेलिया घाली प्रेमपान्हा ॥१॥
 ऐसी हे कृपाळू अनाथांची वेशी । सुखाची च राशी पांडुरंग ॥२॥
 सकळां सन्मुख कृपेचिया दृष्टी । पाहे बहु भेटी उतावीळां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे येथें आतां उरला केंचा । अनंता जन्मींचा शीण भाग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For the weary He is a raft, for the exhausted He is shade, and for the hungry He pours forth the milk of love. Such is this compassionate refuge of the helpless, a very treasure of joy: Panduranga.

He looks upon all with the gaze of mercy, eager to meet those who long for Him. Says Tuka, what weariness or burden of countless births can remain here now?

IN PLAIN WORDS

For the worn-out He is a boat; for the weary, shade; to the hungry He gives the milk of love. So merciful is this gateway for the orphaned, this very heap of joy, Panduranga. With eyes of mercy He faces everyone, looking eagerly to meet those who long for Him. Tuka says: what is left here now of the weariness, the burden of my endless births?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes God by what God does for the helpless. To the one exhausted by life's crossing He is the boat; to the tired He is shade; to the starving He gives love like a mother's milk. Calling Him a gateway for the orphaned, Panduranga is named as a sheer mass of joy who turns His merciful gaze on all and waits eagerly for whoever longs for Him. Against such a refuge the speaker's own long weariness has no standing left: the fatigue accumulated over countless births simply cannot survive contact with this mercy.

GATHA 4160

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the Father who cannot abandon

मराठी मूळ

काय न्यून आहे सांगा । पांडुरंगा तुझापें ॥१॥
 आमुची तों न पुरे इच्छा । पिता ऐसा मस्तकीं ॥२॥
 कैसी तुझां होय सांडी । करुणा तोंडीं उच्चारें ॥३॥
 आश्चर्य चि करी तुका । हे नायका वैकुंठिचिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tell me, what is lacking with You, O Panduranga? Our desire never finds its end, with a Father such as You crowning our heads. How can You abandon one who cries out Your name in anguish? Says Tuka, this is wondrous indeed, O Lord of Vaikuntha.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tell me, what is lacking with You, O Panduranga? Our wish never runs short, with a Father like You over our heads. How could You forsake the one who cries Your name in his pain? Tuka says: this is a wonder, O Lord of Vaikuntha.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reasons from God's abundance to God's faithfulness. Nothing is wanting in Panduranga, so with such a Father watching over them his children's needs can never go unmet. From this he presses the real point: it would be unthinkable for so full a Father to abandon a child who calls out His name in distress. The poem ends in wonder rather than fear, marveling at the Lord of Vaikuntha whose nature makes desertion impossible; the devotee's confidence rests not on his own worth but on what God simply is.

GATHA 4161

Prayers

Prayer, the road ahead blocked

मराठी मूळ

चित्त गुंतलें प्रपंचें । जालें वेडें ममतेचें ॥1॥
 आतां सोडवीं पांडुरंगा । आलें निवारीं तें आंगा ॥ध्रु॥
 गुंतली चावटी । नामीं रूपीं जाली तुटी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे चाली । पुढें वाट खोळंबली ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My mind has become entangled in worldly life; it has gone mad with attachment. Now deliver me, O Panduranga.

Ward off what has come upon me. Idle mischief has crept in, creating a rift between me and Your name and form.

Says Tuka, the road ahead has been blocked.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My mind is tangled in worldly life. It has gone mad with attachment. Now set me free, Panduranga. Ward off what has come upon me. Idle mischief has crept in. It has cut me off from Your name and Your form. Tuka says: the road ahead is blocked.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a soul that knows it is stuck and cannot move on its own. His mind has wrapped itself around the things of the world until it is sick with attachment, so he asks Panduranga to do the untangling for him. The danger he names is precise: useless busyness and chatter have slipped in and severed his contact with God's name and form, the very things that kept him oriented. With the path forward sealed, he has nothing left but to call on the one who can clear it.

GATHA 4162

Confession and Sin

Confession, the moment never comes

मराठी मूळ

किती एका दिसीं । बुद्धि जाली होती ऐसी ॥1॥
 कांहीं करावें स्वहित । तों हें न घडे उचित ॥ध्रु॥
 अवलंबुनी भीक । लाज सांडिली लौकिक ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे दीन । जालों मनुष्यपणा हीन ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

On how many days has the thought arisen: I should do something for my own spiritual good? Yet the right moment never comes. I have taken up begging, casting aside all worldly shame.

Says Tuka, I have become forlorn, lower even than human dignity.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How many days the thought has come to me: I should do something for my own good. But the right moment never arrives. I have taken to begging. I have thrown away all worldly shame. Tuka says: I am wretched, fallen below even the dignity of a human being.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confesses the gap between good intention and the act that never follows. Again and again he resolves to work for his own spiritual welfare, and again and again the right occasion slips past him, so the resolve stays a thought. He admits where this drift has left him: living off others, with the ordinary shame of respectable life cast aside. The harshness is aimed at himself, naming how endlessly postponed self-care can sink a person below even basic human standing, and the confession itself is the first honest move out of that pit.

GATHA 4163

Longing and Separation

World-weariness, take me out of here

मराठी मूळ

आतां बरें जालें । सकाळीं च कळों आलें ॥१॥
मज न ठेवीं इहलोकीं । आलों तेव्हां जाली चुकी ॥२॥
युगमहिमा ठावा । नव्हता ऐसा पुढें देवा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे ठेवीं । भोगासाठीं निरयगांवीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now it is good that it became clear to me early. Do not keep me in this world, O Lord; coming here in the first place was a mistake.

I had not known beforehand, O God, the weight of this age's darkness. Says Tuka, place me in the realm of suffering if I must endure it for my past deeds.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now it is good. It became clear to me early. Do not keep me in this world, Lord. Coming here at all was a mistake. I did not know beforehand, God, how heavy the darkness of this age would be. Tuka says: if I must pay for what I have done, then put me in the land of suffering.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is so worn down by the world that he counts being born into it as an error, and he is relieved to have seen this clearly while there is still time. He pleads with God not to leave him here, confessing he had no idea how crushing the corruption of this age would prove. The final line is stark: rather than be kept in this world, he would

accept even hell as the price of his past deeds. The verse is not despair for its own sake; it is a soul asking to be removed from a place it can no longer trust, and willing to bear the cost.

GATHA 4164

Prayers

Prayer, the parent must spare the child

मराठी मूळ

परि आतां माझी परिसावी विनंती । रखुमाईच्या पती पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 चुकलिया बाळा न मारावें जीवें । हित तें करावें मायबापीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझा ह्मणताती मज । आतां आहे लाज हे चि तुझां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

But now, hear my humble plea, O Lord of Rakhumai, O Panduranga. Do not strike a wayward child to death; it is the duty of parents to do what is best.

Says Tuka, they call me Yours. Now the honor to uphold is Yours.

IN PLAIN WORDS

But now hear my plea, Lord of Rakhumai, Panduranga. Do not put a straying child to death. Parents must do what is good for it. Tuka says: they call me Yours. Now the honor of that is Yours to keep.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pleads as an erring child before a parent who has the power to punish. He does not deny that he has gone astray; he asks instead that God act the way good parents act, correcting the child for its welfare rather than destroying it. Then he turns the claim around: since the world calls him God's own, his failures now reflect on God, and the honor at stake belongs to the Lord. It is the bold logic of the bhakta, binding God to him by love and by reputation, so that to abandon the devotee would be to lose face.

GATHA 4165

Worldly Life

Lament, the age undone by sin

मराठी मूळ

पापाचिया मुळें । जालें सत्याचें वाटोळें ॥१॥
 दोष जाले बिळवंत । नाहीं ऐसी जाली नीत ॥२॥
 मेघ पडों भीती । पिकें सांडियेली िक्षती ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं । वेदा वीर्य शक्ति नाहीं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Because of sin, truth has been undone. Faults have become powerful, and righteousness has vanished.

The rains threaten to fall destructively; the crops have been abandoned in the fields. Says Tuka, the Vedas have lost their strength and vigor.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Because of sin, truth has been ruined. Faults have grown strong. Right conduct is nowhere to be found. The rains threaten to fall and destroy. The crops are left lying in the fields. Tuka says: even the Vedas have lost their strength and power.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram laments an age where wrong has overpowered right and truth itself has come undone. He paints the breakdown spreading outward: sins grow muscular, righteousness disappears, and even the land turns hostile, with ruinous rains and abandoned harvests. The closing line is the gravest, that the Vedas, the oldest source of order, have lost their potency to hold things together. The poem names the stakes of a world cut loose from dharma, where the supports people once leaned on no longer bear weight.

GATHA 4166

Longing and Separation

The Name, the boat across the ocean

मराठी मूळ

ऐसा दुस्तर भवसागर । नेणों कैसा उतरुं पार ॥1॥
 कामक्रोधादि सावजें थोर । दिसताती भयंकर ॥ध्रु॥
 मायाममतेचे भोवरे । घेती भयानक फेरे ॥2॥
 वासनेच्या लहरा येती । उद्योगहेलकावे बसती ॥3॥
 तरावया एक युक्ति असे । तुका नामनावेमधीं बैसे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How fearsome is this ocean of worldly existence; I do not know how I shall cross to the other shore. The wild beasts of lust and anger loom terribly.

The whirlpools of illusion and attachment spin with frightening force. Waves of desire surge, and the storms of restless striving toss one about.

Says Tuka, there is one means to cross: sit in the boat of the Name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This ocean of worldly existence is so hard to cross. I do not know how I will reach the far shore. The wild beasts of lust and anger loom, and they look terrible. The whirlpools of illusion and attachment turn in frightening circles. Waves of desire come; the storms of restless striving toss me about. Tuka says: there is one way to cross. Sit in the boat of the Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram maps the spiritual crossing as a sea voyage and fills the water with every hazard. Lust and anger are predatory beasts, illusion and attachment are whirlpools, desire and restless effort are the waves and squalls that capsize a swimmer. The point of the catalogue is that no one can fight all this by their own strength. The single

answer he offers is to stop swimming and climb aboard the Name of God, the one vessel that carries the soul over a sea it could never cross alone.

GATHA 4167

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the God who will not leave

मराठी मूळ

देव जडला जाइना अंगा । यासी काय करुं सांगा ॥1॥
 वरकड देव येती जाती । हा देव जन्माचा सांगाती ॥ध्रु॥
 अंगीं भरलें देवाचें वारें । देव जग चि दिसे सारें ॥2॥
 भूत न बोले निरुतें । कांहीं केल्या न सुटे तें ॥3॥
 जीव खादला दैवतें । माझा आणि पंचभूतें ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे वाडें कोडें । उभें पुंडलिकापुढें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God has become fixed in my being and will not leave. What shall I do about this, tell me? Other gods come and go, but this God is a companion for life.

The wind of God has filled my body; the whole world appears as God. This spirit within me will not speak a false word; nothing can dislodge it.

This deity has consumed my jiva and the five elements. Says Tuka, with great joy, He stands before Pundalika.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God has lodged in my being and will not go. Tell me, what can I do about this? Other gods come and go; this God is a companion for life. The wind of God has filled my body. The whole world looks like nothing but God. The spirit in me will not speak a false word. Nothing I do can shake it loose. This deity has eaten up my jiva and the five elements. Tuka says: with great delight, He stands before Pundalika.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes possession by God as something he can no longer reverse, half complaint and half wonder. Lesser gods are visitors who arrive and depart, but this one has settled in for good as a lifelong companion. The takeover is total: God's presence fills his body like a wind, the world dissolves into God alone, and try as he might he cannot dislodge it. He says the deity has devoured his very self and the five elements of which his body is made, leaving nothing that is not God. The verse ends in joy, with that same God standing at Pandharpur before the devotee Pundalika who first drew Him there.

GATHA 4168

Prayers

Prayer, born among the Lord's lovers

मराठी मूळ

हरिदासाचिये घरीं । मज उपजवा जन्मांतरीं ॥१॥
 ह्यणसी कांहीं मागा । हें चि देगा पांडुरंगा ॥ध्रु॥
 संतां लोटांगणीं । जातां लाजों नको मनीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्यणे अंगीं । शक्ती देई नाचें रंगीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let me be born in the household of a Hari-devotee in my next life. You say, ask for anything; this alone is what I ask, O Panduranga.

When I prostrate before the saints, let me never feel shame in my mind. Says Tuka, give me the strength to dance with abandon in devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the house of one who loves Hari, let me be born in my next life. You say, ask for something; this alone I ask, Panduranga. When I fall flat before the saints, let me feel no shame in my mind. Tuka says: put the strength in my body to dance with abandon in Your worship.

WHAT IT MEANS

Offered any boon, Tukaram asks for nothing the world prizes; he asks only to be reborn into a household of devotees. The request shows what he values: not wealth or release in the abstract, but the company that keeps a soul turned toward God. He asks for two graces in particular, that he never feel embarrassed prostrating before the saints, and that his body have the strength to lose itself in dancing worship. It is a prayer to belong wholly to the world of bhakti, without the pride that holds a person back from it.

GATHA 4169

Worldly Metaphors

Satire, the emptiness of mere argument

मराठी मूळ

लटिक्याचें आंवतणें जेविलिया साच । काय त्या विश्वास तो चि खरा ॥१॥
 कोल्हांटिणी लागे आकाशीं खेळत । ते काय पावत अमरपद ॥ध्रु॥
 जळमंडपयाचे घोडे राउत नाचती । ते काय तडवती युद्धालागीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्यणे तैसें मतवादीयांचें जिणें । दिसे लाजिरवाणें बोलतां चि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If someone has truly feasted at a false invitation, will he trust that host again? An acrobat may perform tricks in the sky; does she thereby attain immortality? Wooden horses and riders dance at a water-festival; will they charge into a real battle? Says Tuka, such is the life of those who argue over doctrines. Even to speak of it is embarrassing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If a man has feasted at a false invitation, does he really trust that host? An acrobat tumbles through tricks in the sky; does she win the deathless state by it? Wooden horses and their riders dance at the water-festival; will they charge into a real battle? Tuka says: such is the life of those who argue over doctrines. Even to speak of it is shameful.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lines up three pictures of effort that looks like the real thing but produces nothing. A feast you only imagined leaves you hungry; an acrobat's skyward stunts win applause but not immortality; festival horses that prance are useless when a true fight comes. Each image exposes performance mistaken for substance. He then turns the mirror on those who spend their lives debating doctrines, treating clever argument as if it were the goal. The warning is not contempt for thought but a caution against the pattern of substituting talk about God for the actual living of devotion.

GATHA 4170

Longing and Separation

Longing, others were saved, why not me

मराठी मूळ

काय आह्मीं केलें ऐसें । नुद्धरीजेसें सांगावें ॥१॥
 हरण कोल्हें वैकुंठवासी । कोण त्यासी अधिकार ॥२॥
 गजा नाडण सरोवरीं । नाहीं हरी विचारिलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे गणिका नष्ट । माझे कष्ट त्याहूनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What have I done that is so terrible that You refuse to save me? Tell me. A deer and a jackal became dwellers of Vaikuntha; what special qualification did they possess? When the elephant Gajendra was trapped in the lake, Hari did not pause to deliberate.

Says Tuka, the courtesan was wretched, yet my sufferings are greater even than hers.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What have I done that is so terrible You refuse to save me? Tell me. A deer and a jackal became dwellers of Vaikuntha; what right did they have to it? When the elephant was trapped in the lake, Hari did not stop to think it over. Tuka says: the courtesan was a sinner, yet my hardships are greater than hers.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses his case by holding up those God has already rescued. A deer, a jackal, the trapped elephant Gajendra, the fallen courtesan, none of them had any special merit, yet Hari saved them without hesitation. So he asks what crime of his could possibly be bad enough to make God hold back now. The argument is the bhakta's audacity again: he turns God's own record of unearned grace into a claim on it. Naming his suffering as worse than the courtesan's, he insists he has more reason, not less, to be reached for.

GATHA 4171

Social Criticism

Satire, the guru who brought ruin

मराठी मूळ

भाग्यासाठीं गुरु केला । नाहीं आह्मांसी फळला ॥१॥
 याचा मंत्र पडतां कानीं । आमच्या पेवांत गेलें पाणी ॥२॥
 गुरु केला घरवासी । आमच्या चुकल्या गाईंम्हसी ॥३॥
 स्वामी आपुली बुटबुट घ्यावी । आमुची प्रताप टाकुन द्यावी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I took a guru for the sake of good fortune, but it did not bear fruit for me. The moment his mantra entered my ears, water flooded into our granary.

I chose a householder guru, and our cows and buffaloes went astray. Master, you should keep your own faults to yourself and let go of your claim on my achievements.

Says Tuka, such worthless ones only bring redoubled misery.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I took a guru for good fortune. He bore me no fruit. The moment his mantra fell on my ears, water flooded into our granary. I took a householder guru, and our cows and buffaloes wandered off. Master, keep your own ruin to yourself; let go of your claim on what I gain. Tuka says: such worthless ones only double a person's troubles.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram aims his wit at the worldly guru taken for profit rather than for God. He went looking for good fortune through a teacher, and the verse reports a string of comic disasters: the mantra arrived, the granary flooded, the livestock strayed. The complaint is that a guru who is himself sunk in household concerns has nothing real to give and yet claims credit for the disciple's gains. The criticism points at a pattern, the spiritual transaction entered for material reward, and warns that leaning on such a teacher only multiplies trouble. The self-examination is to ask why one sought a guru for fortune at all.

GATHA 4172

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the tender feet on the brick

मराठी मूळ

गुणा आला ईटेवरी । पीतांबरधारी सुंदर जो ॥१॥
 डोळे कान त्याच्या ठायीं । मन पायीं राहो हें ॥२॥
 निवारोनी जाय माया । ऐसी छाया जयासी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे समध्यान । हे चरण सकुमार ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He has come to the edge of the brick, that beautiful one clad in a yellow garment. Let my eyes and ears be fixed upon Him.

Let this mind remain at His feet. His very shadow banishes illusion from all who are near.

Says Tuka, meditate evenly upon these tender and delicate feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He has come and stood upon the brick, that beautiful one in the yellow garment. Let my eyes and my ears rest on Him. Let this mind stay at His feet. His shadow alone drives illusion away. Tuka says: meditate steadily on these tender, delicate feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram fixes his whole attention on Vitthal standing on the brick at Pandharpur, beautiful in his yellow silk. He gathers his senses, eyes and ears, onto that single form, and asks that his mind settle at the feet and not move. He names what the feet do: even their shadow scatters Maya, the illusion that ordinarily holds the soul. The closing instruction is plain and practical, to hold a steady meditation on those tender feet, making the standing image at the shrine the one resting place of the mind.

GATHA 4173

Devotion to Vitthal

The kirtan, lost in the Name

मराठी मूळ

रंगीं रंगें नारायण । उभा करितों कीर्तन ॥१॥
 हातीं घेउनियां वीणा । कंठीं राहें नारायणा ॥२॥
 देखिलीसे मूर्ती । माझ्या हृदयाची विश्रांति ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । देई कीर्तनाचा हेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With joy and color, Narayana stands as I perform kirtan. With the veena in my hands, let Him remain at my throat, O Narayana.

I have seen that form which is the repose of my heart. Says Tuka, O God, grant me the passion for kirtan.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I stand and sing kirtan, lost in the color of Narayana. I take the veena in my hands. Stay on my tongue, O Narayana. I have seen that form. It is the rest of my heart. Tuka says: O God, give me this hunger for kirtan.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is asking God for one gift, and the gift is the singing itself. He stands up with the veena and loses himself in the colour of the Name, and he prays that Narayana will live on his throat so the song keeps coming. The form he has seen is what gives his heart its only rest. So when he asks for the hunger for kirtan, he is asking not for liberation but for the love that makes him sing; the longing is already the reward.

GATHA 4174

Faith and Trust

Faith, demanding the promised treasure

मराठी मूळ

तुझा भरवसा आम्हां । फार होता पुरुषोत्तमा ॥१॥

भवसागरसंकटीं । तारिशील जगजेठी ॥२॥

नाम आदित्याचें झाड । त्याचा न पडे उजड ॥३॥

सिलंगणीचें सोनें । त्यासीं गाहाण ठेवी कोण ॥४॥

तुका ह्मणे देवा । िब्रद सोडूनियां ठेवा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I had great faith in You, O Supreme Being. I trusted You would carry me across the perilous ocean of worldly existence, O Lord of the world.

The name is a tree planted by the sun itself; its shade will never be barren. Who would pawn gold that has been tested by the touchstone? Says Tuka, O God, set aside Your vow and show me Your hidden treasure.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I had great faith in you, Purushottama. I trusted you would carry me across the dangerous sea of this world, Lord of the world. The Name is a tree planted by the sun. Its shade never fails. Who pawns gold that has passed the touchstone? Tuka says: God, set aside your vow and give me the treasure.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses his claim on God like a creditor calling in a debt. He has trusted God to ferry him across the ocean of birth and death, and he reminds God that the Name is no ordinary shelter: it is a tree planted by the sun, whose shade can never fail. His images all say the same thing, that what God has given is already proven true, like gold tested on the touchstone that no one would think to pawn. So he ends boldly, telling God to drop whatever reserve He keeps and hand over the hidden treasure He has promised.

GATHA 4175

Prayers

Prayer, the pilgrim's only wishes

मराठी मूळ

जालों आतां दास । माझी पुरवीं हे आस ॥१॥
 पंढरीचा वारकरी । वारी चुकों नेदीं हरी ॥२॥
 संतसमागम । अंगीं भरोनियां प्रेम ॥३॥
 चंद्रभागे स्नान । तुका ह्मणे हें चि दान ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have now become Your servant; fulfill this longing of mine. Let me be a pilgrim of Pandhari, and let Hari never allow me to miss the annual pilgrimage.

In the company of saints, may love fill my being. Says Tuka, bathing in the Chandrabhaga is all the gift I ask.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I have become your servant. Fulfill this longing of mine. Make me a pilgrim of Pandhari. Hari, never let me miss the pilgrimage. Let love fill my body in the company of the saints. Tuka says: a bath in the Chandrabhaga, that is the only gift I ask.

WHAT IT MEANS

Now that he belongs to God, Tukaram names the small, exact things he wants. He asks only to remain a Varkari, one of the pilgrims who walk to Pandharpur, and never to miss the yearly walk. The rest of his prayer is just as humble: the company of saints, love filling his body, a bath in the river Chandrabhaga that flows past the temple. He wants no heaven and no power; the pilgrimage, the saints, and the river are the whole of what he calls a gift.

GATHA 4176

Prayers

Surrender, no one else to turn to

मराठी मूळ

यासाठीं करितों निष्ठ भाषण । आहेसी तूं जाण सर्वदाता ॥१॥
 ऐसें दुःख कोण आहे निवारिता । तें मी जाऊं आतां शरण त्यासी ॥२॥
 बैसलासे केणें करुनि एक घरीं । नाहीं येथें उरी दुसऱ्याची ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आलें अवघें पायांपें । आतां मायबापें नुपेक्षावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It is for this reason that I speak to You with urgency: You are the giver of all, I know. What other remover of sorrow is there that I should go and surrender to instead? You have taken up sole residence in my home; no room remains for anyone else.

Says Tuka, everything has come to Your feet. Now, O Mother and Father, do not neglect me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is why I speak to you so urgently: I know you are the giver of all. Who else can take away such sorrow, that I should go and surrender to him instead? You have come and settled alone in my house. There is no room left here for anyone else. Tuka says: everything has come to your feet. Now, mother and father, do not turn away from me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram explains why his speech to God is so insistent: there is simply no second address for his sorrow. He knows God is the one giver of all, so going elsewhere would be pointless; no other power can lift the grief he carries. He pictures God as having taken sole residence in his house, leaving no room for any rival refuge. Having laid everything at the feet of the one he calls mother and father, he asks the only thing left to ask, that God not neglect what has been wholly handed over.

GATHA 4177

Autobiography

The God-mad boy, the world's contempt

मराठी मूळ

पोरा लागलीसे चट । धरी वाट देवळाची ॥1॥
 सांगितले नेघे कानीं । दुजें मनी विठ्ठल ॥ध्रु॥
 काम घरीं न करी धंदा । येथें सदा दिशुचत ॥2॥
 आमुचे कुळीं नव्हतें ऐसें । हें चि पिसें निवडलें ॥3॥
 लौकिकाची नाहीं लाज । माझें मज पारिखें ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे नरका जाणें । त्या वचनें दुष्टाचीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The boy has caught the obsession; he keeps running to the temple. He will not listen to anyone; his mind holds only Vitthal.

He does no work at home, always absent-minded here. Nothing like this ever happened in our family before; this peculiar madness has singled him out.

He has no shame before the world; what is mine feels foreign to me. Says Tuka, those who speak such words are the wicked ones who are bound for hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The boy has caught the obsession. He keeps to the road to the temple. He hears nothing you tell him. His mind holds only Vitthal. He does no work at home, no trade. Here he is always absent. No one in our family was ever like this. This madness has picked him out. He has no shame before the world. What is mine has become a stranger to me. Tuka says: it is the wicked who say he is bound for hell.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lets the worldly relatives speak, and then turns their verdict back on them. In their voice, the boy is a scandal: he runs to the temple, ignores everyone, neglects work and trade, brings a madness no one in the family ever had, and has lost all shame before society. The complaint that even his own people now feel foreign to him is meant as an insult to the devotee. But Tukaram's signature line flips it: those who condemn such a God-intoxicated boy as hell-bound are themselves the wicked ones. The poem asks the listener which side of that judgment they are standing on.

GATHA 4178

Longing and Separation

Longing, coaxing the silent God

मराठी मूळ

देवा बोलें आतां बोला । त्वां कां धरिला अबोला॥१॥
 भेऊं नको देई भेटी । तूं कां पडिलासी संकटीं ॥२॥
 तुझ्या जीवींचें मी जाणें । ह्मणसी मुक्ती आह्मां देणें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे न लगे कांहीं । चित्त राहो तुझे पायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, speak now, say something. Why have You become silent? Do not be afraid; grant me Your meeting.

Why have You put Yourself in such a difficult position? I know what is in Your chitta: You think You will have to grant me liberation. Says Tuka, I need nothing of the sort. Just let my mind remain at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God, speak now, say something. Why have you fallen silent? Do not be afraid. Grant me your meeting. Why have you put yourself in such a tight spot? I know what is in your heart. You think you will have to give me liberation. Tuka says: I want nothing of the kind. Just let my mind rest at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram teases his silent God the way one coaxes a reluctant friend. He imagines that God has gone quiet out of a kind of worry, as if afraid that meeting Tukaram will oblige Him to hand over liberation. So Tukaram tells God to relax, because he is not after liberation at all. The whole point of the prayer is to release God from that supposed debt: all he asks is that his mind be allowed to stay at God's feet, which is the only gift he ever wanted.

GATHA 4179

Devotion to Vitthal

Humility, the smallest in God's court

मराठी मूळ

यमधर्म आणि ब्रह्मादिक देव । त्यांचा पूर्ण भाव तुझे पायीं ॥1॥
 करिती स्मरण पार्वतीशंकर । तेथें मी किंकर कोणीकडे ॥ध्रु॥
 सहजरमुखेंसी घोष फणिवराचा । मज किंकराचा पाड काय ॥2॥
 चंद्र सूर्य आणि सर्व तारांगणें । करिती भ्रमण प्रदिक्षणा ॥3॥
 तुका ह्याने त्यांसी स्वरूप कळेना । तेथें मज दीना कोण पुसे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Yama, Brahma, and all the gods hold perfect devotion at Your feet. Parvati and Shankara ceaselessly remember You.

Where do I, a mere servant, stand in that company? Shesha with his thousand mouths raises a constant hymn. What is the standing of this humble servant? The sun, moon, and all the stars revolve around You in circumambulation.

Says Tuka, when even they cannot fathom Your nature, who will pay attention to a wretch like me?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Yama, Brahma, and all the gods hold full devotion at your feet. Parvati and Shankara remember you without stopping. Where do I, a servant, stand among them? Shesha with his many mouths sings your hymn without end. What weight does a servant like me carry? The moon, the sun, and all the host of stars go round you in circles. Tuka says: when even they cannot grasp your nature, who will ask after a wretch like me?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures his own smallness against the grandest worshippers in creation. The death-lord Yama, the creator Brahma, Parvati and Shankara, the thousand-mouthed serpent Shesha, the sun and moon and all the stars, every one of them already adores God and circles Him in worship. Set beside that company, Tukaram counts for nothing, a servant of no weight. Yet the smallness is not despair: by confessing that even these mighty beings cannot fathom God's nature, he turns his own littleness into a plea, asking why the Lord would bother to notice a wretch like him, which is exactly the noticing he hopes for.

GATHA 4180

Faith and Trust

Faith, devotion makes God the debtor

मराठी मूळ

विठोबाचे पायीं जीव म्यां ठेविला । भक्तिभावे केला देव ऋणी ॥1॥
 देव माझा ऋणी आहे सहाकारी । परसपरवारि भवभय ॥२॥
 भवभयडोहीं बुडों नेदी पाहीं । धरुनियां बाही तारी मज ॥3॥
 तारियेले दास पडिल्या संकटीं । विष केलें पोटीं अमृतमय ॥4॥
 अमृतातें सेवीतसे नामरसा । तोडियेला फांसा बंधनाचा ॥5॥
 बंधनाचा फांसा आह्मीं कांहीं नेणों । पाय तुझे जाणों पद्मनाभा ॥6॥
 पद्मनाभा नाभिकमळीं ब्रह्मादिक । त्रैलोक्यनायक ह्यणविसी ॥7॥
 ह्यणविसी देवा दासाचा अंकित । मनाचा संकेत पाहोनियां ॥8॥
 पाहोनियां दृढ निश्चय तयाचा । तो चि दास साचा जवळीक ॥9॥
 जवळीक जाली ब्रह्मीं सुखावले । मार्ग दाखविले मूढा जना ॥10॥
 मूढा जनानाजी दास तुझा मूढ । कास तुझी दृढ धरियेली ॥11॥
 धरियेले तुझे पाय रे विठला । तुका सुखी जाला तुझ्या नामें ॥12॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I placed my life at Vithoba's feet and made God my debtor through devotion. God is my debtor and my ally, saving me from the terror of worldly existence.

He does not let me drown in the well of worldly fear, but holds my arm and pulls me across. He has rescued His servants in times of distress, turning poison in their bellies into nectar.

I drink the nectar of His name-juice; the noose of bondage has been cut. I know nothing of bondage's snare; I know only Your feet, O Padmanabha.

From Your lotus-navel sprang Brahma; You are called the Lord of the three worlds. You call Yourself the servant of Your servants, watching the intent of their hearts.

The one whose resolve is firm is the true devotee, closest to You. In that closeness, the jiva rejoices in Brahman; the path has been shown to the ignorant.

Says Tuka, among the ignorant, I am Your ignorant servant, and I have held fast to Your waist.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I placed my life at Vithoba's feet. By devotion I made God my debtor. My God is my debtor and my helper. He keeps the fear of this world away. He does not let me drown in the deep well of worldly fear. He holds my arm and carries me across. He has saved his servants in their troubles. He turned the poison in their bellies into nectar. I drink the nectar of the Name. The noose of bondage is cut. I know nothing of the noose of bondage. I know only your feet, Padmanabha. Padmanabha, from your navel-lotus came Brahma and the rest. You are called the lord of the three worlds. You call yourself the slave of your slave, watching the secret of his mind. Seeing his firm resolve, that one is the true servant, close to you. In that closeness the jiva rejoices in Brahman, and the path is shown to the foolish people. Among the foolish people I am your foolish servant. I have held your support fast. I have held your feet, Vitthal. Tuka says: Tuka has grown happy through your Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a daring claim: by sheer devotion, the servant has put God in his debt. Having laid his life at Vithoba's feet, he says God now owes him rescue, and so God holds his arm above the deep well of worldly fear and carries him across, just as He once turned poison to nectar in the bellies of His devotees. The instrument of all this is the Name, whose sweetness cuts the noose of bondage so cleanly that Tukaram says he no longer even knows what bondage is. The poem then names the strange reversal at the heart of bhakti: the Lord of the three worlds, from whose navel-lotus Brahma was born, willingly calls Himself the slave of His slave, won over by a devotee's firm resolve. Tukaram places himself last in line, the most foolish among foolish people, and says that holding fast to those feet is exactly what has made him happy.

GATHA 4181

Prayers

Prayer, carry me to the far shore

मराठी मूळ

बहु क्लेशी जालों या हो नरदेहीं । कृपादृष्टी पाहीं पांडुरंगा ॥1॥
 पांडुरंगा सर्वदेवांचिया देवा । घ्यावी माझी सेवा दिनानाथा ॥ध्रु॥
 दिनानाथ िब्रद त्रिभुवनीं तुझें । मायबापा ओझें उतरावें ॥2॥
 उतरीं सत्वर पैलथडी नेई । पूर्णसुख देई पायांपाशीं॥3॥
 पायांपाशीं मज ठेवीं निरंतर । आशा तुझी फार दिवस केली ॥4॥
 केली आस तुझी वाट मी पाहातों । निशिदिनीं ध्यातों नाम तुझें॥5॥
 नाम तुझें गोड स्वभक्ता आवडे । भक्तांलागीं कडे खांदा घेसी॥6॥
 घेसी खांद्यावरी खेळविसी लोभें । पाउल शोभे विटेवरि ॥7॥
 विटेवरि उभा देखिलासी डोळं । मनाचा सोहळा पुरविसी ॥8॥
 पुरवीं सत्वर त्रैलोक्यस्वामिया । मिठी घाली पायां तुका भावें ॥9॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have suffered greatly in this human body. Look upon me with the eye of grace, O Panduranga.

O God of all gods, accept my service, O Lord of the lowly. Your name in the three worlds is "Protector of the afflicted," O Mother and Father; lift this burden from me.

Carry me swiftly to the far shore and grant me perfect joy at Your feet. Keep me near Your feet always; I have hoped for You for so many days.

I have set my hope on You and watch for You; day and night I meditate on Your name. Your name is sweet; Your devotees cherish it.

You carry Your devotees upon Your shoulders and caress them with love. Your feet shine upon the brick; You fulfill every desire of the chitta.

Says Tuka, fulfill this now, O Lord of the three worlds. I clasp Your feet with devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have suffered greatly in this human body. Look on me with the eye of grace, Panduranga. Panduranga, God of all the gods, take up my service, Lord of the lowly. Your name through the three worlds is Lord of the lowly, mother and father; lift this load from me. Lift me at once and carry me to the far shore. Give me full joy at your feet. Keep me always near your feet. I have hoped for you so many days. I have set my hope on you and I watch the road. Night and day I dwell on your Name. Your Name is sweet. Your devotees love it. You take your devotees up on your shoulder. You take them on your shoulder and play with them in love. Your foot is lovely on the brick. I have seen you standing on the brick with my own eyes. You fulfill the heart's festival. Fulfill it quickly, Lord of the three worlds. Tuka says: Tuka clasps your feet with love.

WHAT IT MEANS

Worn down by the suffering of human life, Tukaram presses his case on Panduranga by holding the Lord to His own title, Protector of the lowly. He treats the name as a promise that has to be kept: if God is called the refuge of the afflicted across the three worlds, then He must lift this burden and ferry Tukaram across the ocean to the far shore. The plea is woven with patience and intimacy, the long days of watching the road, the night and day repetition of the sweet Name, the picture of God lifting His devotees onto His shoulder to play with them in love. At the centre is the form he has actually seen, the feet standing on the brick at Pandharpur, and the whole poem ends by simply clasping those feet and asking that the long-hoped rescue come quickly.

GATHA 4182

Longing and Separation

Longing, homeward after many births

मराठी मूळ

एक वेळे तरी जाईन माहेरा । बहुजन्म फेरा जाल्यावरी ॥१॥
 चित्ता हे बैसली अविट आवडी । पालट ती घडी नेघे एकी ॥२॥
 करावें ते करी कारणशरीर । अंतरीं त्या धीर जीवनाचा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तरि होइल विलंब । परि माझा लाभ खरा जाला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

At least once let me go home to my true home, after so many cycles of birth. This undying love has settled in my chitta; not a single moment would I trade it.

The causal body does what it must, but within it the sustenance of true life abides. Says Tuka, there may be delay, but my gain is real and lasting.

IN PLAIN WORDS

At least once let me go home to my true home, after so many rounds of birth. An unfading love has settled in my heart. I would not trade it for a single moment. The causal body does what it must. Within it the strength of true life holds steady. Tuka says: there may be delay, but my gain is real and lasting.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks of returning home like a married daughter longing for her parents' house, except his true home lies beyond the long round of births. The love that has lodged in his heart is unfading, and he would not exchange it for anything even for an instant. He distinguishes between the outer life and the inner one: the causal body keeps running its course, but the real sustenance of life holds firm underneath it. So even if reaching home is delayed, he is content, because the gain itself is already real and will not be lost.

GATHA 4183

The Saints

The saints, God's credit is theirs

मराठी मूळ

सांग त्वां कोणासी तारिलें । संतांवेगळें उद्धरिलें॥१॥
 संत शब्द उपदेशी । मग तूं हो ह्मणशी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं तुझा उपकार । करूं संतांचा उच्चार ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tell me, whom have You saved apart from the saints? Whom have You liberated on Your own? The saints speak the word of guidance, and then You say, "Yes, I did it." Says Tuka, the credit is not Yours at all. Let us praise the saints instead.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tell me, whom have you saved? Whom have you ever lifted up without the saints? The saints speak the teaching. Then you say, I did it. Tuka says: the favor is not yours at all. Let us speak the praise of the saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses God with a blunt question and will not let Him take the credit. He claims that God has never saved a single soul on His own; it is always the saints who first speak the word of teaching that turns a person toward God. Only afterward, he says, does God step in and announce that He did the saving. The signature line drives the correction home: the favour belongs to the saints, not to God, so it is the saints whose praise should be sung. The poem is really about where a seeker should look for help, at the living teachers through whom grace actually arrives.

GATHA 4184

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, Pandhari is Kashi itself

मराठी मूळ

उमा रमा एके सरी । वाराणसी ते पंढरी ॥1॥
 दोघे सारिखे सारिखे । विश्वनाथ विठ्ठल सखे ॥२॥
 तेथें असे भागीरथी। येथें जाणा भीमरथी ॥३॥
 वाराणशी त्रिशुलावरी । सुदर्शनावरि पंढरी ॥४॥
 मनकणिका मनोहर । चंद्रभागा सरोवर ॥५॥
 वाराणशी भैरवकाळ । पुंडलीक क्षेत्रपाळ ॥६॥
 धुंडिराज दंडपाणी। उभा गरुड कर जोडुनी ॥७॥
 गया ते चि गोपाळपुर । प्रयाग निरानरसिंपुर ॥८॥
 तेथें असती गयावळ । येथें गाई आणि गोपाळ ॥९॥
 शमीपत्रपिंड देती । येथें काला निजसुखप्राप्त ॥१०॥
 संतसज्जनीं केला काला । तुका प्रसाद लाधला ॥१०॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Uma and Rama stand equal; Varanasi is the same as Pandhari. Both are alike: Vishwanath and Vitthal are friends.

The Ganga flows there; know that the Bhima flows here. Varanasi rests on the trident; Pandhari rests on the Sudarshana discus.

The beautiful Manikarnika ghat corresponds to the splendid Chandrabhaga. Bhairava guards Varanasi; Pundalika is the guardian of this sacred land.

Dhundiraja stands with his staff there; here stands Garuda with hands folded. Gaya is the same as Gopalpur; Prayag is the same as Narasimhapur.

Gayawals serve there; here, cows and cowherds serve. There, offerings are made with shami leaves; here, the offering is the attainment of true bliss.

Says Tuka, the saints and the good performed the rites, and Tuka received the grace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Uma and Rama are equal. Varanasi and Pandhari are one. The two are alike, alike: Vishwanath and Vitthal are friends. The Ganga flows there. Know that the Bhima flows here. Varanasi rests on the trident. Pandhari rests on the Sudarshana discus. The lovely Manikarnika ghat is here the splendid Chandrabhaga. Bhairava guards Varanasi. Pundalika guards this holy place. Dhundiraja stands there with his staff. Here Garuda stands with folded hands. Gaya is this same Gopalpur. Prayag is this same Narasimhapur. Pilgrim-priests serve there. Here cows and cowherds serve. There they offer the rice-ball with shami leaves. Here the offering is the gaining of one's own bliss. Tuka says: the saints and the good made the shared meal, and Tuka received the grace.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the pilgrim who travels far to Kashi by mapping every holy thing of the north onto his own Pandharpur. Point by point he matches them: Uma to Rama, Vishwanath to Vitthal, the Ganga to the Bhima river, the Manikarnika ghat to the Chandrabhaga, Gaya and Prayag to local shrines, even the guardian deities and the serving priests. The claim is that one need not go anywhere, because Pandhari already holds all of it. The closing line lifts the comparison higher: where Kashi offers ritual rice-balls to the dead, Pandhari offers the attainment of one's own bliss, the shared meal of the saints, and that is the grace Tukaram says he has received.

GATHA 4185

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the empty boaster

मराठी मूळ

फटणाचे बडबडे चवी ना संवाद । आपुला चि वाद आपणासी ॥१॥
 कोणें या शब्दाचे मरावें घाणी । अंतरें शाहाणी राहिजे हो ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे ज्यासी करावें वचन । त्याचे येती गुण अंगास ते ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A braggart's chatter has neither flavor nor substance. It is just his own argument with himself.

Why should anyone suffer the stench of such words? Stay wise within and keep your distance. Says Tuka, the qualities of the one you choose to counsel will naturally come upon you.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A braggart's chatter has no flavor and no substance. It is only his own argument with himself. Why should anyone die in the stench of such words? Stay wise within, and keep your distance. Tuka says: the qualities of the one you choose to speak with come onto your own body.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning against the man who talks loudly and says nothing. His noise is just an argument he is having with himself; there is no flavor in it and no truth. So do not waste your breath answering him; stay quiet and wise inside and step back from the foul air of his words. The closing line names the real stake: whatever quality belongs to the person you keep talking with rubs off onto you, so choosing your company is choosing what you become.

GATHA 4186

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the wasted life

मराठी मूळ

दिवसा व्यापारचावटी । रात्री कुटुंबचिंता मोटी ॥१॥
 काय करूं या मनासी । नाठवे हृषीकेशी ॥२॥
 वेश्येपाशीं रात्री जागे । हरिकीर्तनीं निद्रा लागे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय जालासी । वृथा संसारा आलासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By day he is absorbed in business and gossip; by night he is weighed down by worry over his family. What shall I do with this mind? It never remembers Hrishiksha.

He stays awake all night at a courtesan's side, yet falls asleep the moment Hari's kirtan begins. Says Tuka, what has become of you? You have come into this world in vain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By day he is busy with business and gossip. By night the family's worries weigh heavy on him. What shall I do with this mind? It never remembers Hrishiksha. He stays awake all night beside a courtesan. He falls asleep the moment Hari's kirtan begins. Tuka says: what have you become? You have come into this world for nothing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out a single day and shows a life leaking away through it. The hours go to trade and chatter and household anxiety, and not one moment is given to God. He sharpens the charge with a pair of opposites: this man can stay awake all night for pleasure, yet sleep takes him the instant Hari's kirtan starts, which shows exactly where his heart is pointed. The closing question is aimed not at contempt but at self-examination: a human birth is the chance to remember God, and to spend it this way is to waste the chance entirely.

GATHA 4187

Prayers

Prayer, asking for true understanding

मराठी मूळ

अहो कृपावंता । हाई बुद्धीचा ये दाता ॥१॥
 जेणें पाविजे उद्धार । होय तुझे पायीं थार ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । माझें अंतर वसवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Compassionate One, grant me the gift of true understanding, by which I may attain liberation and find a firm place at Your feet. Says Tuka, O God, come and dwell within my chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Compassionate One, give me the gift of true understanding. By it I may reach liberation and find a firm place at your feet. Tuka says: O God, come and dwell within me.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a short, direct prayer for one thing: right understanding. Tukaram does not ask for comfort or fortune but for the discernment by which a soul is set free and finds steady footing at God's feet. He calls God compassionate because he is leaning entirely on that mercy to give what he cannot earn on his own. The last line turns the request inward: it is not enough to be granted the gift from outside; he asks God to come and live within him, so the understanding has its source there.

GATHA 4188

Worldly Metaphors

Satire, the slanderer as washerman

मराठी मूळ

निंदक तो परउपकारी । काय वणूप त्याची थोरी । जे रजकाहुनि भले परि । सर्व गुणें आगळा ॥१॥
 नेघे मोल धुतो फुका । पाप वरच्यावरि देखा । करी साधका । शुद्ध सरते तिहीं लोकीं ॥२॥
 मुखसंवदणी सांगते । अवघें सांटविलें तेथें । जिह्वा साबण निरुतें । दोष काढी जन्माचे ॥३॥
 तया ठाव यमपुरीं । वास करणें अघोरीं । त्यासी दंडण करी । तुका ह्मणे न्हाणी ते ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The slanderer is truly a selfless benefactor. How can I describe his greatness? He is even better than a washerman in every way.

He charges no fee but washes away our sins for free. Just look: he takes our faults upon himself.

His tongue is the soap that scrubs out the stains of lifetimes. What is stored in his gossip-laden mouth cleanses everything.

Says Tuka, his dwelling is in Yama's city, where terrible suffering awaits. Yet that very suffering of his is what cleanses us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The slanderer is truly a benefactor to others. How can I describe his greatness? He is even better than a washerman, finer in every quality. He takes no fee; he washes for free. Look how he takes our sins onto himself. His tongue is the soap that scrubs out the stains of many lifetimes. Everything stored up in his gossiping mouth cleanses us. Tuka says: his place is in Yama's city, his dwelling in that terrible suffering; that very suffering of his is the bath that washes us clean.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns slander on its head with a mock-praise: the very man who runs you down is doing you a service. A washerman charges a fee, but the slanderer cleans you for nothing, scrubbing away the faults of lifetimes with the soap of his own tongue. The dark turn is that he pays the bill himself, because the man who lives on others' faults

earns the suffering of Yama's hell, and that suffering of his is what leaves the slandered one washed clean. The point for self-examination is to stop fearing or resenting the one who criticizes you; his words wear away your defects, and the harm of the habit falls on the one who indulges it, not on you.

GATHA 4189

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, no time for the Name

मराठी मूळ

प्रपंचाची पीडा सोसिती अघोरी । जया क्षणभरी नाम नये ॥1॥
 नाम नाठविती आत्मया रामाचें । धिग जिणें त्याचें भवा मूळ ॥ध्रु॥
 मूळ ते पापाचें आचरण तयाचें । नाहीं राघवाचें स्मरण त्या ॥2॥
 स्मरण भजन नावडे जयासी । आंदणीया दासी यमदूतां॥3॥
 चिंतन रामाचें न करी तो दोषी । एकांत तयासीं बोलों नये ॥4॥
 नये त्याचा संग धरुं ह्मणे तुका । धरितां पातका वांटेकरी ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who endure grievous worldly suffering yet cannot spare a moment for the Name are to be pitied. Cursed is the life of one who never remembers Rama, the Self.

Sin is the root of such a one's conduct; he has no remembrance of Raghava. One who has no love for remembrance, worship, or devotion is a gift-slave to Yama's messengers.

One who does not contemplate Rama is a wrongdoer; one should not even speak to such a person in private. Says Tuka, do not keep the company of such a one, for by associating with him, you become a partner in his sin.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They endure the terrible suffering of worldly life, yet cannot find a single moment for the Name. Cursed is the life of one who never remembers Rama, the Self; that life is the root of rebirth. The root of his conduct is sin; he has no remembrance of Raghava. One who has no love for remembrance, worship, or devotion is a gift-slave to Yama's messengers. One who does not contemplate Rama is a sinner; do not even speak with him in private. Tuka says: do not keep his company, for if you do, you become a sharer in his sin.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is struck by a strange refusal: people will bear endless worldly pain without complaint, yet cannot spare one moment to remember God. He names the cost plainly: a life without remembrance of Rama is the root of more rebirth, and such a person hands himself over to death's messengers as if he were a slave given away as a gift. The harsh counsel to avoid this person, and not even talk with him alone, is pointed at the pattern, not at hatred of the man, since the danger Tukaram names is contagious: keep company with a life built on forgetting God, and you take on a share of it yourself.

GATHA 4190

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, meaning over rote

मराठी मूळ

अर्थाविण पाठांतर कासया करावें । व्यर्थ चि मरावें घोकूनियां ॥1॥
 घोकूनियां काय वेगीं अर्थ पाहे । अर्थरूप राहे होऊनियां ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे ज्याला अथाअ आहे भेटी । नाही तरी गोष्टी बोलों नका ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why memorize texts without understanding their meaning? One only dies in vain by rote learning. Instead of just memorizing, quickly seek the meaning.

Become the meaning itself. Says Tuka, one who has met the essence may speak. Otherwise, do not even talk about it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why memorize a text without its meaning? You only die in vain by reciting by rote. Instead of mere repetition, quickly look for the meaning. Stay in it, become the meaning itself. Tuka says: one who has met the meaning may speak; otherwise, do not even talk about it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cuts at hollow learning, the kind that chants the words and never reaches what they say. To memorize a scripture without grasping its sense is to spend a life in vain. The real instruction is to go past repetition into the meaning, and then further still, to live it until you yourself become what the words point to. The closing line sets the right to speak by that test: only one who has actually met the meaning may talk about it; the rest should keep silent rather than recite what they have not understood.

GATHA 4191

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, you become your company

मराठी मूळ

बसतां चोरापाशीं तैसी होय बुद्ध । देखतां चि चिंधी मन धांवे ॥1॥
 व्यभिचाःयापासीं बैसतां क्षणभरी । देखतां चि नारी मन धांवे ॥धु.॥
 प्रपंचाचा छंद टाकूनियां गोवा । धरावें केशवा हृदयांत ॥2॥
 सांडूनियां देई संसाराची बेडी । कीर्तनाची गोडी धरावी गा ॥23॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुला सांगतों मी एक । स्वप्नणीनायक मुखीं गावा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sitting with a thief makes the mind think like a thief; the moment you see a rag, the mind races toward it. Sitting even for a moment with an adulterer, the mind runs at the sight of a woman.

Abandon the clinging web of worldly preoccupation and hold Keshava in your heart. Cast off the shackles of worldly life and cultivate a taste for kirtan.

Says Tuka, I tell you this one thing: sing of Rukmini's Lord with your lips.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sit beside a thief and your mind turns like a thief's; the moment it sees a rag, the mind runs toward it. Sit even a moment beside an adulterer, and at the sight of a woman the mind runs. Throw off the tangle of worldly habit and hold Keshava in your heart. Cast off the shackles of worldly life, and grow a taste for kirtan. Tuka says: I tell you this one thing, sing of Rukmini's Lord with your lips.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram shows how company shapes the mind by watching it borrow the habits of whoever sits near. Beside a thief the mind starts grabbing, even at a rag; beside an adulterer it chases at the first sight of a woman. The remedy is to change what you keep close: drop the tangled habits of worldly life, hold Keshava in the heart, and let a taste for kirtan grow where the old craving was. The single instruction he leaves you with is plain and doable, to keep the name of Rukmini's Lord on your lips, so the mind has something holy to keep company with.

GATHA 4192

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, bearing blows for the divine

मराठी मूळ

मस्तकीं सहावें ठांकियासी जाण । तेव्हां देवपण भोगावें गा ॥१॥
 आपुलिये स्तुती निंदा अथवा मान । टाकावा थुंकोन पैलीकडे ॥२॥
 सद्गुसेवन तें चि अमृतपान । करुनी प्राशन बैसावें गा ॥३॥
 आपुल्या मस्तकीं पडोत डोंगर । सुखाचें माहेर टाकुं नये ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां सांगूं तुला किती । जिण्याची फजीती करूं नये ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When you can endure blows upon the head, then alone can you enjoy the state of divinity. Whether it is praise or blame or honor, spit it all to the other side.

The service of the Sadguru is the true nectar; drink it deeply and be at rest. Even if mountains fall upon your head, do not abandon the home of true joy.

Says Tuka, how much more shall I tell you? Do not make a disgrace of this life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When you can bear blows upon your head, then alone may you taste the state of the divine. Praise or blame or honor, your own, spit it all to the far side. The service of the Sadguru is the true nectar; drink it and sit at rest. Though mountains fall upon your head, do not abandon the home of joy. Tuka says: how much more shall I tell you? Do not make a disgrace of this life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets a steep price on the divine state: you reach it only when you can take blows to the head without flinching, which means letting go of the self that needs defending. Praise, blame, and even honor are to be spat away, since all of them feed the very pride that must die. What replaces them is the service of the true teacher, which he calls nectar; drink that and rest in it. The warning at the end is for self-examination: the home of joy is worth keeping even if mountains fall on you, so do not throw a human life away in petty disgrace.

GATHA 4193

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the mother and child

मराठी मूळ

स्वामिसेवा गोड । माते बाळकाचें कोड ॥१॥
 जेंजें मागावें भातुकें । तेंतें पुरवी कौतुकें ॥२॥
 खेळविलें कोडें । हरुषें बोले कीं बोबडें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे लाड । तेथें पुरे माझें कोड ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The service of the Lord is sweet. A mother delights in her child's play.

Whatever toy the child asks for, she provides it with delight. She plays with the child joyfully, smiling when it babbles.

Says Tuka, there my every desire is fulfilled in that tender love.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The service of the Lord is sweet, like a mother's delight in her child's play. Whatever toy the child asks for, she gives it gladly. She plays with it happily, smiling when it babbles. Tuka says: in that tender love every desire of mine is fulfilled.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes serving God through the simplest tenderness there is, a mother with her small child. The work is not duty but delight: she gives the child whatever it asks, plays along, and smiles even at its babbling. He places himself as the child in this love, trusting that God indulges the devotee the way a mother indulges her little one. The closing line is the whole point: inside that love nothing more needs to be sought, because every desire is already met.

GATHA 4194

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the Name needs only faith

मराठी मूळ

तुझें नाम पंढरिनाथा । भावेंविण नये हाता ॥१॥
 दाहां नये विसां नये । पंनासां साटां नये ॥२॥
 शां नये सहस्रा नये । लक्षकोडीलागीं नये ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पंढरिनाथा । भावेंविण नये हाता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The name of the Lord of Pandhari cannot be obtained without true devotion. It cannot be bought for ten, twenty, fifty, or sixty coins.

It cannot be had for a hundred, a thousand, or even millions. Says Tuka, O Lord of Pandhari, without devotion it does not come into one's hands.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your name, O Lord of Pandhari, does not come into the hand without faith. It cannot be bought for ten, nor for twenty, nor for fifty or sixty. Not for a hundred, not for a thousand, not for a million coins. Tuka says: O Lord of Pandhari, without faith it never comes into the hand.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram insists that the Name has only one price, and it is not money. He runs the numbers upward, ten, twenty, fifty, a hundred, a thousand, millions, to show that no sum can purchase it. What it asks for instead is bhava, true faith or feeling of the heart; the Name comes into your hand only when that is present. The repetition that frames the poem drives the single claim home: spiritual treasure is not bought, it is received by the heart that believes.

GATHA 4195

The Saints

Saints, shun the company that turns from them

मराठी मूळ

संतांपायीं विन्मुख जाला । तो जरि संगति मागों आला ॥१॥
 तरि त्याहुनि दुरी जावें । सुखें एकांतीं बैसावें ॥२॥
 आत्मचर्चा नाहीं जेथें । अगी लावुनि द्यावी तेथें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं । चित्ता समाधान कांहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If one who turned his back on the saints comes seeking your company, move further away from him. Sit happily in solitude instead.

Where there is no discussion of the Self, set fire to that place and leave. Says Tuka, there is no peace of mind to be found there.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If one who has turned his back on the saints comes asking for your company, then move further away from him. Sit happily alone instead. Where there is no talk of the Self, set fire to that place and go. Tuka says: there is no peace of mind to be had there.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram counsels how to guard your own spiritual life by choosing company. A person who has rejected the saints may still come seeking your fellowship, and the advice is to step back from him rather than be drawn along, choosing solitude over harmful closeness. He makes the test sharp: any gathering with no talk of the Self is worth burning down and leaving, an image aimed at the emptiness of the place, not at any person in it. The reason given is simple and practical: such company leaves the mind no peace, so it is no loss to walk away.

GATHA 4196

The Saints

Saints, the diamond keeps its worth

मराठी मूळ

हिरा ठेवितां काळें गाहाण । मोल न तुटे दुकाळीं जाण ॥१॥
तैसे संतजन पाहीं । विनटले श्रीहरिपायीं ॥२॥
तुका ह्याने तैसे भक्त । तयांसी जन हें निंदित ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A diamond placed in safekeeping, even in dark times, does not lose its value. Such are the saintly ones, devoted to the feet of Shrihari.

Says Tuka, such devotees may be slandered by the world, but their worth never diminishes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A diamond left in safekeeping, even through dark times, does not lose its value, even in a famine. So look at the saints: they are joined wholly to the feet of Shrihari. Tuka says: such devotees the world may slander, yet their worth does not fall.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the slander that lands on holy people with a steady image. A diamond does not cheapen because times are hard or a famine comes; its worth is in itself, not in the world's mood. The saints are like that, fastened to the feet of Shrihari, so their value rests in that bond and nowhere else. The point for self-examination is to weigh the saints by what they are joined to, not by the world's opinion of them, since slander cannot lower what was never priced by the world.

GATHA 4197

Worldly Metaphors

Satire, the pilgrimage that never leaves home

मराठी मूळ

परिसैं गे सुनेबाई । नको वेचूं दूध दहीं ॥1॥
 आवा चालिली पंढरपुरा । वेसीपासुनि आली घरा ॥२॥
 ऐकें गोष्टी सादर बाळे । करीं जतन फुटकें पाळें ॥3॥
 माझे हातींचा कलवडू । मजवाचुंनि नको फोडूं ॥4॥
 वळवटिक्षरीचें लिंपन । नको फोडूं मजवांचून ॥5॥
 उखळ मुसळ जातें । माझें मन गुंतलें तेथें ॥6॥
 भिक्षुक आल्या घरा । सांग गेली पंढरपुरा ॥7॥
 भक्षीं मपित आहारु । नको फारसी वरो सारु ॥8॥
 सून ह्याने बहुत निकें । तुह्मी यात्रेसि जावें सुखें ॥9॥
 सासूबाई स्वहित जोडा । सर्व मागील आशा सोडा ॥10॥
 सुनमुखीचें वचन कानीं । ऐकोनि सासू विवंची मनीं ॥11॥
 सवतीचे चाळे खोटे । म्यां जावेंसैं इला वाटे ॥12॥
 अतां कासया यात्रे जाऊं । काय जाउनि तेथें पाहूं ॥13॥
 मुलें लेकरें घर दार । माझें येथें चि पंढरपूर ॥14॥
 तुका ह्याने ऐसैं जन । गोवियेलें मायेंकरून ॥15॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Listen, dear daughter-in-law, do not waste the milk and curds. Your mother-in-law has set out for Pandharpur but only got as far as the village gate before turning back home.

Listen carefully, child, and guard the cracked pot with care. Do not break my curd-stirrer without me.

Do not break the dried-dung coating on the grinding-stones without me. My mind is attached to the mortar, pestle, and grinding-stone.

If a mendicant comes to the house, tell him I have gone to Pandharpur. Eat simply and do not cook too elaborately.

The daughter-in-law says sweetly, go happily on your pilgrimage, mother; give up all backward-looking attachment. Hearing her daughter-in-law's words, the old woman thinks to herself: my rival wants me gone.

So why should I go on pilgrimage at all? What would I see there anyway? My children, grandchildren, house, and home are my Pandharpur right here. Says Tuka, such is the way of people, bound by the ropes of illusion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Listen, daughter-in-law: do not waste the milk and the curds. Your mother-in-law has set out for Pandharpur. She got as far as the village gate, and then she came back home. Listen carefully, child, and guard the cracked pot. Do not break my curd-stirrer while I am gone. Do not break the dried-dung coating on the grinding-stones while I am gone. My mind is caught in the mortar, the pestle, the grinding-stone. If a beggar comes to the house, tell him I have gone to Pandharpur. Eat plainly. Do not cook elaborate food. The daughter-in-law says sweetly: this is very good, go on your pilgrimage happily. Mother-in-law, gather your own true welfare; let go of every backward longing. Hearing her daughter-in-law's words, the old woman thinks in her heart: my rival wants me gone. These are her false games; she only wishes I would leave. So why should I go on pilgrimage now? What would I go and see there anyway? My children, my grandchildren, my house and door, my Pandharpur is right here. Tuka says: this is how people are, bound fast by Maya.

WHAT IT MEANS

The whole abhanga is a comic portrait of a pilgrim who never makes it past the gate. The old woman announces she is leaving for Pandharpur, the holy town of Vitthal, but turns back before she has gone a step, fussing over the curds, the cracked pot, the stirrer, the grinding-stones. Her mind is glued to the kitchen, not to God. When the daughter-in-law urges her to go and let go of attachment, she hears only rivalry and convinces herself that her home, her children, her house, is itself Pandharpur. Tuka names the pattern without insult: this is how Maya binds an ordinary person, who mistakes the clutch of household things for piety and calls it pilgrimage. The mirror is turned toward anyone who plans the journey to God but cannot loosen a single grip to take it.

GATHA 4198

Social Criticism

Satire, the slanderer in human dress

मराठी मूळ

एक ते गाढव मनुष्याचे वेष । हालविती पुस पुढें दाढी ॥१॥
 निंदा हें भोजन जेवण तयांसी । जोडी घरीं रासी पातकांच्या ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुखें बैसोनियां खाती । कुंभपाकीं होती नर्कवासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Some are donkeys in human form, wagging their whiskers and stroking their beards. Slander is their daily meal; they heap up stores of sin at home.

Says Tuka, they sit and eat contentedly, but they will dwell in the boiling hell of Kumbhapa.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Some are donkeys dressed as men, wagging their tails and stroking their beards. Slander is their meal; that is what they eat. At home they pile up heaps of sins. Tuka says: they sit and eat in comfort now, but they will fall into the boiling hell of Kumbhapa.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tuka strikes hard at people who make slander their daily food. Outwardly they look like men, grooming the beard, carrying themselves with dignity, but he calls them donkeys in disguise, because their real diet is the tearing-down of others. Each act of slander, he says, stacks up like stored grain into a hoard of sins inside the house. The

comfort they enjoy now is borrowed against a reckoning: the boiling hell named Kumbhapaka. The warning lands not as contempt for any one person but as a hard look at the habit of feeding on other people's faults.

GATHA 4199

Longing and Separation

Trust, God does not delay

मराठी मूळ

मागत्याची टाळाटाळी । झिंझ्या वोढूनि कपाळीं॥१॥
 ऐसा तंव मोळा । तुमचा नसेल गोपाळा ॥२॥
 नसेल ना नवें । ऐसें धरियेलें देवें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाला । उशीर नाही तो विठ्ठला॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He evades the one who asks, pulling wrinkles across his forehead. Surely, O Gopala, Yours is not such a disposition.

Or is it something new that God has adopted? Says Tuka, there has been no delay on Vitthal's part.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A man who is asked for something stalls and dodges, wrinkling his forehead. But O Gopala, surely Your way is not like that. Has God taken up some new habit? No, He has not. Tuka says: there has never been any delay on Vitthal's part.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tuka contrasts a tight-fisted human with the open hand of God. When you ask a grudging man for help, he frowns and puts you off; that is the way of the world. Then he turns to Gopala and insists that giving is not that kind of withholding nature. He even half-asks whether God has picked up some new, stingy habit, and answers his own doubt: no, nothing has changed. The settled conviction is that Vitthal has never once been slow to give; if there is a delay, it is not on God's side.

GATHA 4201

Social Criticism

Self-examination, the eye that misses its own faults

मराठी मूळ

संसार करिती मोठ्ठा महत्वाणें । दिसे लोका उणें न कळे त्या ॥१॥
 पवित्रपण आपुलें घरच्यासी च दिसे । बाहेर उदास निंदिताती ॥२॥
 आपणा कळेना आपले अवगुण । पुढिलाचे दोषगुण वाखाणिती ॥३॥
 विषयाचे ध्यासें जग बांधियेलें । ह्मणोनि लागले जन्ममृत्यु ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझें संचित चि असें । देवाजीचें पिसे सहजगुण ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who conduct worldly life with great self-importance appear deficient to others, yet cannot see it themselves. Their own purity is visible only to their household; outsiders see only their flaws and speak ill of them.

They cannot see their own faults, yet they readily enumerate the virtues and vices of others. The world is bound by the chains of sensory obsession, and therefore birth and death persist.

Says Tuka, such is my own accumulated destiny: a natural madness for God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who run their worldly life with great self-importance look deficient to others, and cannot see it in themselves. Their purity is visible only to their own household; outside, people are cold and speak ill of them. They cannot see their own faults, but they freely list the virtues and faults of others. The world is bound by its craving for sense-objects, and so birth and death keep coming. Tuka says: this is simply what I have stored up, a natural madness for God.

WHAT IT MEANS

The abhanga sets a blind spot against a clear one. People who carry themselves with self-importance in worldly affairs cannot see how poorly they appear to others; their own family may call them pure, but outsiders see only the flaws. The sharper point is the double standard: they are expert at cataloguing everyone else's virtues and vices while staying blind to their own. Tuka names the engine underneath, the craving for sense-objects, as the very thing that keeps the round of birth and death turning. He closes by pointing at himself instead of at them: whatever he has been given to store up is just one thing, a natural madness for God, and the contrast is meant to turn the listener's eye back onto his own faults rather than his neighbour's.

GATHA 4202

Worldly Life

Counsel, keep good company

मराठी मूळ

गव्हाराचें ज्ञान अवघा रजोगुण । सुखवासी होऊन विषय भोगी ॥१॥

त्यासी ज्ञानउपदेश केला । संगेंविण त्याला राहावेना ॥२॥

तुका ह्मणे संग उत्तम असावा । याविण उपावा काय सांगों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The knowledge of the pleasure-seeker is all passion. He dwells in comfort and indulges in sensory enjoyments.

Even when spiritual teaching is offered to him, he cannot live without worldly company. Says Tuka, one must keep good company. Beyond this, what other remedy can I suggest?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The pleasure-seeker's knowledge is all restless passion. He lives in comfort and feeds on the senses. Even when you give him spiritual teaching, he cannot stay away from worldly company. Tuka says: one must keep good company. Apart from this, what other remedy can I name?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tuka diagnoses the comfortable worldly man and prescribes one cure. Such a person's so-called knowledge is nothing but rajas, the drive toward enjoyment; he settles into ease and lives off sense-pleasures. Teaching alone will not move him, because the moment instruction ends he slides back into the company that holds him. So the remedy is not more doctrine but a change of company: surround yourself with the good, the satsang. Tuka offers it plainly as the one practical lever, asking what else there is to suggest, since the company we keep shapes us more than any lesson.

GATHA 4203

Social Criticism

Satire, the worldly heart and the stung conscience

मराठी मूळ

भाग्यालागी लांचावले । देवधर्म ते राहिले ॥१॥
 कथे जातां अळसे मन । प्रपंचाचें मोटें ज्ञान ॥२॥
 अखंडप्रीति जाया । नेणे भजनाच्या ठाया ॥३॥
 कथाकीर्तन धनाचें । सर्वकाळ विषयीं नाचे ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे पंढरिराया । ऐसे जन्मविले वांयां ॥५॥
 पतिव्रतेची कीर्ती वाखाणितां । सिंदळईच्या माथां तिडिक उठे ॥६॥
 आमुचें तें आहे सहज बोलणें । नाहीं विचारून केलें कोणीं ॥७॥
 अंगें उणें त्याच्या बैसे टाळक्यांत । तेणें ठिणग्या बहुत गाळीतसे ॥८॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी काय करणें त्यासी । ढका खवंदासी लागतसे ॥९॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Lured by fortune, they have abandoned worship and dharma. The mind grows lazy at the thought of a sacred discourse, yet it possesses great expertise in worldly affairs.

One's constant love is for wife and children; one knows not the place of devotion. The kirtan they perform is for the sake of wealth; they dance to the tune of sense-objects at all times.

Says Tuka, O King of Pandhari, such people were born in vain. When the virtue of a faithful wife is praised, a wrinkle of irritation rises on the forehead of the unchaste.

Our speech is simply natural and straightforward; no one has stopped to consider it. The one who is deficient within gets a burning in his skull, and so he throws off sparks.

Says Tuka, what can we do about such people? The kicks land back on the one who kicks.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Bribed by fortune, they have left worship and dharma behind. The mind grows lazy at the thought of a sacred discourse, but it has great skill in worldly affairs. Their constant love is for wife and children; they do not know the place of devotion. The kirtan they perform is for the sake of money; they dance always to the tune of the senses. Tuka says: O King of Pandhari, such people were born in vain. When the virtue of a faithful wife is praised, a sharp pang rises in the head of the unchaste woman. Our speech is just plain and straight; no one stops to weigh it. The one who is lacking inside takes it into his own skull, and throws off many sparks. Tuka says: what can we do about such a one? The kick lands back on the one who kicked.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tuka describes hearts owned by the world and then explains why honest words enrage them. Such people skip worship and dharma, find sacred discourse tiresome but worldly business effortless, love only family, and even turn kirtan into a way to earn money, dancing all day to the senses. He says they were born in vain, then gives the telling image: praise a faithful wife and the unchaste woman feels the sting on her own forehead. His own speech, he insists, is simply plain and straight, aimed at no one in particular; if it burns someone, it is because that person recognizes the lack in himself and reacts with sparks of anger. The closing proverb turns it inward: the kick returns to the kicker, so the offence a listener takes is a measure of his own conscience, not of any malice in the words.

GATHA 4204

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, knowing God past words

मराठी मूळ

आहे ऐसा देव वदवावी वाणी । नाहीं ऐसा मनीं अनुभवावा ॥१॥
 आवडी आवडी किळवराकिळवरी । वरिली अंतरी ताळी पडे ॥२॥
 अपूर्व दर्शन मातेपुत्रा भेटी । रडूं मागे तुटी हर्षयोगें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे एकें कळतें दुसरें । बरियानें बरें आहाचाचें आहाच ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

That God exists, let the tongue proclaim. That He does not exist, let the mind experience through direct realization.

Wave upon wave of longing and the cry of devotion arise, and when the inner being is satisfied, realization dawns. The rare meeting of mother and child brings tears that follow the burst of joy.

Says Tuka, one thing is understood, then another reveals itself. The good within the good is simply as it is.

IN PLAIN WORDS

That God exists, let the tongue say it. That He is not a mere thing, let the mind taste in direct experience. Wave on wave of longing rises, love calling to love, and when the inner being is filled, the chord falls into place. Like the rare meeting of mother and child, the tears come after the burst of joy. Tuka says: one thing is understood, and then the next reveals itself. The real is truly real; the shallow stays shallow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tuka marks the line between saying God and tasting God. The tongue can declare that God exists, but the proof he wants is not a statement; it is direct realization in the mind, where what looked like nothing turns out to be everything. He describes how it comes: longing breaks over the heart in waves, love answering love, until the inner being is satisfied and everything tunes into harmony, like the overwhelming reunion of mother and child where the weeping follows the joy. Realization, he says, is progressive: grasp one thing and the next opens of itself. The closing line is a touchstone, what is genuinely real proves itself real, while the merely shallow shows up as shallow, so the only test is to taste it.

GATHA 4205

Prayers

Prayer, the Name above every gift

मराठी मूळ

हे चि माझे चित्तीं । राहो भावप्रीति । विठ्ठल सुषुप्ती । जागृति स्वप्नासी ॥१॥
 आणिक नाहीं तुज मागणें । राज्यचाड संपित्त धन । जिद्धे सुख तेणें । घेतां देहीं नाम तुझें ॥२॥
 तुझें रूप सर्वाठायीं । देखें ऐसें प्रेम देई । न ठेवावा ठायीं । अनुभव चित्ताचा ॥३॥
 जन्ममरणाचा बाध । समुळ्ळनि तुटे कंद । लागो हा चि छंद । हरि गोविंद वाचेसी ॥४॥
 काय पालटे दुरुषणें । अवघें कोंदाटे चैतन्य । जीवशिवा खंडण । होय ते रे चिंतितं ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे या चि भावें । आह्मीं धालों तुझ्या नामें । सुखें होत जन्म । भलते याती भलतैसीं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

May this love and devotion for Vitthal remain in my chitta in waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. I ask You for nothing else: no kingdom, no wealth, no possessions.

The tongue finds its joy in taking Your name while in this body. Let me see Your form everywhere; grant me such love.

Let the mind's experience not be kept in one place but pervade all. May the root of birth and death be completely severed.

May this one passion cling to the tongue: Hari, Govinda. What is transformed by Your sight? All is flooded with pure consciousness.

The boundary between jiva and God is shattered in that contemplation. Says Tuka, with this very devotion we are sated by Your name. Let births come happily, in any caste, in any form.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let only this stay in my heart: love and devotion. Vitthal in deep sleep, in waking, in dream. I ask You for nothing else: no craving for kingdom, no wealth, no possessions. The tongue's whole joy is taking Your name while I live in this body. Let me see Your form everywhere; grant me such love. Do not keep the mind's experience fixed in one place; let it spread through all. Let the root of birth and death be cut clean away. Let this one passion cling to my tongue: Hari, Govinda. What changes at Your sight? Everything is flooded with pure consciousness. The wall between jiva and God is shattered in that contemplation. Tuka says: with this very devotion we are filled full by Your name. Let births come gladly, in any caste, in any form.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a prayer that refuses every prize except love of God. Tuka asks that devotion to Vitthal hold his heart through all three states, waking, dream, and deep sleep, and explicitly waves away kingdom, wealth, and possessions. What he wants instead is the Name on his tongue while he lives, the sight of God's form everywhere, and a realization that does not stay penned in one place but pervades everything. The stakes he names are the deepest ones: the very root of birth and death cut away, and the boundary between the individual soul and God shattered in contemplation, so that all is seen as one pure consciousness. So complete is this that he no longer fears rebirth; if births must come, let them come gladly, in any caste or form, because the Name has already made him full.

GATHA 4206

Longing and Separation

Longing, breaking God's silence

मराठी मूळ

मौन कां धरिलें विश्वाच्या जीवना । उत्तर वचना देई माझ्या ॥1॥
 तूं माझें संचित तूं चि पूर्वपुण्य । तूं माझें प्राचीन पांडुरंगा ॥ध्रु॥
 तूं माझें सत्कर्म तूं माझा स्वधर्म । तूं चि नित्यनेम नारायणा ॥2॥
 कृपावचनाची वाट पाहातसें । करुणा वोरसें बोल कांहीं ॥3॥
 तुका म्हणे प्रेमळाच्या प्रियोत्तमा । बोल सर्वोत्तमा मजसवें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why have You fallen silent, O Life of the universe? Answer my words. You are my destiny, You are my past merit, You are my ancient inheritance, O Panduranga.

You are my righteous action, You are my own dharma, You are my daily practice, O Narayana. I watch for a word of grace from You.

Speak something, overflowing with compassion. Says Tuka, O Beloved of the loving, O Supreme One, speak with me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why have You gone silent, O Life of the universe? Answer my words. You are my stored merit, You are my old good deeds, You are my ancient inheritance, O Panduranga. You are my good works, You are my own dharma, You are my daily practice, O Narayana. I am watching for a word of grace from You. Overflow with mercy; say something. Tuka says: O Beloved of those who love, O Highest of all, speak with me.

WHAT IT MEANS

The whole abhanga is one cry against God's silence. Tuka, the Life of the universe, has gone quiet, and Tuka pleads for a single word in answer. He then lays everything he has at God's feet: his merit, his past good deeds, his inheritance, his righteous works, his dharma, his daily discipline, all of it is not his own doing but Panduranga himself. Having no other ground to stand on, he simply waits, watching for one word of grace, asking God to overflow with compassion and speak. The longing is total because he has handed God his entire spiritual account and now needs only the reply.

GATHA 4207

Autobiography

Boldness, wrestling the Almighty in prayer

मराठी मूळ

काय करुं आतां धरुनियां भीड । निःशंक हें तोंड वाजविलें ॥१॥
 नव्हे जगीं कोणी मुकियाचा जाण । सार्थक लाजोनी नव्हे हित ॥२॥
 आलें तें उत्तर बोलें स्वामीसवें । धीट नीट जीवें होऊनियां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मना समर्थासीं गांठी । घालावी हे मांडी थापटूनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What shall I do now, holding back out of shyness? I have opened my mouth without reservation. No one in this world recognizes the mute; remaining silent out of shame brings no good.

Whatever answer came, I spoke it to my Lord, boldly and straightforwardly. Says Tuka, O mind, when you have the chance to meet the Capable One, slap your thigh and wrestle Him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What shall I do now, holding back out of shyness? I have opened my mouth without fear. No one in this world takes notice of the silent man; staying quiet out of shame brings no good. Whatever answer came to me, I spoke it to my Lord, plainly and boldly, putting my life into it. Tuka says: O my mind, when you get a chance to grapple with the Almighty, slap your thigh and close in.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tuka turns prayer into a wrestling match and argues against timidity before God. He asks why he should hold back out of shyness, and answers that the world ignores the man who stays mute; silence kept out of shame wins nothing. So he speaks his whole heart to his Lord, boldly and straight, staking his life on it rather than swallowing his words. The closing image is the bold one: he tells his own mind that when it gets the rare chance to take hold of the Almighty, it should slap its thigh like a wrestler entering the ring and grapple. Reverence, here, does not mean keeping a fearful distance; it means coming close enough to contend.

GATHA 4208

Longing and Separation

Longing, the child crying for the breast

मराठी मूळ

माझिया तो जीवें घेतला हा सोस । पाहें तुझी वास भेटावया ॥१॥
 मातेविण बाळ न मनी आणिका । सर्वकाळ धोका स्तनपाना ॥२॥
 वोसंगा निघाल्या वांचूनि न राहे । त्याचें आर्त माय पुरवीते ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे माते भक्तां तूं कृपाळ । गिळियेले जाळ वनांतरीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My jiva has taken up this longing to meet You; I watch and wait for You. A child does not accept anyone other than its mother; its only anxiety is for the breast.

Until it is taken into her lap, it will not rest; the mother fulfills its every cry. Says Tuka, O Mother, You are compassionate to Your devotees. You swallowed the forest fire for their sake.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My whole soul has taken up this longing: I watch and wait to meet You. A child wants no one but its mother; its only worry, all day long, is the breast. It will not rest until it is taken into her lap, and the mother answers its every cry. Tuka says: O Mother, You are merciful to Your devotees. You swallowed the forest fire to save them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tuka prays to God as Mother and makes himself the nursing child. His whole being has fixed on one longing, to meet God, the way an infant accepts no substitute for its mother and frets all day for nothing but the breast. The child will not be quieted until it is gathered into her lap, and a true mother meets every cry; so Tuka asks the same nearness and the same response from God. He grounds his trust in the divine record of rescue, recalling that this Mother once swallowed the forest fire to save the cowherds and cattle, the deed of Krishna at Vrindavan. The plea is simple: be to me what a mother is to her child, and you have already proved you will.

GATHA 4209

Krishna Leela

Praise, Krishna swallows the forest fire

मराठी मूळ

ते काय पवाडे नाहीं म्यां ऐकिले । गोपाळ रिक्षले वनांतरीं ॥१॥
 मावेचा वोणवा होऊनि राक्षस । लागला वनास चहूंकडे ॥२॥
 गगनासी ज्वाळा लागती तुंबळ । गोधनें गोपाळ वेडावलीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तेथें पळावया वाट । नाहीं वा निपट ऐसें जालें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Have I not heard those tales of valor? The cowherds were rescued in the forest. A demon took the form of a wildfire and set the forest ablaze on all sides.

Flames leapt up to the sky in towering pillars; the cattle and cowherds were bewildered. Says Tuka, there was absolutely no way to flee. That is how dire the situation had become.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Have I not heard those tales of His power? The cowherds were saved in the forest. A demon turned into a wildfire and set the forest blazing on every side. Towering flames rose to the sky; the cattle and the cowherds were lost in fear. Tuka says: there was no way at all to flee. That is how desperate it had become.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tuka recalls one of Krishna's deeds as the cowherd of Vrindavan to prove the reach of his power. He has heard the tale, he says, of how the gopas were rescued in the forest when a demon took the form of a wildfire and ringed the woods in flame. He sets the scene at its worst: pillars of fire reaching the sky, the cattle and cowherds dazed with terror, and absolutely no path of escape left. By stopping at the moment of total helplessness, he sharpens the point left implicit: when no human escape remained, deliverance came only from Krishna. The remembered miracle becomes ground for trust that the same Lord saves those who have no other way out.

GATHA 4210

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, the cowherds' cry for rescue

मराठी मूळ

धडकला अिग्न आह्वा येती वरी । गोपाळ श्रीहरी विनविती ॥१॥
 अरे कृष्णा काय विचार करावा । आला रे वोणवा जळों आतां ॥ध्रु॥
 अरे कृष्णा तुझें नाम बिळवंत । होय कृपावंत राख आतां ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे अरे कृष्णा नारायणा । गोपाळ करुणा भाकितिले ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The fire raged and flames rose overhead. The cowherds pleaded with Shrihari.

O Krishna, what is to be done? The wildfire has come to burn us. O Krishna, Your name is mighty; be compassionate and protect us now.

Says Tuka, O Krishna, O Narayana, the cowherds cried out to You in anguish.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The fire has caught. Its flames leap up overhead. The cowherds plead with Shrihari. O Krishna, what should we do? The wildfire has come; we will burn now. O Krishna, your name is mighty. Be kind. Protect us now. Tuka says: O Krishna, O Narayana, the cowherds cried out to you in their anguish.

WHAT IT MEANS

This opens a sequence on the forest fire that surrounds Krishna and the cowherds. The danger is plain and immediate: the flames are already overhead and the boys know they will die. They do not look for water or a way to run; they turn to Krishna himself and to the power they trust in his name. The poem fixes the whole weight of the moment on that one appeal, calling for kindness and rescue right now. Tuka closes by naming what is really happening: this is a cry of anguish flung at God, not a plan.

GATHA 4211

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, reminding the Lord of his deeds

मराठी मूळ

अरे कृष्णा आम्ही तुझे निज गडी । नवनीत आवडी देत होतो ॥1॥
 अरे कृष्णा आतां राखेंराखें कैसें तरी । संकटाभीतरीं पडियेलों ॥ध्रु॥
 वरुषला इंद्र जेव्हां शिळाधारीं । गोवर्धन गिरी उचलिला ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझे पवाडे गोपाळ । वणिनती सकळ नारायणा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Krishna, we are Your true companions. We used to offer You fresh butter with love.

O Krishna, save us now somehow; we have fallen into grave danger. When Indra unleashed his deluge, You lifted the Govardhana mountain on Your fingertip.

Says Tuka, the cowherds recount all Your heroic deeds before You, O Narayana.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Krishna, we are your own playmates. We used to give you fresh butter, and gladly. O Krishna, save us now somehow; we have fallen into a great danger. When Indra poured down rain in sheets, you lifted up the Govardhana mountain. Tuka says: the cowherds recount all your great deeds before you, O Narayana.

WHAT IT MEANS

The cowherds press their case by reminding Krishna who they are to him and what he has already done. They name their nearness, the playmates who fed him butter with love, and then his own past rescue, the lifting of Govardhana when Indra's storm threatened them. The logic is intimate, not theological: you saved us before, you are ours, save us again. Tuka points out that they are reciting his heroic deeds back to him, holding up his own record as their plea.

GATHA 4212

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, the rescuer's record recited

मराठी मूळ

अरे कृष्णा तुवां काळया नाथिला । दाढे रगडिला रिठासुर ॥1॥
 अरे कृष्णा तुवां पुतना शोषिली । दुर्बुद्धि कळली अंतरींची ॥ध्रु॥
 गोपाळ करुणा ऐसी नानापरी । भाकिती श्रीहरी तुजपुढें ॥2॥
 तुजें नाम कामधेनु करुणेची । तुका ह्मणे त्यांची आली कृपा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Krishna, You subdued the serpent Kaliya. You crushed the demon Rishtasura in Your jaws.

O Krishna, You destroyed Putana, discerning her wicked intent. The cowherds plead in many such ways before You, O Shrihari.

Your name is the wish-fulfilling cow of compassion. Says Tuka, His grace descended upon them.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Krishna, you mastered the serpent Kaliya. You crushed the demon Rishtasura in your jaws. O Krishna, you dried up Putana, for you saw the wickedness hidden in her heart. In many such ways the cowherds plead before you, O Shrihari. Your name is the wish-granting cow of mercy. Tuka says: his grace came down upon them.

WHAT IT MEANS

The cowherds keep listing the times Krishna struck down what came to harm: the serpent, the demon, the murderous nurse whose hidden intent he saw through. Each memory says the same thing in a new way, that he has always destroyed the threat and protected his own. The poem then turns the recital into a claim about his name itself, calling it the wish-granting cow of mercy, the source that answers every need. Tuka closes by saying the plea worked: grace descended on them.

GATHA 4213

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, the small child takes the terrible form

मराठी मूळ

चहुंकडूनियां येती ते कलोळ । सभोंवते जाळ जविळ आले ॥१॥
 सकुमार मूतिन श्रीकृष्ण धाकुटी । घोंगडी आणि काठी खांद्यावरि ॥२॥
 लहान लेंकरुं होत ते सगुण । विक्राळ वदन पसरिलें ॥३॥
 चाभाड तें एक गगनीं लागलें । एक तें ठेविलें भूमीवरि ॥४॥
 तये वेळे अवघे गोपाळ ही भ्याले । तुकें ही लपालें भेऊनियां ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

From all four sides the fiery waves advanced; the ring of flame drew close. There stood the delicate form of little Krishna, with a blanket and a staff upon His shoulder.

That small child took on His divine form and opened His terrible, vast mouth. One jaw reached to the sky and the other rested on the earth.

At that moment, all the cowherds were terrified. Says Tuka, even I hid myself in fear.

IN PLAIN WORDS

From all four sides the waves of fire come on. The ring of flame draws near. There stands the delicate little Krishna, a blanket and a staff on his shoulder. That small child took on his divine form and opened his terrible, vast mouth. One jaw reached the sky; the other rested on the earth. At that moment all the cowherds were afraid. Tuka says: even I hid myself in fear.

WHAT IT MEANS

The rescue does not come as comfort but as terror. The fire closes in from every side, and the same little boy with his blanket and staff suddenly opens into a form whose mouth spans heaven and earth. The poem holds both pictures at once, the tender child and the engulfing immensity, so the reader feels how the saving power is itself overwhelming. Tuka places himself inside the scene, hiding with the frightened cowherds, refusing to stand at a safe distance and admire. The point is that meeting God's full reality is not soothing; it shakes you.

GATHA 4214

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, the mouth swallows the fire

मराठी मूळ

श्रीमुख वोणवा गिळीत चालिलें । भ्यासुर वासिलें वदनांबुज ॥१॥
 विक्राळ त्या दाढा भ्यानें पाहावेना । धाउनी रसना ज्वाळ गिळी ॥२॥
 जिद्धा लांब धावे गोळा करी ज्वाळ । मोटें मुखकमळ त्यांत घाली ॥ २॥
 तुका ह्मणे अवघा वोणवा गिळला । आनंद जाहाला गोपाळांसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The divine mouth advanced, swallowing the wildfire as it went. Fearsome and gaping was that lotus-face.

His terrible jaws were too dreadful to behold. His tongue raced out and gathered the flames in a mass, drawing them into that vast mouth.

Says Tuka, He swallowed the entire wildfire, and the cowherds were filled with joy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The holy mouth moved forward, swallowing the wildfire as it went. That lotus-face gaped, fearsome. The terrible jaws were too dreadful to look at. His tongue raced out and swept the flames into a mass. The great lotus-mouth took them all in. Tuka says: he swallowed the whole wildfire, and the cowherds were filled with joy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here the rescue is carried out in front of them. The vast mouth advances on the fire and the tongue gathers the flames like a heap and draws them in, until nothing of the wildfire is left. The poem keeps the image fearsome on purpose: the same gaping form that frightened them is what saves them. Tuka ends on the swing from dread to joy, the cowherds' relief once the danger is simply gone, swallowed whole.

GATHA 4215

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, please be small again

मराठी मूळ

गोपाळ प्रीतीनें कैसे विनविती । विक्राळ श्रीपती होऊं नको ॥१॥
 नको रे बा कृष्णा धरुं ऐसें रूप । आह्मां चळकांप सुटलासे ॥२॥
 होई बा धाकुटा शाम चतुर्भुज । बैसोनियां गुज सुखें बोलों ॥३॥
 वोणव्याच्या रागें गिळशील आह्मां । तुका मेघशामा पायां लागे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The cowherds lovingly implored Him: Do not take this fearsome form, O Lord. Please, dear Krishna, do not hold such a shape; we are trembling all over.

Become small again, our dark four-armed friend, so we may sit together and talk in comfort. In Your fury against the fire, You might swallow us too.

Says Tuka, O dark-clouded Lord, I fall at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The cowherds lovingly plead with him: Do not stay this fearsome shape, O Lord. Please, dear Krishna, do not hold such a form; we are trembling all over. Become the little dark four-armed one again, so we may sit together and talk happily. In your anger at the fire, you might swallow us too. Tuka says: O dark-clouded Lord, I fall at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Now that the fire is gone, the cowherds want their friend back, not the engulfing immensity. Their love asks for nearness over majesty: come down to our size so we can sit and talk again. They even confess a fear that his fury, having swallowed the fire, might not stop at the fire and could swallow them. The prayer is tender and a little frightened at once. Tuka joins their plea, falling at the feet of the dark-clouded Lord, asking for the approachable face of God rather than the overwhelming one.

GATHA 4216

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, the child returns, the boys wonder

मराठी मूळ

सांडियेलें रूप विक्राळ भ्यासुर । झालें सकुमार कोडिसवाणें ॥१॥
 शाम चतुर्भुज मुकुट कुंडलें । सुंदर दंडलें नव बाळ ॥२॥
 गोपाळ ह्यणती कैसें रे बा कृष्णा । रूप नारायणा धरियेलें ॥३॥
 कैसा वाढलासी विक्राळ जालासी । गटगटा ज्वाळांसी गिळयेलें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्यणे भावें पुसती गोपाळ । अनाथवत्सल ह्यणोनियां ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He set aside that fearsome, terrible form and became tender and beautiful once more. Dark, four-armed, with crown and earrings, a lovely new child, adorned and gentle.

The cowherds said, What was that, dear Krishna? What form did You assume, O Narayana? How You grew and became so enormous, gulping down the flames in great swallows. Says Tuka, the cowherds ask with innocent devotion, for He is the tender guardian of the helpless.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He let go of that fearsome, terrible form and became tender and lovely again. Dark, four-armed, with crown and earrings, a beautiful new child, gentle and adorned. The cowherds say: What was that, dear Krishna? What form did you take, O Narayana? How you grew, how terrible you became, gulping down the flames in great swallows. Tuka says: the cowherds ask with simple devotion, for he is the tender guardian of the helpless.

WHAT IT MEANS

Krishna grants the request and shrinks back into the gentle child, crowned and beautiful. But the boys cannot let the wonder go; they keep asking what they just saw, how their small friend swelled into something that swallowed fire. Their questions are not doubt but artless devotion, the awe of people who love him and have just glimpsed what he really is. Tuka names the reason he answers them at all: he is the tender guardian of the helpless, who lets the small and bewildered come close and ask.

GATHA 4217

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, is your soft mouth burned

मराठी मूळ

बा रे कृष्णा तुझें मुख कीं कोमळ । कैसे येवढे ज्वाळ ग्रासियेले ॥१॥
 बा रे कृष्णा तुझी जिह्वा कीं कोवळी । होईल पिळली नारायणा ॥२॥
 बैसैं कृष्णा तुझें पाहूं मुखकमळ । असेल पोळलें कोणे ठायीं ॥३॥
 घोंगडिया घालीं घालूनियां तळीं । वरी वनमाळी बैसविती ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे भावें आकिळला देव । कृपासिंधुराव त्रैलोक्याचा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Dear Krishna, Your mouth is so soft. How did You swallow such mighty flames? Dear Krishna, Your tongue is so tender; surely it must be burned, O Narayana.

Sit down, Krishna; let us look at Your face. Is it scorched anywhere? They spread a blanket on the ground and seat Vanamali upon it.

Says Tuka, their devotion overwhelmed God, that ocean of mercy, Lord of the three worlds.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Dear Krishna, your mouth is so soft. How did you swallow such mighty flames? Dear Krishna, your tongue is so tender; surely it has been burned, O Narayana. Sit down, Krishna; let us look at your lotus-face. Has it been scorched anywhere? They spread a blanket on the ground and seat Vanamali on it. Tuka says: their devotion overcame God, that ocean of mercy, Lord of the three worlds.

WHAT IT MEANS

The cowherds' awe turns into tenderness for his body. They worry that the soft mouth and tender tongue that swallowed the fire must have been burned, and they sit him down to check his face for scorch marks. They treat the Lord of the three worlds as a child they must care for. The poem shows love reaching up and pulling God down into being looked after. Tuka says this devotion overcame him: the ocean of mercy lets himself be held and fussed over by those who love him.

GATHA 4218

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, the sky inside his mouth

मराठी मूळ

एक ह्यणती मुख वासीं नारायणा । पाहों दे वदना डोळेभरि ॥१॥
 वासुनियां मुख पहाती सकळ । अवघे गोपाळ व्योमाकार ॥२॥
 ह्यणती गोपाळ बेटे हो हा देव । स्वरूपाचा ठाव न कळे याच्या ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे अवघे विठोबाभोंवते । मिळाले नेणते लहानथोर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One cowherd says, Open Your mouth, O Narayana; let us gaze upon Your face to their full satisfaction. He opens His mouth and they all look in: every cowherd sees the vast expanse of the sky within.

They say, This boy is really God in disguise. The depths of His true nature cannot be fathomed.

Says Tuka, they all gathered around Vithoba, young and old, not understanding at all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One says: Open your mouth, O Narayana; let us look our fill at your face. He opens his mouth and they all look in, and every cowherd sees the whole expanse of the sky inside. They say: This boy is really God in disguise. We cannot reach the bottom of who he is. Tuka says: they all gathered round Vithoba, young and old, not understanding at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

When he opens his mouth at their asking, they see the entire sky within it, the whole universe inside the child. That sight tells them plainly what their friend is: God hidden in a boy, with a depth they cannot fathom. The poem lets the realization arrive through looking, not through being told. Tuka ends gently on the gap that remains, the crowd of young and old pressed around Vithoba, near to him and loving him, and still not understanding what they are near.

GATHA 4219

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, the fortunate ones and the rest of us

मराठी मूळ

एक ह्मणती कृष्णा वासिलें त्वां मुख । तेव्हां थोर धाक पडिला आह्वां ॥१॥
 गिळों लागलासी अग्नीचे कल्लोळ । आह्मी चळचळं कांपतसों ॥२॥
 ज्वाळांबरोबरि गिळशील आह्वां। ऐसें मेघशामा भय वाटे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसे भाग्याचे गोपाळ । फुटकें कपाळ आमुचें चि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One cowherd says, Krishna, when You opened Your mouth, a great terror fell upon us. As You began swallowing the torrents of flame, we were trembling all over.

We feared that along with the flames, You would swallow us too, O dark-clouded Lord. Says Tuka, how fortunate were those cowherds. The cracked forehead is only ours.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One says: Krishna, when you opened your mouth, a great fear fell on us. As you began swallowing the torrents of flame, we trembled and shook. We feared that along with the flames you would swallow us too, O dark-clouded Lord. Tuka says: how fortunate those cowherds were. The cracked forehead is only ours.

WHAT IT MEANS

The cowherds confess the terror they felt even while being saved, the fear that the swallowing might not spare them. Then Tuka turns the whole scene back on himself and on us. Those boys stood beside Krishna and saw him with their own eyes; their luck was complete. The cracked, unlucky forehead, he says, belongs to us who came too late and did not see. It is a sharp claim against his own fortune, naming the ache of the devotee who longs for a nearness the lila already gave to others.

GATHA 4220

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, the Lord names what he is

मराठी मूळ

गोपाळांचें कैसें केलें समाधान । देउनि आलिंगन निवविले ॥१॥
 ज्वाळांबरोबरि तुह्मां कां ग्रासीन । अवतार घेणें तुह्मांसाठीं ॥२॥
 निर्गुण निर्भय मी सर्वानिराळा । प्रकृतिवेगळा गुणातीत ॥३॥
 चिन्मय चिद्रूप अवघें चिदाकार । तुका ह्मणे पार नेणे ब्रह्मा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How He consoled the cowherds, giving them His embrace and comforting them. Why would I swallow you along with the flames? It is for your sake alone that I took birth.

I am without qualities, without fear, separate from all, beyond nature, beyond the three gunas. I am pure consciousness, pure awareness, all of the form of consciousness.

Says Tuka, even Brahma cannot fathom My depths.

IN PLAIN WORDS

See how he comforted the cowherds, giving them his embrace and quieting them. Why would I swallow you along with the flames? I took birth for your sake alone. I am without qualities, without fear, apart from everything, beyond nature, beyond the three gunas. I am all consciousness, all awareness, everything in the form of awareness. Tuka says: even Brahma does not know my limit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Krishna answers their fear with an embrace and then with the truth about himself. To the boys he speaks of love: I would never harm you; I came into this body only for your sake. Then the poem lifts into plain Vedanta from Krishna's own mouth: he is beyond qualities, beyond fear, beyond nature and the three gunas, pure consciousness taking every form. The two halves belong together, the tender protector and the formless absolute are one. Tuka seals it by saying even Brahma cannot measure that depth.

GATHA 4221

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, the promise and the closed eyes

मराठी मूळ

ऐसा मी अपार पार नाहीं अंत । परि कृपावंत भाविकांचा ॥1॥
 दुर्जनां चांडाळां करीं निदानळण । करीं संरक्षण अंकितांचें ॥ध्रु॥
 भक्त माझे सखे जिवलग सांगाती । सर्वांग त्यांप्रति वोडवीन ॥2॥
 पीतांबरछाया करीन त्यांवरी । सदा त्यांचे घरीं दारी उभा ॥3॥
 माझे भक्त मज सदा जे रातले । त्यांघरीं घेतलें धरणें म्यां ॥4॥
 कोठें हें वचन ठेविलें ये वेळे । तुका ह्मणे डोळे झांकियेले ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am boundless, without end or limit, yet I am full of compassion for the faithful. I crush the wicked and protect those who are pledged to Me.

My devotees are My friends, My dear companions. I will extend My whole being to shield them.

I will spread the shade of My yellow garment over them and stand always at their door. My devotees who are always devoted to Me, in their homes I have taken up permanent residence.

Says Tuka, where has that promise gone now? You have simply closed Your eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am boundless; I have no edge, no end. Yet I am full of mercy for the faithful. I destroy the wicked and the cruel. I guard those who are pledged to me. My devotees are my friends, my dear companions; I will hold out my whole body to shield them. I will spread the shade of my yellow garment over them and stand always at their door. My devotees who are always given to me, in their houses I have settled to stay. Tuka says: where have you put that promise now? You have simply shut your eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Krishna lays out his side of the covenant in full: the limitless one binds himself to the faithful, destroying what threatens them and standing guard at their door, even taking up permanent residence in their homes. Then Tuka, in his own voice, turns the long promise into a complaint. If all that was sworn, where is it now; why does God seem absent and unmoved. The closing line, that he has simply closed his eyes, is the cry of a devotee holding the Lord to his own word. The poem does not soften the protest; it sets the grandeur of the promise against the silence the bhakta is feeling, and lets the ache stand.

GATHA 4222

Worldly Metaphors

Satire, the wife who rules a slave to lust

मराठी मूळ

भ्रतारेंसी भार्या बोले गुज गोष्टी । मज ऐसी कष्टी नाहीं दुजी ॥1॥
 अखंड तुमचें धंदावरी मन । माझें तों हेळण करिती सर्व ॥२॥
 जोडितसां तुह्मी खाती हेरेंचोरें । माझीं तंव पोरें हळहळीती ॥३॥
 तुमची व्याली माझे डाई हो पेटली । सदा दुष्ट बोली सोसवेना ॥४॥
 दुष्टवृत्ति नंदुली सदा द्वेष करी । नांदों मी संसारीं कोण्या सुखें ॥५॥
 भावा दीर कांहीं धड हा न बोले । नांदों कोणां खालें कैसी आतां ॥६॥
 माझ्या अंगसंगें तुह्वांसी विश्रांति । मग धडगति नाहीं तुमची ॥७॥
 ठाकतें उमकतें जीव मुठी धरुनि । परि तुह्मी अजून न धरा लाज ॥८॥
 वेगळे निघतां संसार करीन । नाहीं तरी प्राण देतें आतां ॥९॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाला कामाचा अंकित । सांगे मनोगत तैसा वर्ते ॥१०॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A wife speaks intimately to her husband: there is no one as miserable as I. Your mind is always absorbed in business; everyone neglects me.

You earn, but thieves and pilferers consume it, while my children go hungry. Your mother, that demon, has turned against me; her harsh words are unbearable.

My wicked sister-in-law harbors constant malice; in what happiness shall I continue in this household? The brother-in-law speaks nothing straight. Under whose shelter shall I now live? Only in your embrace do I find rest, but then you lose all sense of propriety.

I hold my breath and clench my fists in anguish, yet even now you show no shame. Let us separate and set up our own home, or else I will end my life right now.

Says Tuka, one who has become a slave to desire speaks his mind and acts accordingly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A wife speaks close to her husband, telling her woes. There is no one as wretched as I am. Your mind is always on your business. Everyone here treats me as nothing. You earn, and thieves and pilferers eat it up, while my children go hungry. Your mother, that demon, has turned on me; I cannot bear her cruel words. My wicked sister-in-law hates me without end. In what happiness am I to live in this house? The brother-in-law never says one straight word. Under whose shelter am I now to stay? Only in my arms do you find rest; after that you keep no sense of shame. I hold my breath and clench my fists in pain, and still you feel no shame. Set up a separate home, and I will keep house. If not, I will give up my life right now. Tuka says: a man who has become the servant of lust speaks her mind and acts just as she wishes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stages a marital quarrel to expose what desire does to a man. The wife pours out grievance after grievance against his family and then issues the demand: break from your parents and siblings, set up a separate house for me alone, or I will die. The point lands in the signature line: the husband, enslaved to lust, has no mind of his own; he simply echoes whatever she wants and obeys. Examine the pattern, not the woman: when craving rules, a person surrenders their own judgment and is led wherever the desire points. The household here is the inner life that craving tears apart.

GATHA 4223

Worldly Metaphors

Satire, the husband led like a donkey by craving

मराठी मूळ

कामाचा अंकित कांतेतें प्राथिनत । तूं कां हो दिशचत निरंतर ॥1॥
 माझीं मायबापें बंधु हो बहिण । तुज करी सीण त्यागीन मी ॥ध्रु॥
 त्यांचें जरि तोंड पाहेन मागुता । तरि मज हत्या घडो तुझी ॥2॥
 सकाळ उठोन वेगळा निघेन । वाहातों तुझी आण निश्चयेंसी ॥3॥
 वेगळें निघतां घडीन दोरे चुडा । तूं तंव माझा जोडा जन्माचा कीं ॥4॥
 ताईत सांकळी गळांचि दुलडी । बाजुबंदजोडी हातसर ॥5॥
 वेणीचे जे नग सर्व ही करीन । नको धरूं सीण मनीं कांहीं ॥6॥
 नेसावया साडी सेलारी चुनडी । अंगींची कांचोळी जिळया फुलें ॥7॥
 तुका ह्याने केला रांडेनें गाढव । मनासवें धांव घेतलीसे ॥8॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Enslaved by desire, the husband pleads with his wife: why are you always so unhappy? My parents, brothers, and sisters, I will abandon all of them if they cause you grief. If I ever look upon their faces again, may the sin of your murder fall upon me.

Tomorrow morning I will move out on my own. I swear this oath to you with certainty.

When we set up our own home, I will have bangles and a necklace made for you, a gold chain, a pendant, arm-bands, and bracelets. I will have every ornament for your hair made as well.

Do not carry any sorrow in your mind. A silk sari, a fine shawl, a bodice, a net of flowers for your blouse.

Says Tuka, the woman has made a donkey of him, and he runs wherever his mind leads.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A man enslaved to lust pleads with his wife. Why are you unhappy all the time? My mother and father, my brothers and sister: if they cause you grief, I will abandon them all. If I ever look on their faces again, may the guilt of your murder fall on me. Tomorrow morning I will move out on my own. I swear this oath to you for certain. Once we set up our own home, I will have bangles and a necklace made for you. You are my partner for this whole life. An amulet, a chain, a double-stranded necklace, a pair of arm-bands, a bracelet. I will have every ornament for your hair made too. Do not carry any sorrow in your mind. A sari to wear, a fine shawl, a bodice, a net of flowers for your blouse. Tuka says: the woman has made a donkey of him, and he runs wherever his mind leads.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the answering half of the quarrel, now from the man's side. To soothe his wife he renounces his own parents and siblings, swears terrible oaths, and promises an endless list of ornaments and fine clothes. Tukaram lets the cascade of bribes run long on purpose, because each gift is one more proof of how completely the man has surrendered. The signature line names it plainly: craving has made him a donkey, dragged along behind his own appetite. Look at the pattern in yourself: when desire takes the reins, a person will throw over every loyalty and promise anything to keep feeding it.

GATHA 4224

Worldly Metaphors

Discernment, the mark of Hari shows the true

मराठी मूळ

उजिळतां उजळे दीपकाची वाती । स्वयंभ ते ज्योति हिंया अंगीं ॥१॥

एकीं महाकष्टें मेळविलें धन । एकासी जतन दैवयोगें ॥२॥

परिमळें केलें चंदनाचे चिन्ह । निवडी ते भिन्न गाढव तो ॥३॥

तुका ह्मणे जया अंगीं हरिठसा । तो तरे सहसा वंद्य होय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Trimming a lamp's wick makes it burn brighter, for the flame is inherently in the wick. One man acquires wealth with great labor, while another has it preserved by destiny.

Sandalwood is identified by its fragrance; the fool who cannot discern it is like a donkey. Says Tuka, one in whom the mark of Hari is stamped crosses over easily and becomes honored.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Trim the wick and the lamp burns brighter; the flame was already there, alive in the wick itself. One man gathers wealth with great toil; another keeps it by his good fortune. Sandalwood is known by its fragrance; only a donkey cannot tell it apart. Tuka says: the one who carries the mark of Hari on him crosses over easily and is honored everywhere.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is teaching how the genuine reveals itself and why some recognize it and some do not. The lamp's flame is not added from outside; trimming the wick only lets what is already there shine, just as discipline uncovers the light already in a person. Sandalwood announces itself by its scent; anyone who cannot tell it from ordinary wood is a fool. The whole point rests on the last line: a person stamped with the mark of Hari, the living presence of God, crosses the ocean of birth easily and is honored on his own. The fragrance is real devotion, and it cannot be faked.

GATHA 4225

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, reckoning a wasted life

मराठी मूळ

बारावर्षा बाळपण । तें ही वेचलें अज्ञानें ॥१॥
 ऐसा जन्म गेला वांयां । न भजतां पंढरिराया ॥२॥
 बाकी उरलीं आठएशीं । तीस वेचलीं कामासी ॥३॥
 बाकी उरलीं आठवन्न । तीस वेचली ममतेन ॥४॥
 बाकी उरलीं आठवीस । देहगेह विसरलास ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसा झाडा । संसार हा आहे थोडा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Twelve years of childhood are spent in ignorance. Thus life has gone to waste without worshipping the Lord of Pandhari.

Of the remaining eighty-eight years, thirty were spent in the pursuit of desire. Of the remaining fifty-eight, thirty were consumed by attachment.

Of the remaining twenty-eight, you forgot even your own body and home. Says Tuka, do the reckoning: this span of worldly life is very brief.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Twelve years of childhood, and those went in ignorance. So this birth has gone to waste, never worshipping the King of Pandhari. Of eighty-eight years left, thirty went to lust and craving. Of fifty-eight left, thirty were eaten by attachment. Of twenty-eight left, you forgot your own body and home. Tuka says: do the accounts. This worldly life is very short.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram does the arithmetic of a life out loud, subtracting year after year to show how little is actually left for God. Childhood goes to ignorance, the prime to lust, the next stretch to attachment, the last to mere maintenance of body and household, and Pandhari, the Lord, never once gets worshipped. By counting down to a small remainder, he forces the listener to feel how brief the span really is. The call is to face the ledger honestly while there is still time, and to spend what remains on the one thing the whole life kept postponing.

GATHA 4226

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, only the chosen are truly pure

मराठी मूळ

सोवळा तो जाला । अंगीकार देवें केला ॥१॥
 येर करिती भोजन । पोट पोसाया दुर्जन ॥१॥
 चुकला हा भार । तयाची च येरझार ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे दास । जाला तया नाही नास ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*He alone is pure whom God has accepted. All others merely eat to sustain their bellies, the wretches.**The one who has missed this opportunity keeps going back and forth in vain. Says Tuka, the one who became God's servant never faces destruction.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

He alone is pure whom God has taken as His own. The rest only eat to fill their bellies, poor wretches. The one who missed this gift just keeps going back and forth in vain. Tuka says: the one who has become God's servant never comes to ruin.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram redefines purity, taking it away from ritual and giving it to God's choosing. The truly clean person is not the one who keeps the outward rules but the one God has accepted; everyone else, however busy, is merely feeding a body and going nowhere. Whoever lets that one chance slip is trapped in the round of birth and death, coming and going to no purpose. The blessing falls on the servant of God, who alone is beyond destruction. The point of self-examination: am I living to fill the belly, or have I given myself to be His?

GATHA 4227

Confession and Sin

Confession, anger is the only defilement

मराठी मूळ

आजि शिवला मांग । माझें विटाळलें आंग ॥१॥
 यासी घेऊं प्रायश्चित्त । विठ्ठलविठ्ठल हृदयांत ॥१॥
 जाली क्रोधासी भेटी । तोंडावाटे नर्क लोटी ॥२॥
 अनुतापीं न्हाऊं । तुका ह्मणे रवी पाहूं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Today one I was taught to shun has touched me; my body has been defiled. For this I shall take atonement by chanting Vitthal, Vitthal from the heart.

I met with anger today, and through my mouth it poured forth hellish filth. Says Tuka, let me bathe in remorse and then look upon the sun.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Today an outcaste touched me; my body has been defiled. For this I will take my atonement: Vitthal, Vitthal in the heart. Today I met with anger, and my mouth poured out filth like hell. Tuka says: let me bathe in remorse, then look upon the sun.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram seizes the language of ritual pollution and turns it inward against himself. The real defilement, he says, was not a person's touch but his own anger, which poured hellish filth out of his mouth. So the cleansing he prescribes is not a ritual bath but the name of Vitthal held in the heart and a sincere bath in remorse, after which he can again face the light. The poem rebukes the whole logic of caste pollution: blaming another for defiling you is itself the impurity. Watch your own anger, not your neighbor's touch.

GATHA 4228

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, safe at rest beside the Lord

मराठी मूळ

ठाव तुह्यांपाशीं । जाला आतां हृषीकेशी ॥१॥
न लगे जागावें सतत । येथें स्वभावें हे नीत ॥२॥
चोरट्यासी थारा । येथें कैचा जी दातारा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे मनें । आह्मां जालें समाधान ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A place has been found beside You now, O Hrishiksha. There is no need to keep constant guard; this is the natural order here.

Where can a thief find shelter in such a place, O generous Lord? Says Tuka, our minds have found their peace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A place beside you has become mine now, Hrishiksha. There is no need to keep watch all the time; here this is simply the nature of things. What shelter could a thief ever find in this place, O giver? Tuka says: in our mind we have found peace.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the rest of one who has found his place beside God. Once he is settled close to Hrishiksha, the Lord of the senses, he no longer has to stand guard, because safety is built into that place itself. No thief, no enemy of the soul, can find a foothold near the giver of all. The result is the line that closes it: the mind has found its peace. He is naming the security that comes only from nearness to God, where vigilance gives way to trust.

GATHA 4229

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the child's whims indulged by grace

मराठी मूळ

पाळयेले लळे । माझे विठ्ठले कृपाळे ॥१॥
 बहुजन्माचें पोषणें । सरतें पायांपाशीं तेणें ॥२॥
 सवे दिली लागों । भातें आवडीचें मागों ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भिन्न । नाहीं दिसों दिलें क्षण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My loving whims have been indulged by the gracious Vitthal. The nurturing of many births has come to fulfillment at His feet.

He has allowed me to follow Him and ask for the food of my chitta's desire. Says Tuka, He has not let me feel separate from Him for even a moment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My little whims have been indulged by my merciful Vitthal. The care carried across many births reaches its end here at His feet. He let me come close and follow Him, and ask for the food I love. Tuka says: not for a moment has He let me feel apart from Him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as a beloved child whose every small wish the gracious Vitthal has granted. The nurturing of many lifetimes, all the seeking carried from birth to birth, finally comes to rest at the Lord's feet. God lets him draw near, walk behind Him, and even ask for the very things his heart craves. The closing line holds the whole grace: not for a single moment is he allowed to feel separate from God. This is union spoken in the tender idiom of a child indulged by a loving parent.

GATHA 4230

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, Pandhari is heaven on earth

मराठी मूळ

जो या गेला पंढरपुरा । आणीक यात्रा न मानी तो ॥१॥
 सुलभ माय पंढरिराणा । पुरवी खुणा अंतरींच्या ॥२॥
 जन्मांतरिंच्या पुण्यरासी । वारी त्यासी पंढरी ॥३॥
 बाहेर येतां प्राण फुटे । रडें दाटे गहिवरें ॥४॥
 दधिमंगळभोजन सारा । ह्मणती करा मुरडीं ॥५॥
 मागुता हा पाहों ठाव । पंढरिराव दर्शनें ॥६॥
 तुका ह्मणे भूवैकुंठ । वाळुवंट भींवरा ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who has been to Pandharpur accepts no other pilgrimage. The gentle Lord of Pandhari fulfills every secret longing.

The accumulated merit of many births draws one to the Pandhari pilgrimage. When it comes time to leave, the soul breaks; sobs of deep emotion well up.

After the farewell meal is finished, they plead, let us turn back once more. Let us behold the Lord of Pandhari one more time through His darshan.

Says Tuka, Pandhari is Vaikuntha on earth, and the sands of the Bhimra are its holy ground.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who has gone to Pandharpur counts no other pilgrimage worth it. The gentle mother, the King of Pandhari, fills the secret longings of the heart. The piled-up merit of many births draws a soul to the Pandhari pilgrimage. When the time comes to leave, the heart breaks; sobs and tears well up. The farewell meal with curds is finished, and they cry, let us turn back. Let us see this place again, the Lord of Pandhari in his darshan. Tuka says: Pandhari is Vaikuntha on earth, and the sands of the Bhima are its holy ground.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exalts the pilgrimage to Pandharpur above every other holy journey. Reaching Vithoba there satisfies the longings a pilgrim cannot even put into words, and only the merit of many lifetimes brings one to that shrine. He dwells on the grief of departure, the breaking heart and welling tears, the pilgrims who have eaten the parting meal yet beg to turn back for one more look at the Lord. The final claim is the boldest: Pandhari is not a road to heaven but Vaikuntha itself set down on earth, with the riverbank sands of the Bhima as sacred ground. Place and presence are one.

GATHA 4231

Worldly Life

Social criticism, flee the quarreling town

मराठी मूळ

न मिळती एका एक । जये नगरीचे लोक ॥1॥
 भलीं तेथें राहूं नये । क्षणें होईल न कळे काय ॥ २ ॥
 न करितां अन्याय । बळें करी अपाय ॥ ३ ॥
 नाहीं पुराणाची प्रीति । ठायींठायीं पंचाइती ॥ ४ ॥
 भल्या बुऱ्या मारी । होतां कोणी न निवारी ॥ ५ ॥
 अविचाऱ्या हातीं । देऊनि प्रजा नागविती ॥ ६ ॥
 तुका ह्मणे दरी । सुखें सेवावी ते बरी ॥ ७ ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In a city where people do not get along with one another, a good person should not stay. At any moment, something terrible may happen without warning.

Even without provocation, they resort to violence. There is no love for sacred discourse; only quarreling at every turn.

They beat the good and the gentle, and no one intervenes. The administration is handed to the unprincipled, who oppress the people.

Says Tuka, better to dwell happily in a cave in the wilderness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The people of some town cannot get along with one another. A good person should not stay there. In a moment, who knows what will happen. Even when no wrong is done, they do harm by force. They have no love for the sacred stories; there are disputes at every turn. They beat the good and the gentle, and no one steps in to stop it. Power is handed to the reckless, who strip the people bare. Tuka says: better to live happily in a cave in the wilderness.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram paints a town poisoned by strife and counsels the good to get out. Where people cannot live together, violence erupts without cause, there is no taste for sacred teaching, only endless quarrels, and the gentle are beaten while bystanders do nothing. Worst of all, authority falls to the unprincipled, who plunder those they should protect. His verdict is stark: a cave in the wild, lived in peace, is better than such a place. The poem is a judgment on the company we keep, that an environment ruled by malice and lawless power is no place to seek the good life.

GATHA 4232

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the obstinate heart cannot be taught

मराठी मूळ

शिकवणें नाक झाडी । पुढील जोडी कळेना ॥१॥
निरयगांवीं भोग देता । तेथें सत्ता आणिकांची ॥२॥
अवगुणांचा सांटा करी । ते चि धरी जीवासी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे जडबुद्ध । कर्मशुद्धी सांडवीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You wipe his nose and teach him manners, yet he cannot see the gain that lies ahead. In the realm of hell, others hold the power, not he.

He hoards a store of vices and clings to them with his very life. Says Tuka, his intellect is dull. Make him purify his actions.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You wipe his nose and try to teach him, and still he cannot see the gain that lies ahead. In the town of hell the suffering is dealt out, and there the power is in another's hands. He gathers a hoard of vices and holds onto them with his very life. Tuka says: his mind is dull. Make him purify his deeds.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a person too stubborn to learn even when patiently taught. You care for him like a child, yet he cannot grasp the reward that lies ahead, so he piles up faults and clings to them as if they were his life. He forgets that in the realm of suffering the power belongs to others, not to him, and there will be no escaping the account. The remedy Tukaram urges is not contempt but correction: get him to purify his actions. Look at the dullness as a pattern, the heart that hoards its vices and refuses the gain it cannot yet see.

GATHA 4233

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the Vaishnava's badge of war

मराठी मूळ

गोपीचंदन मुद्रा धरणें । आह्मां लेणें वैष्णवां ॥१॥
 मिरवूं अळंकार लेणें । हीं भूषणें स्वामीचीं ॥२॥
 विकलों ते सेवाजीवें । एक्या भावें एकविध ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे शूर जालों । बाहेर आलों संसारा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To wear the sandal-paste marks and the sacred seal is our adornment as Vaishnavas. We parade these ornaments and jewels; they are the insignia of our Lord.

We have sold our lives in single-pointed service to Him alone. Says Tuka, I have become a warrior who has emerged victorious from the battlefield of worldly life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To wear the sandal-paste mark and the sacred seal is our adornment, ours as Vaishnavas. We carry these ornaments and jewels; they are the insignia of our Lord. We have sold our very lives into service, with one feeling, single and undivided. Tuka says: I have become a warrior, and I have come out of worldly life victorious.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the outward signs of the devotee into the regalia of a soldier. The sandal-paste marks and the holy seal are not decoration but the insignia of the Lord whose army the Vaishnavas belong to. To wear them is to have sold one's life into single-pointed service, undivided in heart. The closing image names the stakes: worldly life is a battlefield, and the devotee who serves wholly is the warrior who walks off it victorious. Devotion here is not retreat but conquest, the sign worn openly as a banner.

GATHA 4234

Social Criticism

Social criticism, no rank saves you

मराठी मूळ

विषयांचे लोलिंगत । ते फजीत होतील ॥१॥
 न सरे येथें यातिकुळ । शुद्ध मूळबीज व्हावें ॥२॥
 शिखासूत्र सोंग वरि । दुराचारी दंड पावे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे अभिमाना । नारायणा न सोसे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who wallow in sensory pleasures will be put to shame. Caste and lineage will not avail them here; one must become pure from the root.

The outward marks of sacred thread and topknot are mere appearance; the one of corrupt conduct will be punished. Says Tuka, Narayana cannot endure pride.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who wallow in the pleasures of the senses will be put to shame. Caste and lineage will not help you here. You must become pure from the root. The sacred thread and the topknot are only an outward costume. The one whose conduct is corrupt is punished. Tuka says: Narayana cannot bear pride.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips away every credential a person hides behind. Birth, caste, and family line carry no weight in the matter that counts; what is asked for is purity at the root, not on the surface. The sacred thread and topknot, the visible badges of religious status, are called a costume: they decorate the outside while the conduct beneath stays rotten, and that conduct is what gets punished. The poem ends on the deepest cause: Narayana cannot endure pride. The whole apparatus of rank is itself the pride that God will not abide, so the warning turns the listener inward to examine what they are actually leaning on.

GATHA 4235

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, the stolen gift of land

मराठी मूळ

वडिलें दिलें भूमिदान । तें जो मागे अभिळासून ॥१॥
 अग्रपूजेचा अधिकारी । श्रेष्ठ दंड यमा घरीं ॥२॥
 उभयकुल समवेत । नकाअ प्रवेश अद्भुत ॥३॥
 तप्तलोहें भेटी । तुका ह्मणे कल्पकोटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If one reclaims the land that one's forefathers gave as a charitable donation, the one who held the honor of first worship will receive the harshest punishment in Yama's house. Together with both family lines, he enters a dreadful hell.

Says Tuka, for an entire cosmic age, he must embrace pillars of burning iron.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Land that the elders gave away in charity, and a man takes it back out of greed. He once held the honor of the first worship; now the worst punishment in Yama's house is his. Both family lines go with him. The descent into hell is terrible. Tuka says: for ten million ages he embraces pillars of burning iron.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names one specific betrayal and follows it all the way to its end. Land that ancestors donated as a sacred charity is reclaimed by a descendant out of pure covetousness, and the higher the man's former standing, the heavier the reckoning. The penalty is not his alone: both lineages are dragged down with him, and the entry into hell is dreadful. The closing image fixes the scale, embracing pillars of burning iron for ten million ages, so that a quiet act of greed is measured against an almost endless suffering. The poem asks the listener to weigh what a gift once consecrated really costs to take back.

GATHA 4236

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, the false witness

मराठी मूळ

लटिकी ग्वाही सभेआंत । देतां पतित आगळा ॥१॥
 कुंभपाकीं वस्ती करुं । होय धुरु कुळेसी ॥२॥
 रजस्वला रुधिर स्रवे । तें चि घ्यावें तृषेसी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जन्मा आला । काळ जाला कुळासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He who bears false witness in an assembly is the most fallen of all. He will dwell in the boiling hell of Kumbhapaka, and his entire family line is set ablaze.

Says Tuka, the day he was born became a dark day for his entire clan.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The man who gives false testimony in the assembly is the most fallen of all. He will live in the boiling hell of Kumbhapaka, and his whole family line is set on fire. Tuka says: the day he was born became a dark day for his clan.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram fixes on the lie told under oath, the false witness in a public assembly, and calls it the lowest fall a person can take. The consequence is the boiling cauldron-hell of Kumbhapaka, and again the ruin is not contained to one man: his entire family is set ablaze with him. The final line lands the verdict at the very beginning of his life,

saying his birthday itself became a curse on his people. The point is not relish at his fate but the weight Tukaram puts on truthful speech: a single false word can be heavy enough to darken a whole lineage, which asks the hearer to guard their own tongue.

GATHA 4237

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, the fearless wrongdoer

मराठी मूळ

आचरे दोष न धरी धाक । परीपाक दुःखाचा ॥१॥
 चांडाळ तो दुराचारी । अंगीकारी कोण त्या ॥२॥
 नव्हे संतान वीस घर । अंधकार कुळासी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्याचें दान । घेतां पतन दुःखासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*He commits faults without any fear; the result is only suffering. Who will accept such a wretched wrongdoer?
 He has no progeny; his house stands desolate, and darkness covers his lineage.*

Says Tuka, accepting gifts from such a person leads only to a downfall of sorrow.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He does wrong and keeps no fear of it. The ripening of it is only sorrow. He is an outcaste in his conduct, a corrupt man. Who will take him in? He has no children; his house stands empty; darkness covers his line. Tuka says: take a gift from such a person and you fall into sorrow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the person who sins without any inner dread, and traces what such fearlessness ripens into: only suffering. By his conduct, not his birth, he has made himself an outcaste, and the poem asks plainly who would shelter him. His house is left without children, desolate, his lineage swallowed in darkness. The closing turn widens the warning to the listener: even accepting a gift from such a person draws you down into his sorrow, so the verse cautions against being entangled with corruption, not just against committing it.

GATHA 4238

Social Criticism

Social criticism, a life gone to waste

मराठी मूळ

कीविलवाणा जाला आतां । दोष करितां न विचारी ॥१॥
 अभिळाषी नारी धन । झकवी जन लटिकें चि ॥२॥
 विश्वासिया करी घात । न धरी चित्ता कांटाळा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं आला । वृथा गेला जन्मासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He has become pitiable now, committing sins without a second thought. He lusts after women and wealth, deceiving people with lies.

He betrays those who trust him and feels no revulsion in his chitta. Says Tuka, he has not truly been born; his life has gone entirely to waste.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He has become a pitiful thing now, doing wrong without a second thought. He lusts after women and wealth and cheats people with plain lies. He destroys the one who trusted him and feels no disgust in his heart. Tuka says: he was never truly born; his whole life has gone to waste.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sketches a man so given over to wrongdoing that he no longer pauses before doing it, driven by craving for women and money and content to deceive openly. The sharpest charge is the betrayal of trust done without a flicker of revulsion in the heart, for the deadened conscience is worse than the act. The verdict is severe but pointed at the pattern: a person who lives this way has wasted the very gift of birth. Tukaram's measure of a human life is not its length or its gains but whether it was lived toward truth, and by that measure such a life never began. The listener is left to ask whether their own conscience can still feel that disgust.

GATHA 4239

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the religion that is sold

मराठी मूळ

घेऊं नये तैसें दान । ज्याचें धन अभिळाषी ॥१॥
 तो ही येथें कामा नये । नकान जाय ह्मणोनि ॥२॥
 विकी स्नानसंध्या जप । करी तप पुढिलांचें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे दांभिक तो । नकान जातो स्वइच्छा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not accept improper gifts from one who covets your wealth. Such a person is of no use here either; he goes to hell because of it.

He sells his prayers, his rituals, and his austerities, performing them for others' benefit alone. Says Tuka, that hypocrite goes to hell of his own free will.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not take such a gift, given by one who covets your wealth. He too is of no use here; he goes to hell because of it. He sells his bathing and his prayers and his chanting; he does his austerities for someone else's sake. Tuka says: that hypocrite goes to hell of his own free will.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns against a tangled exchange: a gift offered by someone who is really after your wealth, which corrupts both the giver and the taker. He then turns on the man who has made his religion a trade, selling his ritual bath, his prayers, his chanting, performing his austerities not for God but on commission for others. The verse names this hypocrisy as self-chosen ruin: he goes to hell of his own free will, because no one forced him to make devotion a business. The point lands on motive over form. Outwardly the rites are correct; inwardly they are for sale, and that hollow inside is the fall. It invites the listener to ask for whose sake their own practice is done.

GATHA 4240

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, become fire itself

मराठी मूळ

सदा नामघोष करुं हरिकथा । तेणें सदा चित्ता समाधान ॥१॥
 सर्वसुख ल्यालों सर्व अलंकार । आनंदें निर्भर डुलतसों ॥२॥
 असों ऐसा कोठें आठव ही नाही । देहीं च विदेही भोगूं दशा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी जालों अग्निरूप । लागों नेदूं पापपुण्य आतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We will always raise the chant of the Name and perform Hari's sacred discourse. By that, the mind is forever at peace.

We have donned every ornament of joy and sway in bliss. We no longer even remember where we are; while in the body, we experience the state of the bodiless.

Says Tuka, we have become fire itself. We will not let either sin or merit cling to us now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We will always raise the cry of the Name and tell the story of Hari. By that the heart is always at peace. We have put on every ornament of joy, and we sway, full of bliss. We do not even remember where we are; while in the body, we taste the state of the bodiless. Tuka says: we have become fire itself. We will let neither sin nor merit cling to us now.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a fullness reached through one practice: the constant chant of the Name and the telling of Hari's story, which keeps the heart steadily at peace. The joy is total enough to be worn like ornaments, swaying the whole body, and so complete that even the awareness of place dissolves; though still embodied, he tastes the freedom of one with no body. The closing image is the radical claim, holding firm rather than softened: we have become fire itself. As fire burns clean and lets nothing stick, this state lets neither sin nor merit cling, for the soul absorbed in the Name has passed beyond the whole ledger of good and bad deeds.

GATHA 4241

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the boaster and the true saint

मराठी मूळ

वरिवरि बोले युद्धाचिया गोष्टी । परसैन्या भेटी नाहीं जाली ॥1॥
 पराव्याचे भार पाहुनियां दृष्टी । कांपतसे पोटीं थरथरां ॥ध्रु॥
 मनाचा उदार रायांचा जुंझार । फिरंगीचा मार मारीतसे ॥2॥
 धन्य त्याची माय धन्य त्याचा बाप । अंगीं अनुताप हरिनामें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे साधु बोले खर्गधार । खोचती अंतरें दुर्जनाचें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

On the surface he talks of war, but he has never actually faced the enemy's army. At the sight of the opposing forces, he trembles within.

He is generous only in his mind, a warrior only in his own imagination, wielding an imaginary sword. Blessed is the mother and father of the one whose body truly burns with remorse for Hari's sake.

Says Tuka, the words of a true saint cut like a sword's edge, piercing the inner darkness of the wicked.

IN PLAIN WORDS

On the surface he talks of battle, but he has never met the enemy's army. The moment he sees the opposing ranks, his belly trembles. He is generous only in his mind, a warrior only in his thoughts, swinging a sword that is not there. Blessed is the mother, blessed is the father, of the one whose body truly burns with longing for Hari's Name. Tuka says: the words of a true saint cut like the edge of a sword; they pierce the inner dark of the wicked.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contrasts the empty boaster with the genuine devotee. The boaster speaks loudly of war but has never faced an enemy; at the first sight of real ranks he shakes inside, generous and brave only in his own imagination, swinging an imaginary sword. Against him stands the one whose whole body burns with longing for Hari's Name, and Tukaram calls even that person's parents blessed for having brought him into the world. The closing turn redefines courage: the true saint's weapon is speech, words sharp as a sword's edge that cut straight through the inner darkness of the wicked. Real valor is not noise about battle but the burning sincerity that lets plain words pierce. The listener is asked which kind of warrior they are.

GATHA 4242

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, impossible images, all is illusion

मराठी मूळ

गंधर्वनगरीं क्षण एक राहावें । तें चि पें करावें मुळक्षत्र ॥1॥
 खपुष्पाची पूजा बांधोनि निर्गुणा । लक्ष्मीनारायणा तोषवावें ॥धु.॥
 वंध्यापुत्राचा लग्नाचा सोहळा । आपुलिया डोळां पाहों वेगीं ॥2॥
 मृगजळा पोही घालुनि सज्जाना । तापलिया जना निववावें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे मिथ्या देहेंद्रियकर्म । ब्रह्मार्पण ब्रह्म होय बापा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Dwell for a moment in the city of illusion and then use it as your foundation. Worship the formless Lakshmi-Narayana with sky-flowers and see if He is pleased.

Witness with your own eyes the wedding celebration of a barren woman's son. Sprinkle the water of a mirage upon a scorched assembly and cool them.

Says Tuka, the body, senses, and their actions are all illusory. When all is offered to Brahman, one becomes Brahman, O child.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Stay a moment in the city of the sky-spirits, and make that your foundation. Worship the formless with flowers that grow in the sky, and try to please Lakshmi-Narayana. Watch with your own eyes the wedding feast of a barren woman's son. Pour the water of a mirage over a scorched crowd and cool them. Tuka says: the body, the senses, and their deeds are all unreal. Offered to Brahman, one becomes Brahman, O child.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strings together images that cannot exist: a city of sky-spirits used as solid ground, flowers grown in the empty sky, the son of a barren woman holding a wedding, a mirage that gives real water. Each is impossible, and that is the lesson: the world we take as solid is exactly as unreal as these. From this he draws the conclusion that the body, the senses, and all their actions are equally illusory, no more substantial than mirage-water. The closing turn is the release: when everything, including this unreal self, is offered up to Brahman, the offerer becomes Brahman. The tender address, O child, frames the whole thing as instruction, leading the listener from seeing through illusion to surrendering into the only thing that is real.

GATHA 4243

Prayers

Prayer, begging for the leftovers

मराठी मूळ

तुझा ह्यणविलों दास । केली उच्छष्टासी आस ॥1॥
 मुखीं घालावा कवळ । जरी तूं होशील कृपाळ ॥2॥
 सीण भाग माझा पुसें । तुका ह्यणे न करीं हांसें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I call myself Your servant and have set my hope on Your leftovers. Place a morsel in my mouth, if only You will be gracious.

Wipe away my weariness and fatigue. Says Tuka, do not laugh at me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You let me be called Your servant. I have set my hope on Your leftovers. Put a morsel in my mouth, if You will be kind. Wipe away my weariness and my tiredness. Tuka says: do not laugh at me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays from the lowest place he can take, and keeps it there. He does not ask for a place at the table, only for the leftovers, and for a single morsel to be set in his mouth if God chooses to be gracious. He asks that his weariness and exhaustion be wiped away, the tiredness of a servant who has nothing of his own. The closing line is the rawest, do not laugh at me, the plea of someone who knows how small his request is and fears even that might be met with scorn. The prayer makes humility itself the whole of the devotee's claim on God: not merit, only need.

GATHA 4244

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, wanting nothing but to give

मराठी मूळ

काय मागें आह्मी गुंतलों काशानीं । पुढें वाहों मनीं धाक देवा ॥1॥
 कीतिन चराचरीं आहे तैसी आहे । भेटोनियां काय घ्यावें आह्मां ॥ध्रु॥
 घेउनी धरणें बैसती उपवासी । हट आह्मांपासीं नाहीं तैसा ॥2॥
 तातडी तयांनीं केली विटंबणा । आह्मां नारायणा काय उणें ॥3॥
 नाहीं मुक्तिचाड वास वैकुंठीचा । जीव भाव आमुचा देऊं तुज ॥4॥
 तुका ह्यणे काय मानेल तें आतां । तूं घेई अनंता सर्व माझें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What are we entangled in behind us? Why carry dread of what lies ahead, O God? Your fame pervades all creation as it is; what more is there for us to gain by meeting You? Some sit on hunger-strikes demanding Your audience, but we are not that stubborn. Those who pressed You in haste only brought humiliation upon

themselves.

We lack nothing, O Narayana. We have no craving for liberation or a seat in Vaikuntha.

We will give You our life and jiva. Says Tuka, whatever pleases You now, take everything of mine, O Infinite One.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What were we entangled in before? Why carry dread in the mind of what lies ahead, O God? Your fame fills all that moves and stands still, just as it is; what is there for us to gain by meeting You? Some sit in hunger-strikes, demanding Your audience; we have no such stubbornness. Those who pressed You in haste only brought shame on themselves. We lack nothing, O Narayana. We have no craving for liberation or for a seat in Vaikuntha. We give You our life and our soul. Tuka says: take whatever pleases You now; take everything of mine, O Infinite One.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays down both fear and demand. He refuses to fret over past entanglements or future dread, and he notes that God's glory already fills the whole moving and unmoving world, so there is nothing extra to be won by forcing a meeting. He sets himself apart from those who try to coerce God, the ones who fast in protest demanding a vision, recalling that such pressure only humiliated them. Then comes the heart of it: he wants nothing, not even liberation, not even a place in Vaikuntha, the very goals most devotees chase. Having emptied himself of every demand, he offers the only thing left, his life and his soul, and tells the Infinite to take all of it on God's own terms. Love that asks for nothing becomes a love that can give everything.

GATHA 4245

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, plundering God's treasure

मराठी मूळ

जालों बिळवंत । होऊनियां शरणागत ॥१॥
केला घरांत रिघावा । ठायीं पाडियेला ठेवा ॥२॥
हाता चढे धन । ऐसें रचलें कारण ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे मिठी । पायीं देउनि केली लुटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have become mighty by becoming a surrendered one. I gained entry into His home and found the treasure exactly where it was kept.

Wealth that comes easily into one's hands: such is the arrangement He has made. Says Tuka, I embraced His feet and plundered the entire store.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have become mighty by becoming one who surrenders. I made my way into His house and found the treasure lying right where it was kept. Wealth comes easily into my hands; that is how He has arranged it. Tuka says: I clasped His feet and looted the whole store.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the language of weakness inside out: he became powerful precisely by giving up, by becoming one who has surrendered. Surrender is the entry; once inside God's house he finds the treasure waiting exactly where it was always kept, and the wealth falls into his hands without effort because God has arranged it that way. The closing image is gleeful and bold: clasp the Lord's feet, he plundered the entire store. The paradox is the whole teaching. What no force or striving can seize, total self-giving carries off completely, so the one who lays down all power walks away with all the riches.

GATHA 4246

The Moral Ideal

Warning, the wages of lust

मराठी मूळ

दासीचा जो संग करी । त्याचे पूर्वज नकान द्वारीं॥१॥
 ऐसे सांगों जातां जना । नये कोणाचिया मना ॥२॥
 बरें विचारुनी पाहें । तुज अंतीं कोण आहे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे रांडलेका । अंतीं जासिल यमलोका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The one who consorts with a maid-servant sends his ancestors to the gates of hell. When one tries to tell people this, it does not sit well with anyone.

Think carefully about who will stand by you in the end. Says Tuka, you slave of lust, in the end you will go to Yama's realm.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The man who beds a servant-girl sends his ancestors to the gates of hell. When you go and tell people this, it pleases no one. Think carefully: who will stand by you at the end? Tuka says: you slave of lust, in the end you will go to Yama's realm.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names a sin the world does not want named, and refuses to soften it. He says the man who uses a powerless servant-girl for his lust drags down even those who came before him, and warns that this plain truth makes everyone uncomfortable. He turns the listener to the only question that matters: when the body falls, who will actually be with you? The pleasure passes; the account remains, and he says it leads straight to the realm of death. The sting is aimed at the pattern of using the weak for appetite, not at one person to be despised.

GATHA 4247

Renunciation

Renunciation, the seed that will not sprout

मराठी मूळ

गुळ सांडुनि गोडी घ्यावी । मीठ सांडुनि चवि चाखावी ॥1॥
 ऐसा प्रपंच सांडुनि घ्यावा । मग परमार्थ जोडावा॥ध्रु॥
 साकरेचा नव्हे ऊंस । आह्मां कैचा गर्भवास ॥2॥
 बीज भाजुनि केली लाही । जन्ममरण आह्मांसि नाहीं ॥3॥
 आकारासी कैचा ठाव । देह प्रत्यक्ष जाला वाव ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे अवघें जग । सर्वा घटीं पांडुरंग ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Abandon sugar, yet keep its sweetness. Discard salt, yet retain its flavor.

In the same way, renounce worldly life and then gain the spiritual treasure. Sugar does not revert to sugarcane; how then can we return to the womb? A seed once roasted into puffed grain will not sprout again; birth and death are no more for us.

Where can form find a foothold when the body itself has become empty? Says Tuka, the whole world is pervaded by Panduranga in every being.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Keep the sweetness, but let the sugar go. Keep the flavor, but let the salt go. In the same way, let worldly life go, and then take up the spiritual treasure. Sugar does not turn back into cane; so how can we return to the womb? A seed once roasted into puffed grain will not sprout again; for us there is no more birth and death. Where can form take hold, when the body itself has become empty? Tuka says: the whole world is full of Panduranga, in every single being.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a renunciation that keeps the essence and drops only the husk. You do not lose sweetness by letting go of the sugar, and you do not lose the truth by letting go of worldly life; you finally hold it cleanly. He gives two images for the change being irreversible: refined sugar never becomes cane again, and roasted grain never sprouts again, so for the one who has turned, birth and death are finished. With the body seen as empty, separate form has nowhere left to stand. What remains is the one presence, Panduranga, filling every being everywhere.

GATHA 4248

Prayers

Surrender, the babbling child

मराठी मूळ

आमुचें दंडवत पायांवरि डोई । व्हावें उतराई ठेवूनियां ॥1॥
 कराल तें काय नव्हे जी विठ्ठला । चित्त घावें बोला बोबडिया ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी लडिवाळें अनाथें । ह्मणोनि दिनानाथें सांभाळावें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My prostration places my head upon Your feet. Accept it and be free of any debt to me.

Is there anything You cannot do, O Vitthal? Lend Your ear to this babbling child's words. Says Tuka, we are Your helpless little ones. Therefore, O Lord of the lowly, You must look after us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My bow lays my head on Your feet. Accept it, and let Yourself owe me nothing. Is there anything You cannot do, O Vitthal? Lend Your ear to these babbling words. Tuka says: we are Your spoiled helpless little ones; so, Lord of the destitute, You must look after us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes empty-handed and makes his very helplessness the claim. He bows so completely that his prostration cancels any debt God could owe him; the offering is total. Then he leans on God's unlimited power and asks only that his stammering, childlike words be heard. He calls himself and his fellow devotees spoiled, helpless children who have nothing to give. The whole appeal rests on God's own title, Lord of the destitute: if that is who You are, then caring for the helpless is simply what You do.

GATHA 4249

Ecstasy and Joy

Joy, sheltered by the Mother

मराठी मूळ

भाग्यवंत आह्मी विष्णुदास जगीं । अभंग प्रसंगीं धैर्यवंत ॥1॥
 नाही तें पुरवीत आणुनि जवळी । गाउनी माउली गीत सुखें ॥ध्रु॥
 प्रीति अंगीं असे सदा सर्वकाळ । वोळली सकळ सुखें ठायीं ॥2॥
 आपुल्या स्वभावे जैसे जेथें असों । तैसे तेथें दिसों साजिरे चि ॥3॥
 वासनेचा कंद उपडिलें मूळ । दुरितें सकळ निवारिलीं ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे भक्तजनाची माउली । करील साउली विठ्ठल आह्मां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We are the fortunate ones, servants of Vishnu in this world, steadfast and courageous in every trial. Our Mother provides what is lacking and brings it near, singing Her song of joy.

Love dwells in our being at all times; every happiness has settled in its place. In our natural state, wherever we are, we appear radiant and fresh.

The root of desire has been uprooted; all sins have been destroyed. Says Tuka, Vitthal will spread His shade over us, the children of His devotees.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are the fortunate ones, servants of Vishnu in this world, unbroken and steady in every trial. Our Mother brings near whatever is missing, and sings Her song of joy. Love is in us always, all the time; every happiness has settled into its place. Just as we are, wherever we are, we look fresh and lovely. The root of desire has been pulled up; every sin has been cleared away. Tuka says: Vitthal, the Mother of His devotees, will spread His shade over us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram counts the wealth of those who belong wholly to God. He calls the devotees fortunate and steady in any trial, because the Lord, here named as Mother, supplies what they lack and fills them with song. With love settled in them and every joy in its place, they need no improvement: as they naturally are, wherever they happen to be, they shine. The transformation is described as desire torn out by the root and sin wiped clean. The poem ends in shelter: Vitthal, mothering His devotees, spreads His shade over them.

GATHA 4250

The Saints

The saints, one glance bears fruit at once

मराठी मूळ

तीर्थो फळती काळें जन्में आगिळ्या । संतदृष्टी पाया हेळामात्रें ॥1॥
 सुखाचे सुगम वैष्णवांचे पाय । अंतरींचा जाय महाभेव ॥२॥
 काळें हि न सरे तपें समाधान । कथे मूढजन समाधिस्थ ॥३॥
 उपमा द्यावया सांगतां आणीक । नाहीं तिन्ही लोक धुंडाळतां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मी राहिलों येणें सुखें । संतसंगें दुःखें नासावया ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Pilgrimages bear fruit over many lifetimes, but a single glance from a saint's eye bears fruit instantly. The feet of the Vaishnavas are the easy path to joy; the great dread within is dispelled.

Even over ages, austerities do not yield contentment, yet in a sacred discourse, even a dull person enters deep absorption. No comparison can be found for this in all three worlds, search as you may.

Says Tuka, I have remained in this joy, for the company of saints destroys all sorrow.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Pilgrimages bear fruit only over many lifetimes; a single glance from a saint bears fruit in an instant. The feet of the Vaishnavas are the easy road to joy; the great dread inside is gone. Even ages of austerity do not bring peace, yet in a holy discourse even a dull man falls into deep absorption. There is nothing in all three worlds to compare it to, search as you may. Tuka says: I have stayed in this joy, so that the company of saints may destroy my sorrow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures the saints against the hard, slow paths and finds them swifter. Sacred journeys may take lifetimes to ripen, but one look from a true saint ripens at once, and the feet of the devotees are the simple way into joy that lifts the deep fear within. Long austerities can fail to bring contentment, while a single holy discourse can carry even a slow-witted person into absorption. He insists nothing in the three worlds compares to this. So he has chosen to settle in this joy, letting the company of saints undo his sorrow.

GATHA 4251

Confession and Sin

Confession, the whole burden on Vithoba

मराठी मूळ

संतजना माझी यावया करुणा । ह्मणउनी दीन हीन जालों ॥1॥
 नेणें योग युक्ती नाहीं ज्ञान मति । गातसें या गीती पांडुरंगा ॥ध्रु॥
 भाव भक्ती नेणें तप अनुष्ठान । करितों किर्तन विठ्ठलाचें ॥2॥
 ब्रह्मज्ञान ध्यान न कळे धारणा । एका नारायणा वांचूनियां ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझा विठोबासी भार । जाणे हा विचार तो चि माझा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have become poor and lowly so that the saintly ones may show me compassion. I know no yoga, no technique, no wisdom, no intellect.

I sing these songs of Panduranga. I know neither devotion nor austerity nor ritual practice.

I perform Vitthal's kirtan alone. I understand neither Brahman-knowledge, nor meditation, nor concentration, except for Narayana alone.

Says Tuka, my entire burden is upon Vithoba. He alone knows what is right for me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have become poor and lowly so that the saints might take pity on me. I know no yoga, no technique, no wisdom, no quick mind; I just sing these songs of Panduranga. I do not know devotion, or austerity, or ritual; I only sing Vitthal's kirtan. I understand no knowledge of Brahman, no meditation, no holding the mind still, nothing but Narayana alone. Tuka says: my whole burden is on Vithoba; he alone knows what is right for me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram empties his hands of every credential before he asks for help. He says his low, poor condition is itself the appeal, drawing the saints' compassion; he claims no yoga, no learning, no sharp intellect. All he can do is sing the Name of Panduranga, and he denies even devotion, austerity, and ritual as his own achievements. Knowledge of Brahman, meditation, concentration: he disowns them all, holding only to Narayana. Stripped of every method, he sets the entire weight of his life on Vithoba, trusting that God alone knows what is good for him.

GATHA 4252

Confession and Sin

Confession, the unworthy servant

मराठी मूळ

ऐसें काय उणें जालें तुज देवा । भावेंविण सेवा घेसी माझी ॥1॥
 काय मज द्यावा न लगे मुशारा । पहावें दातारा विचारुनि ॥ध्रु॥
 करितों पाखांडें जोडूनि अक्षरें । नव्हे ज्ञान खरें भक्तिरस ॥2॥
 गुणवाद तुझे न बोलवे वाणी । आणिका छळणी वाद सांगें ॥3॥
 तरी आतां मज राखें तुझे पायीं । देखसील कांहीं प्रेमरस ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुज हांसतील लोक । निःकाम सेवक ह्मणोनियां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What is it that You lack, O God, that You will not accept my service without true devotion? Must I be paid wages? Consider this, O generous Lord. I compose verses by stringing together syllables in artifice; it is not genuine wisdom or the nectar of devotion.

My tongue cannot truly sing Your praises; I only know how to argue and wrangle with others. Even so, keep me at Your feet.

Perhaps You will find some trace of love there. Says Tuka, people will laugh at You, calling me Your selfless servant when I am no such thing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What do You lack, O God, that You will not take my service unless it has real love in it? Must I be paid wages? Look closely and consider, O generous Lord. I make a sham, stringing syllables together; it is not real wisdom, not the nectar of devotion. My tongue cannot truly sing Your goodness; I only know how to argue and wrangle with others. Even so, now keep me at Your feet; perhaps there You will find some trace of love. Tuka says: people will laugh at You for calling me a selfless servant.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confesses the hollowness of his own service even as he clings to God. He asks why God, who lacks nothing, should refuse service that has no genuine love behind it, and whether he must somehow be paid for it. He admits his verses are clever artifice, not true wisdom or devotion, and that his tongue is better at quarreling than at praise. Yet he still begs to be kept at God's feet, hoping that nearness alone might grow some real love in him. The closing turn is self-mocking: if God claims him as a selfless servant, even the world will laugh at the claim.

GATHA 4253

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false saint

मराठी मूळ

भोंदावया मीस घेऊनि संतांचें । करी कुटुंबाचें दास्य सदा ॥1॥
 मनुष्याचे परी बोले रावा करी । रंजवी नरनारी जगामध्ये ॥ध्रु॥
 तिमयाचा बैल करी सिकविलें । चित्रीचें बाहुलें गोष्टी सांगे ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा जळो हे महंती । लाज नाही चितीं निसुगातें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Under the guise of sainthood, he deceives others while serving his own family day and night. He speaks like a human being, puts on a show, and entertains men and women in the world.

He is like a ventriloquist's puppet or a painted doll that tells stories. Says Tuka, O God, cursed is such spiritual leadership. The shameless one feels no remorse.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He puts on the disguise of a saint to cheat others, while day and night he serves only his own household. He talks like a man, makes a show, and entertains the men and women of the world. He is a trained performing bull, a painted doll that tells stories. Tuka says: O God, let such sainthood burn; the shameless man feels nothing in his heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exposes the man who wears holiness as a costume. The robe and the title are a disguise for deceit, while in truth his whole devotion goes to feeding his own family. He performs piety for an audience, charming the crowd of men and women, but he is only a trained animal going through tricks or a painted puppet reciting borrowed tales. Tukaram curses this kind of religious leadership outright. The point falls on the pattern of using sanctity as a show: a heart so shameless that it feels no sting at the fraud.

GATHA 4254

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the fraudulent exorcist

मराठी मूळ

अंगीं घेऊनियां वारें दया देती । तया भक्ता हातीं चोट आहे ॥1॥
 देव्हारा बैसोनि हालविती सुपें । ऐसीं पापी पापें लिंपताती ॥ध्रु॥
 एकीबेकीन्यायें होतसे प्रचित । तेणें लोक समस्त भुलताती ॥2॥
 तयाचे स्वाधीन दैवतें असती । तरी कां मरती त्यांचीं पोरें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे पाणी अंगारा जयाचा । भक्त कान्होबाचा तो ही नव्हे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who take on a spirit and then give blessings while possessed hold deception in their hands. They sit at the shrine and wave a winnowing fan, and such sinful ones are smeared with sin.

By a trick of coincidence, something appears to come true, and the people are deluded. If the deities were truly under their control, why do their own children die? Says Tuka, one who deals in holy water and sacred ash is not even a devotee of God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who let a spirit ride them and then hand out blessings have only deceit in their hands. They sit at the shrine and wave a winnowing fan, and such sinners smear themselves with sin. Once in a while a thing comes true by chance, and all the people are fooled. If the gods were really under their control, why do their own children die? Tuka says: a man who deals in holy water and sacred ash is not even a devotee of God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips the mask off the possession-priest who trades on people's fear. The man pretends a spirit possesses him, blesses from the shrine, waves his fan, and calls it power, but it is fraud, and he only piles sin on himself. A rare coincidence that comes true is enough to delude the crowd. Then Tukaram lands the test no fraud can pass: if you truly commanded the gods, your own children would not die. The verse aims at the trade in holy water and ash that preys on the credulous; the one who runs it is not even a devotee, let alone a holy man.

GATHA 4255

Prayers

Prayer, do not fob me off

मराठी मूळ

कोणा एकाचिया पोरें केली आळी । ठावी नाहीं पोळी मागें देखी ॥१॥
 बुझाविलें हातीं देउनी खापर । छंद करकर वारियेली ॥२॥
 तैसें नको करूं मज कृपावंता । काय नाहीं सत्ता तुझे हातीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मायबापाचें उचित । करावें तें हित बाळकाचें ॥४॥
 मनीं ध्यान करी अहंता धरुनी । तया चक्रपाणी दूर ठेला ॥५॥
 मान अभिमान सांडुनियां द्यावे । अवघ्यां नीच व्हावें तरी प्राप्त ॥६॥
 तुका ह्मणे हें चि कोणासी सांगावें । सादर होउनि भावें भजें देवा ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A child somewhere made a fuss, never having seen a proper flatbread. They calmed it by putting a potsherd in its hand and distracted it from its crying.

Do not do this with me, O Compassionate One. Is there nothing within Your power? Says Tuka, it is the duty of parents to do what is truly good for the child. One who meditates with ego in the mind finds God standing far away.

Abandon pride and self-importance; become humble before all. Only then is God attained.

Says Tuka, to whom should this be told? With devotion and sincerity, worship God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Some child made a fuss, never having seen a real flatbread. They quieted it by putting a potsherd in its hand and stopped its endless crying. Do not do this to me, O Compassionate One. Is there nothing in Your power? Tuka says: it is the duty of a mother and father to do what is truly good for the child. The one who meditates while holding on to ego finds the Lord standing far off. Drop honor and self-importance; become lowest of all, and then He is reached. Tuka says: who can this even be told to? Become attentive, and worship God with love.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram begs God not to pacify him with a worthless substitute. He gives the homely picture of a crying child fooled by a broken shard placed in its hand because it has never seen real food. He asks God not to fob him off that way, since nothing is beyond God's power, and reminds Him that true parents give the child what actually helps, not a distraction. Then the poem turns to the seeker: meditation done while clutching ego pushes the Lord far away. Only by laying down pride and self-importance, becoming the lowest of all, is God reached, and the one road is attentive, loving worship.

GATHA 4256

Social Criticism

Social criticism, counsel wasted on the proud

मराठी मूळ

अधमाचें चित्त अहंकारीं मन । उपदेश शीण तया केला ॥1॥
 पापियाचें मन न करी आचार । विधवे शृंगार व्यर्थ केला ॥ध्रु॥
 अधमाचें चित्त दिशुचत ऐकेना । वांयां सीण मना करुं काय ॥2॥
 गर्धबासी दिली चंदनाची उटी । केशर लल्हाटीं शुकराच्या॥3॥
 पतिवंचकेसी सांगतां उदंड । परि तें पाषांड तिचे मनीं ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे तैसें अभावीं सांगतां । वाउगा चि चित्ता सीण होय ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mind of the wicked is filled with ego; teaching him is a waste of effort. The mind of a wrongdoer will not follow righteous conduct; adorning a widow is equally pointless.

The mind of the wicked is restless and will not listen; why should we trouble our own minds in vain? It is like applying sandalwood paste to a donkey or saffron to a pig's forehead. No matter how much you tell an unfaithful woman, her mind remains steeped in deceit.

Says Tuka, preaching to the faithless brings only needless fatigue to the chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The base man's mind is full of ego; teaching him only wears you out. The sinner's mind will not keep good conduct; dressing up a widow is just as useless. The base man's mind is restless and will not listen; why wear out your own mind for nothing? It is like rubbing sandalwood paste on a donkey, or saffron on a pig's forehead. Tell an unfaithful woman all you like; her mind stays steeped in deceit. Tuka says: preaching to the faithless brings only pointless tiredness to the heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns that good counsel is wasted where there is no openness to receive it. A mind packed with ego cannot take teaching, and a heart set on wrongdoing will not keep to good conduct, so the effort exhausts the teacher for nothing. He piles on blunt images of misplaced effort: sandalwood paste on a donkey, saffron on a pig, finery on one who will not value it. However much you say, a mind steeped in deceit stays as it is. The lesson is about discernment, knowing where teaching can land, not about writing off a person; the warning is to spend your strength where the heart is willing.

GATHA 4257

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the man who will not listen

मराठी मूळ

किती उपदेश करावा खळासी । नावडे त्यासी बरें कांहीं ॥१॥
 शुद्ध हे वासना नाहीं चांडाळाची । होळी आयुष्याची केली तेणें ॥२॥
 नाहीं शुद्ध भाव नायके वचन । आपण्या आपण नाडियेलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्यासी काय व्याली रांड । करितो बडबड रात्रदिस ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How much counsel can one give to the wicked? Nothing good appeals to them. The wretch has no pure desire; he has made a bonfire of his own lifespan.

He has no genuine feeling and will not heed good words; he has only ruined himself. Says Tuka, what cursed woman bore such a one? He babbles senselessly day and night.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How much can you counsel a wicked man? Nothing good appeals to him. The wretch has no clean desire; he has made a bonfire of his own life. He has no true feeling and will not hear good words; he has ruined himself, by himself. Tuka says: what cursed woman gave birth to him? He babbles on, day and night.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the man who cannot be reached because he refuses to be reached. No amount of counsel takes hold, since nothing good attracts him and his desires are unclean; he is burning up his own lifespan like a bonfire. He has no genuine feeling and will not listen, so the ruin is self-inflicted, not done to him by anyone else. The harsh outburst about his birth is the cry of a teacher worn down by a heart that will not turn. The warning lands on the pattern of willful deafness and the empty noise it makes, day and night, in place of real listening.

GATHA 4258

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false devotee

मराठी मूळ

संत देखोनियां स्वयें दृष्टी टाळी । आदरें न्याहाळी परस्त्रीसी ॥1॥
 वीट ये कर्णासी संतवाक्यामृता । स्त्रीशब्द ऐकतां निवे कर्ण ॥धु.॥
 कथेमाजी निज वाटे नित्यक्षणीं । िस्त्रयेचे कीर्तनीं प्रेमें जागे ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुह्मी क्रोधासी न यावें । स्वभावा करावें काय कोणीं ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

At the sight of a saint, he averts his eyes, yet he gazes adoringly at another man's wife. The nectar of saints' words grates on his ears, but when a woman speaks, his ears are soothed.

He falls asleep every moment during a sacred discourse, yet at the performance of a woman, he is wide awake with passion. Says Tuka, do not be angry with such people. What can anyone do about their nature?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When he sees a saint, he turns his eyes away. But he stares with longing at another man's wife. The nectar of a saint's words sickens his ears. When a woman speaks, his ears are soothed. During the sacred discourse he dozes off every moment. At a woman's performance he is wide awake with passion. Tuka says: do not be angry with such people. What can anyone do about their nature?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram holds up a portrait of a man whose appetites have flipped the holy and the profane. Everything that should draw him, the saint, the saint's words, the sacred story, repels him; everything that should not hold him, another's wife, her voice, her dancing, wakes him fully. The poem names the pattern without softening it: the man is not asleep by accident, he is asleep only to what is good. Then Tukaram turns the blade back: do not waste anger on him, ask instead what a person's own nature is doing. The closing line is an examination of how the heart bends, not a license to despise the man caught in the bending.

GATHA 4259

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, grace where effort fails

मराठी मूळ

मणि पडिला दाढेसी मकरतोंडीं । सुखें हस्ते चि काढवेल प्रौढीं ॥1॥
 परि मूर्खाचें चित्त बोधवेना । दुधें कूर्मीच्या पाळवेल सेना ॥धु.॥
 सकळ पृथ्वी हिंडतां कदाचित । ससीसिंगाची प्राप्त होय तेथें ॥2॥
 अतिप्रयत्नें गिळतां वाळुवेतें । दिव्य तेलाची प्राप्त होय तेथें ॥3॥
 अतिक्रोधें खवळला फणी पाही । धरुं येतो मस्तकीं पुष्पप्रायी ॥4॥
 पहा ब्रह्मानंदें चि एकीं हेळा । महापातकी तो तुका मुक्त केला ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A jewel caught in the jaws of a crocodile could still be removed with a steady, daring hand. But the mind of a fool simply cannot be enlightened.

An army of turtles could be nourished with milk, if one tried hard enough. If you scoured the whole earth, you might somehow find a hare's horn.

If you pressed sand hard enough, you might extract rare oil. Even a furious serpent could be subdued and have a flower placed upon its head.

Says Tuka, by the bliss of Brahman alone has this great wrongdoer been effortlessly set free.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A jewel that has fallen into a crocodile's jaws, a steady, daring hand can still pull it out. But the mind of a fool cannot be made to understand. An army of turtles could be raised on milk, if one tried hard enough. Wander the whole earth and you might somehow find a hare's horn. Press sand hard enough and you might draw out rare oil. Even a raging cobra can be tamed and have a flower laid on its head. Tuka says: by the bliss of Brahman alone, this one great sinner was set free without effort.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up impossibilities to measure one harder thing and then one easier thing. A jewel from a crocodile's mouth, an army of turtles fed on milk, a hare's horn, oil pressed from sand, a flower set on a furious serpent: all are absurd, yet he calls the fool's awakening harder still. The point is that no amount of clever effort can open a closed mind. Against all that strain he sets the last line, where the impossible happens without effort: the bliss of Brahman, sheer grace, freed even a great sinner. He puts himself in that place, naming himself the sinner, so the claim lands on his own life: what striving could never reach, grace did, and did it easily.

GATHA 4260

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the fearless servant

मराठी मूळ

भोळे भाविक हे जुनाट चांगले । होय तैसं केलें भक्तिभावे ॥१॥
 ह्मणउनि चिंता नाहीं आह्मां दासां । न भ्यो गर्भवासा जन्म घेतां ॥२॥
 आपुलिया इच्छा करुं गदारोळ । भोगूं सर्वकाळ सर्व सुखें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

These innocent, devout, old-fashioned faithful ones are truly fine. Whatever happened, they accepted it with loving devotion.

Therefore we servants have no worry; we do not fear the womb or taking birth again. At our own pleasure we will raise a joyful uproar and enjoy every happiness at all times.

IN PLAIN WORDS

These simple, trusting, old-fashioned faithful ones are truly good. Whatever came, they took it with loving devotion. So we servants have no worry. We do not fear the womb, we do not fear taking birth again. As we please we will raise a joyful uproar and enjoy every happiness at all times.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram praises the old, plain-hearted devotees who met whatever life brought them with love rather than complaint, and then claims their freedom for himself and his fellow servants. Because such trust has shut out fear, the thing people dread most, the womb and another birth, has lost its terror. Rebirth, the engine of worldly anxiety, becomes nothing to flee. What remains is not grim endurance but celebration: free of dread, the servants make a joyful noise and take every happiness as it comes. The fearlessness and the festivity are the same gift seen from two sides.

GATHA 4261

Prayers

Prayer, spare the erring child

मराठी मूळ

आतां तरी माझी परिसा वीनवती । रखुमाईच्या पति पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 चुकलिया बाळा न मारावे जीवे । हित तें करावे मायबापीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझा ह्मणताती मज । आतां आहे लाज हे चि तुह्मां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now hear my humble plea, O Lord of Rakhumai, O Panduranga. Do not strike a wayward child to death; it is the duty of parents to seek the child's welfare.

Says Tuka, they call me Yours. The honor to uphold is Yours now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now hear my humble plea, O Lord of Rakhumai, O Panduranga. Do not strike a wayward child dead. Parents are meant to seek their child's good. Tuka says: they call me Yours. The honor to keep now is Yours.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes as a child who knows he has gone wrong and pleads not for reward but for mercy. He invokes the relationship itself: a parent does not kill a straying child, a parent works for the child's welfare, so let God act as the parent he is. Then he presses the claim home by naming what is at stake for God, not for himself. The world calls him God's own; if God now lets him fall, it is God's name, God's honor, that suffers. He makes his own rescue a matter of the Lord's good name.

GATHA 4262

Longing and Separation

Longing, no skill but love

मराठी मूळ

नाही बळयोग अभ्यास कराया । न कळे ते क्रिया साधनाची ॥१॥
 तुझिये भेटीचें प्रेम अंतरंगीं । नाहीं बळ अंगीं भजनाचें ॥२॥
 काय पांडुरंगा करुं बा विचार । झुरतें अंतर भेटावया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सांगा वडिलपणें बुद्धी । तुजविण दयानिधी पुसों कोणां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have no strength for yoga or spiritual practice; I do not understand the methods of discipline. Within my chitta there is longing to meet You, but I lack the strength for formal worship.

What shall I do, O Panduranga? My inner being yearns to meet You. Says Tuka, counsel me with the wisdom of an elder. Apart from You, O Treasure of mercy, whom shall I ask?

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have no strength for yoga, no power to keep up the practice. I do not understand the methods of discipline. In my heart there is love that longs to meet You. But in my body there is no strength for formal worship. What shall I do, O Panduranga? My inner being pines to meet You. Tuka says: counsel me as an elder would. Apart from You, O Treasure of mercy, whom shall I ask?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out exactly what he lacks: no aptitude for yoga, no stamina for disciplined practice, no grasp of the formal methods that are supposed to reach God. What he does have is the only thing he cannot manufacture, a heart that aches to meet the Lord. The poem sets that pure longing against his complete incapacity and makes the incapacity the whole appeal. Then he asks God himself for the guidance a wise elder would give, because the usual sources of help are exactly what he has just confessed he cannot use. With no method and no teacher left, he has nowhere to turn but to the one he longs for.

GATHA 4263

Longing and Separation

Longing, the complaint of the overlooked

मराठी मूळ

जिहीं तुझी कास भावें धरियेली । त्यांची नाही केली सांड देवा ॥१॥
 काय माझा भोग आहे तो न कळे । सुखें तुझी डोळे झांकियेले ॥२॥
 राव रंक तुज सारिके चि जन । नाही थोर लहान तुजपाशीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मागें आपंगिलें भक्तां । माझिया संचिता कृपा नये ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who held fast to Your hem with sincere devotion were never abandoned by You, O God. What my own destiny holds, I do not know.

You have peacefully closed Your eyes. Rich and poor are the same to You; there is no great or small in Your sight.

Says Tuka, in the past You embraced other devotees, but Your grace has not come to my accumulated karma.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who held fast to Your hem with love, You never abandoned them, O God. What my own fate holds, I do not know. You have calmly closed Your eyes. Rich and poor are the same to You. With You there is no great and no small. Tuka says: in the past You took up other devotees. But Your grace has not come to my store of karma.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a grievance, but he argues it from God's own record. Others clung to God and were never cast off; God himself is famously even-handed, treating rich and poor, great and small, alike. So why, Tukaram asks, has that grace passed him by? The line that God has calmly closed His eyes is the sharp center: it can mean God is indifferent, or that God is overlooking faults, and Tukaram lets the ache sit there unresolved. He is not denying God's mercy; he is holding God to it, asking why the karma that weighs him down has not yet been met by the grace shown to everyone else.

GATHA 4264

The Nature of God

Nature of God, formless yet visible

मराठी मूळ

पहावया तुझा जरि बोलें अंत । तरि माझे जात डोळे देवा ॥१॥
 स्तंभीं तुज नाहीं घातलें प्रल्हादें । आपुल्या आनंदें अवतार ॥२॥
 भक्ताच्या काजा जालासी सगुण । तुज नाहीं गुण रूप नाम ॥३॥
 ऐसा कोण देवा अधम यातीचा । निर्धार हा साचा नाहीं तुझा ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे बोले कवतुके गोष्टी । नेदीं येऊं पोटीं राग देवा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If I try to test Your patience, O God, my own eyes will wear out first. It was not Prahlada who placed You in the pillar; You took incarnation of Your own delight.

For the sake of Your devotees You became visible, though You truly have no quality, form, or name. What person, O God, is so lowly in caste that Your firm resolve will not reach them? Says Tuka, I speak these words playfully. Do not harbor anger in Your heart, O Lord.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If I tried to find the end of You by speaking, my own eyes would give out first, O God. Prahlada did not put You inside the pillar. You took that form out of Your own delight. For the sake of Your devotees You took on form, though You have no quality, no shape, no name. What person is so low in birth that Your firm resolve will not reach him? Tuka says: I speak these things playfully. Do not let anger rise in Your heart, O Lord.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram holds two truths together: God is endless and beyond all attributes, yet God takes form for love of His devotees. No one forces this; Prahlada did not conjure God into the pillar, God burst out of His own joy. The God who has no quality, shape, or name still puts on quality, shape, and name to be near those who need Him. From this Tukaram draws the radical reach of grace: no birth is too low for God's resolve to find. Then, having spoken so boldly about the nature of the Lord, he ends with a child's disarming caution, calling his own words play and asking God not to take offense.

GATHA 4265

Prayers

Prayer, dullness laid before mercy

मराठी मूळ

प्रगट व्हावें हे अज्ञानवासना । माझी नारायणा हीनबुद्ध ॥1॥
 खाणीवाणी होसी काष्टीं तूं पाषाणीं । जंतु जीवाजनीं प्रसिद्ध हा ॥ध्रु॥
 ज्ञानहीन तुज पाहें अल्पमति । लहान हा चित्तीं धरोनियां ॥2॥
 परि तूं कृपाळ होसी देवराणा । िब्रदें तुझीं जना प्रसिद्ध हें ॥3॥
 उतावीळ बहु भक्तांचिया काजा । होसी केशीराजा तुका ह्मणे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

May this veil of ignorance and my dull intellect be made visible before You, O Narayana. You dwell in mines, in markets, in wood, in stone, in every creature and living being; this is well known.

I seek You with meager understanding, holding this small thought in mind. But You are compassionate, O King of gods; Your pledges are famous among all people.

Says Tuka, You are ever eager to rush to the aid of Your devotees, O Lord Keshi.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let it be shown plainly, this craving born of ignorance, this poor wit of mine, O Narayana. You are found in mines, in markets, in wood and in stone, in every creature and living thing. This is well known. I look toward You with a small, dim understanding, holding only this little thought in mind. Yet You are compassionate, O King of gods. Your pledges are famous among all people. Tuka says: You are quick, so quick, to rush to Your devotees' aid, O Lord Keshi.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram brings God not his merit but his deficiency, asking that his ignorance and dullness be laid bare before the Lord rather than hidden. He sets his smallness against God's vastness: the One who fills mines, markets, wood, stone, and every living thing is the One a feeble mind is trying to reach with a single faint thought. The prayer does not rest on the seeker's capacity but on God's character. God is known to be merciful, His promises are famous, He is eager, even impatient, to run to the help of His devotees. Tukaram offers his weakness precisely because he trusts that reputation.

GATHA 4266

Faith and Trust

Faith, the only support

मराठी मूळ

जरी तुझा मज नसता आधार । कैसा हा संसार दुःहावला ॥1॥
 ऐसा बळी कोण होइल पुरता । जो हे वारी चिंता आशापाश ॥धु.॥
 मायामोहफांसा लोकलाजबेडी । तुजवीण तोडी कोण एक ॥2॥
 हें तों मज कळों आलें अनुभवं । बरें माझ्या जीवें पांडुरंगा ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे यास तूं चि माझा गोही । पुरी भाव नाही जना लोका ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If I did not have Your support, how could I have endured this worldly life? Who else is strong enough to ward off the anxiety of desire and attachment? The snare of illusion and the fetters of worldly shame: who but You can sever them? This I have come to know by experience, deep in my jiva, O Panduranga. Says Tuka, You alone are my witness in this. The world and its people do not fully understand.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If I did not have Your support, how could I have borne this worldly life? Who else is strong enough to drive off the dread of desire and attachment? The snare of illusion, the chain of worldly shame: who but You can cut them? This I have come to know from my own experience, deep in my life, O Panduranga. Tuka says: in this You alone are my witness. The people of the world do not truly understand.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram testifies that God's support is the one thing that made his life in the world bearable. He names the forces that bind a person, the anxiety of desire and attachment, the snare of illusion, the chain of caring what others think, and asks who but God is strong enough to cut them. The claim is not borrowed from scripture but earned: he says he knows it from his own experience, deep in his being. Then he marks how private that knowledge is. The world cannot see it and does not understand, so God alone stands as witness to what God has done for him.

GATHA 4267

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the settled heart

मराठी मूळ

तुजविण चाड आणिकांची कांहीं । धरीन हें नाही तुज ठावें ॥1॥
 तरणउपाय योगक्षेम माझा । ठेवियेला तुझ्या पायीं देवा ॥धु.॥
 कोण मज आळी काय हे तांतडी । सोनियाची घडी जाय दिस ॥2॥
 तुझिया नामाचें ल्यालोंसें भूषण । कृपा संतजन करितील ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाला आनंदाचा वास । हृदया या नास नव्हे कधीं ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

That I would cherish anything other than You is something that will never happen, and You know it. My means of crossing over, my welfare, and my security have all been placed at Your feet, O God.

What complaint do I have, what is my hurry? Each day passes like a golden moment. I have worn the ornament of Your name.

The saintly ones will bestow their grace. Says Tuka, the home of bliss has been established in this heart. It shall never be destroyed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

That I would want anything besides You will never happen, and You know it. My way across, my welfare, my keeping, I have laid them all at Your feet, O God. What grievance have I, what is the hurry? Each day passes like a golden moment. I have put on the ornament of Your name. The saints will give their grace. Tuka says: the home of bliss has settled in this heart. It will never be destroyed.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a poem of a heart that has stopped striving and started resting. Tukaram has handed over everything he might otherwise scramble to secure, his salvation, his well-being, his protection, and placed it all at God's feet. With nothing left to grasp at, there is no complaint and no rush; each day becomes golden simply because he wears the name of God like a jewel. He trusts the saints to add their grace. The closing claim is the calm that follows surrender: bliss has not visited but moved in, made its home in his heart, and that dwelling cannot be destroyed.

GATHA 4268

Prayers

Prayer, kept a servant forever

मराठी मूळ

हैं चि सुख पुढे मागतों आगळें । आनंदाचीं फळें सेवादान ॥1॥
 जन्मजन्मांतरीं तुझा चि अंकिला । करुनि विठ्ठला दास ठेवीं ॥ध्रु॥
 दुजा भाव आड येऊं नेदीं चित्ता । करावा अनंता नास त्याचा ॥2॥
 अभय देऊनि करावें सादर । क्षण तो विसर पडों नेदीं ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी जेजे इच्छा करूं । ते ते कल्पतरु पुरविसी ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This is the greater joy I ask for going forward: the fruit of bliss in service and self-offering. Birth after birth, make me Your own, O Vitthal; keep me as Your servant.

Do not let any second thought enter my mind; O Infinite One, destroy it at once. Grant me assurance and make me attentive.

Do not let me forget You for even a moment. Says Tuka, whatever desires we hold, You, like the wish-fulfilling tree, fulfill them all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is the greater joy I ask for from here on: the fruits of bliss that come from service and self-giving. Birth after birth, make me Your own, O Vitthal. Keep me as Your servant. Do not let a second thought come between my mind and You. O Endless One, destroy it at once. Give me Your assurance and make me attentive. Do not let me forget You for even a moment. Tuka says: whatever desires we hold, You, the wish-granting tree, fulfill them all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks for the one boon that does not end in rebirth's weariness but deepens it into joy: to be God's servant, life after life. The reward he wants is not release from service but the bliss that service itself gives. He prays against the one thing that could spoil it, the second thought, any rival attachment that comes between his mind and God, and asks God to destroy it instantly and keep him alert and unforgetting. The final line names why he dares ask so much: God is the wish-fulfilling tree, who grants whatever the heart truly desires. So Tukaram makes sure his deepest desire is only to belong to God.

GATHA 4269

Prayers

Prayer, jest withdrawn before the Lord

मराठी मूळ

तुज केलिया नव्हे ऐसैं काई । डोंगराची राई क्षणमात्रें ॥१॥
 मज या लोकांचा न साहे आघात । देखणें प्रचित जीव घेती ॥२॥
 सहज विनोदें बोलिलेलों गोष्टी । अरंभी तों पोटीं न धरावी ॥३॥
 दीनरूप मज करावें नेणता । याहुनी अनंता आहें तैसा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Is there anything that is impossible for You? You could reduce a mountain to mustard in an instant. I cannot endure the assaults of these people; their very gaze takes my life.

I spoke these words in simple jest; do not hold them against me. Regard me as lowly, as ignorant, even more so than I already am.

Says Tuka, do whatever pleases You with me. I have no need for what the world thinks.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Is there anything You cannot do? You could turn a mountain to mustard in an instant. I cannot bear the blows of these people. Their very gaze takes my life. I spoke those words in simple jest. Do not hold them against me from the start. Make me lowly, make me unknowing, even more than I already am. Tuka says: do with me whatever pleases You. I have no need of what the world thinks.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram begins by confessing God's limitless power, that the One who could shrink a mountain to a mustard seed can surely do anything, and then admits his own small wound: he cannot endure the hostility of people, whose mere looks drain the life from him. The poem reads as a half-apology for words spoken too freely; he asks God not

to take his jesting to heart. Then comes the turn that resolves the hurt: instead of asking to be raised above his accusers, he asks to be made even lowlier and more ignorant than he is. He surrenders the whole matter to God's pleasure and lets go of the world's opinion altogether, which is exactly what frees him from the gazes that were killing him.

GATHA 4270

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, You already know my heart

मराठी मूळ

ऐसा सर्व भाव तुज निरोपिला । तूं मज एकला सर्वभावे ॥१॥
 अंतरींची कां हे नेणसील गोष्टी । परि सुखासाठीं बोलविसी ॥२॥
 सर्व माझा भार तुज चालवणें । तेथें म्यां बोलणें काय एक ॥३॥
 स्वभावे स्वहित हिताचें कारण । कौतुक करून निवडिसी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तूं हें जाणसी गा देवा । आमुच्या स्वभावा अंतरींच्या ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have offered all my feelings to You. You are mine alone, with all my chitta.

Why do You not know these innermost matters? Yet for the sake of joy, You make me speak. All my burdens are Yours to carry; what need is there for me to say anything? By Your own nature, You bring about our true welfare, sorting things out with playful grace.

Says Tuka, You know all this, O God, the innermost nature of our chittas.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have offered You all my feelings. You are mine alone, with my whole heart. Why do You act as if You do not know what is inside me? You make me say it only for the joy of it. The whole weight of me is Yours to carry. What is there left for me to say? By Your own nature You work my true good; You sort it all out as if in play. Tuka says: You know this, O God. You know the inmost nature of our hearts.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has handed his whole inner life over to Vitthal and knows the surrender is already complete. So he gently teases God: why pretend not to know what is in my heart, when You know it better than I do? He sees that God draws the prayer out of him not from need but for the sweetness of being asked. Once the whole burden is carried by God, the devotee has nothing left to plead; God arranges everything for the soul's good, lightly, as if at play. The poem rests in the certainty that the Lord already knows the inmost self, so words are only the overflow of love.

GATHA 4271

The Nature of God

Mercy, the mother loves the difficult child

मराठी मूळ

लोखंडाचे न पाहे दोष । शिवोन परीस सोनें करी॥१॥
 जैसी तैसी तरीं वाणी । मना आणी माउली ॥२॥
 लेकराचें स्नेहे गोड । करी कोड त्यागुणें ॥ ॥
 मागें पुढें रिघे लोटी । साहे खेटी करी तें ॥३॥
 तुका विनंती पांडुरंगा । ऐसें सांगा आहे हें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The touchstone does not look at the faults of iron; by its touch, it turns iron into gold. Just so, a mother brings her child to mind, however the child may be.

Out of love for her child, she fulfills every wish. She pushes and pulls, endures every hardship the child causes.

Says Tuka, O Panduranga, tell me, is this not so?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The touchstone does not look at the faults of the iron. It touches it and turns it to gold. However the child speaks, the mother takes it to heart. Out of love she grants its every wish. She pushes it forward, pulls it back, and bears every trouble it makes. Tuka says: O Panduranga, tell me, is it not so?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks God to deal with him the way a touchstone deals with iron and a mother deals with her child. The touchstone never inspects the iron's flaws; one touch and the base metal is gold, faults and all. So too a mother takes whatever her child blurts out straight to her heart, fulfills its wishes, and endures every hardship it causes without turning away. Tukaram presses the comparison on Panduranga as a question, almost daring God to deny it: this is what real love does, so love me like that. The plea is for grace that does not weigh the devotee's worthiness first.

GATHA 4272

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the worldly hypocrite

मराठी मूळ

4274. पर्वकाळीं धर्म न करी नासरी । खर्ची राजद्वारीं द्रव्यरासी ॥1॥
 सोड्याची करी पाहुणे बरा । कांडवी ठोंबरा संतांलागीं ॥2॥
 बाइलेचीं सर्व आवडीनें पोसी । मातापितरांसी दवडोनी ॥3॥
 श्राद्धीं कष्टी होय सांगतां ब्राह्मण । गोवार मागून सावडीतो ॥4॥
 नेतो पानें फुलें वेश्येला उदंड । ब्राह्मणासी खांड नेदी एक ॥5॥
 हातें मोऱ्या शोधी कष्ट करी नाना । देवाच्या पूजना कांटाळतो ॥6॥
 सारा वेळ धंदा करितां श्रमेना । साधूच्या दर्शना जातां कुंथे ॥7॥
 हरिच्या कीर्तनीं गुंगायासि लागे । येरवीं तो जागे उगला चि ॥8॥
 पुराणीं बैसतां नाहीं रिकामटी । खेळतो सोंगटी अहोरात्रीं ॥9॥
 देवाच्या विभुती न पाहे सर्वथा । करी पानवथा नेत्रभिक्षा ॥10॥
 गाईला देखोनी बदबदां मारी । घोड्याची चाकरी गोड लागे ॥11॥
 ब्राह्मणाचें तीर्थ घेतां त्रास मोटा । प्रेमें घेतो घोंटा घटघटां ॥12॥
 तुका ह्याणे ऐसे प्रपंचीं गुंतले । जन्मोनि मुकले विठोबासी ॥12॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He does no charity on holy days, but spends heaps of wealth at the royal court. He feasts his friends lavishly but turns away the saints with harsh words.

He lovingly maintains his wife's relatives but drives away his own parents. He grumbles when told to feed brahmins at the ancestral rites.

He brings abundant flowers and gifts to the courtesan but will not give a morsel of sugar to a brahmin. He labors hard searching for pearls by hand but is disgusted by the worship of God.

He toils all day in business without tiring but groans at the thought of visiting a saint. At Hari's kirtan he falls asleep, though otherwise he stays wide awake.

He says he has no free time to sit for a discourse, yet plays dice day and night. He never visits holy places of God but feasts his eyes at taverns.

He beats the cow on sight but delights in grooming his horse. He finds it a great burden to accept holy water from a brahmin but gulps down liquor with relish.

Says Tuka, such people, entangled in worldly life, are born only to lose Vitthoba.

IN PLAIN WORDS

On the holy day he gives no charity, but at the king's court he spends heaps of money. He feasts his cronies well, but serves the saints coarse gruel. He keeps his wife's relatives in comfort and drives his own parents away. At the ancestral rites he grumbles when told to feed a brahmin. He carries armfuls of flowers and gifts to the courtesan, but will not give a brahmin one lump of sugar. He digs for pearls with his hands and takes endless trouble, but the worship of God disgusts him. He works at business all day and never tires, but groans at the thought of going to see a holy man. At Hari's kirtan he grows drowsy; everywhere else he stays wide awake. He says he has no spare time to sit at a scripture reading, yet he plays dice day and night. He never looks on the holy sights of God, but feasts his eyes at the tavern. He sees a cow and beats it hard, but loves to groom his horse. Taking holy water from a brahmin is a great burden to him, but he gulps down liquor with relish. Tuka says: such people, tangled in worldly life, are born only to lose Vitthoba.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a portrait of the man whose appetites and his devotions are exactly reversed. Tukaram lays the contradictions side by side: lavish at court but stingy with saints, generous to the courtesan but withholding from the brahmin, tireless at business but exhausted at the threshold of worship, wide awake everywhere except at kirtan. Each pairing exposes where the heart truly leans; the man has energy and money in abundance, just never for God. The point is not to despise this man but to recognize the pattern in oneself, the way we always find time, effort, and tenderness for what we actually want. Tukaram names the cost at the end: a whole human birth spent this way is a life that lets Vitthal slip away.

GATHA 4273

The Power of the Name

The Name, warriors of Rama

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी रामाचे राऊत । वीर जुंझार बहुत ॥१॥
 मनपवनतुरंग । हातीं नामाची फिरंग ॥२॥
 वारु चालवूं चहूंखुरीं । घाला घालूं यमपुरी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पेणें । आह्मां वैकुंठासी जाणें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We are the horsemen of Rama, mighty warriors in battle. The mind and breath are our steed, and the Name is the sword in our hand.

We ride our horse on all four hooves and charge straight into the city of Death. Says Tuka, our destination is Vaikuntha itself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are the horsemen of Rama, many mighty warriors in battle. Mind and breath are our horse; the Name is the sword in our hand. We drive our steed at full gallop on all four hooves and charge straight into the city of Death. Tuka says: our resting place, the place we are going, is Vaikuntha itself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the inner life into a battlefield and casts the devotees as Rama's mounted soldiers. The horse they ride is the mind joined to the breath; the weapon they wield is the Name. With these alone they charge fearlessly at Yama, the city of Death, the one enemy that defeats everyone else. The claim is bold: armed only with the Name, they ride past death itself. Their destination is not survival but Vaikuntha, the abode of God, so the war is already as good as won.

GATHA 4274

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, no caste at the feet of Hari

मराठी मूळ

पवित्र तें कुळ पावन तो देश । जेथें हरिचे दास घेती जन्म ॥1॥
 कर्मधर्म त्याचे जाला नारायण । त्याचेनी पावन तिन्ही लोक ॥२॥
 वर्णअभिमानें कोण जाले पावन । ऐसें द्या सांगून मजपाशीं ॥3॥
 अंत्यजादि योनि तरल्या हरिभजनें । तयाचीं पुराणें भाट जालीं ॥3॥
 वैश्य तुळाधार गोरा तो कुंभार । धागा हा चांभार रोहिदास ॥4॥
 कबीर मोमीन लतिब मुसलमान । शेणा न्हावी जाण विष्णुदास ॥5॥
 काणोपात्र खोदु पिंजारी तो दादु । भजनीं अभेद हरिचे पायीं ॥6॥
 चोखामेळा बंका जातीचा माहार । त्यासी सर्वेश्वर ऐक्य करी ॥7॥
 नामयाची जनी कोण तिचा भाव । जेवी पंढरीराव तियेसवें ॥8॥
 मैराळा जनक कोण कुळ त्याचें । महिमान तयाचें काय सांगों ॥9॥
 यातायातीधर्म नाहीं विष्णुदासा । निर्णय हा ऐसा वेदशास्त्रीं ॥10॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुह्मी विचारावे ग्रंथ । तारिले पतित नेणों किती ॥11॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sacred is the family and holy is the land where the servants of Hari take birth. Narayana Himself has become their merit and dharma; through them, all three worlds are purified.

Tell me, who has ever been purified by mere pride of caste? The lowborn and all other beings have been saved by devotion to Hari; the Puranas themselves sing their praises. Tulsidhara the merchant, Gora the potter, Rohidas the cobbler.

Kabir the weaver, Latif the Muslim, Shena the barber, all servants of Vishnu. Kanopatra, Khodu the cotton-carder, Dadu: all equal at the feet of Hari in devotion.

Chokhamela and Banka, born as Mahars, yet the Lord of all made them one with Himself. Namdev's Jani, what was her status? Yet the Lord of Pandhari dined with her.

Janaka the king of Mithila, what was his lineage? How can one describe his greatness? For the servants of Vishnu there is no distinction of caste; this is the clear verdict of the Vedas and scriptures. Says Tuka, search the sacred texts; countless wrongdoers have been saved, beyond all counting.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sacred is the family, holy is the land, where the servants of Hari are born. Narayana himself becomes their duty and their merit; through them all three worlds are made pure. Tell me, who was ever made holy by pride of caste? Say it to my face. The lowborn and every kind of birth have been carried across by devotion to Hari; the Puranas themselves became their bards. Tuladhara the merchant, Gora the potter, Rohidas the cobbler. Kabir the weaver, Latif the Muslim, Shena the barber, all servants of Vishnu. Kanopatra, Khodu, Dadu the cotton-carder: all undivided at the feet of Hari in their devotion. Chokhamela and Banka, Mahars by caste, and the Lord of all made them one with himself. Namdev's Jani, what was her standing? Yet the King of Pandhari ate with her. Janaka the king, what was his lineage? How can I tell his greatness? For the servants of Vishnu there is no rule of high birth and low; this is the verdict of the Vedas and the scriptures. Tuka says: search the books yourselves. The fallen ones who have been saved are past all counting.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram throws down a direct challenge: name one person ever sanctified by caste pride alone. He answers with a roll call of saints drawn from every rank, a merchant, a potter, a cobbler, a weaver, a Muslim, a barber, Mahars, a serving woman, even a king, and insists that devotion to Hari, not birth, is what carried each of them across. The repeated point is that at the feet of God all these distinctions dissolve; the Lord himself dined with the maidservant Jani and made the outcaste Chokhamela one with him. To anyone who would defend the hierarchy of birth, Tukaram says: go check the scriptures, the verdict is already against you. The poem lands as a flat denial that caste has any standing in the life of God.

GATHA 4275

The Power of the Name

The Name, hold to Your own pledge

मराठी मूळ

4277. नामासारिखी करणी । हे तों न दिसे त्रिभुवनीं ॥1॥
 सिलंगणीचें सोनें । ठेवूं नये तें गाहाण ॥ध्रु॥
 आदित्याचीं झाडें । काय त्याचा उजड पडे ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । िब्रदें सोडोनियां ठेवा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is nothing in the three worlds equal to the Name in its power. Gold from the touchstone should never be mortgaged.

Can the sun's trees ever cause darkness to fall? Says Tuka, O God, do not set aside Your own sacred pledges.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no act in all three worlds equal to the Name. Gold proved by the touchstone should never be pawned away. Can the sun, the tree of light, ever let darkness fall? Tuka says: O God, do not set aside Your own sacred pledges.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram declares that nothing anywhere matches the power of the Name, then guards that claim with two images. Gold once tested true is never handed over as pawn; the Name, once known to be supreme, must not be treated as a mere bargaining chip. And the sun cannot produce darkness, because giving light is simply what it is. In the same way, God has bound himself by promises of mercy that belong to his very nature. So the closing line is half plea, half reminder: keep faith with the pledges You have made, for to break them would be to act against Yourself.

GATHA 4276

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the fire that fuel never quenches

मराठी मूळ

येऊनि संसारा काय हित केलें । आयुष्य नासिलें शिशनोदरा ॥1॥
 विषय सेवितां कोण तृप्त जाला । इंधनीं निवाला अग्नि कोठें ॥२॥
 देखोनी मृगजळ भांबावलीं वेडीं । विचाराची थडी न टाकिती ॥३॥
 ऐसियां जीवांसी सोय न लाविसी । निष्ठ कां होसी कृपाळुवा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having come into this world, what good have you done? You have wasted your life on the belly and its appetites. Who has ever been satisfied by indulging in sense pleasures? When has fire ever been quenched by adding fuel? Seeing a mirage, the foolish are bewildered, yet they will not take shelter on the bank of discrimination.

O merciful One, why do You not set such jivas on the right path? Why do You remain indifferent? Says Tuka, O God, unfathomable is Your greatness; You dwell within the hearts of all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have come into this world; what good have you done? You have ruined your life on the belly and below it. Who was ever made full by feeding on sense pleasures? Where has fire ever been put out by adding fuel? The foolish see a mirage and run about bewildered; they will not stand on the bank of discrimination. O merciful one, why do You not set such souls on the road? Why do You stay so unmoved? Tuka says: O God, unfathomable is Your greatness; You fill the heart of every being.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram opens by holding a life up to a single test: what good have you actually done with it, or did you spend it all on appetite? He answers with two plain images of an endless craving, sense pleasure that never satisfies and fire that only flares higher when you feed it. People chase these the way the deluded chase a mirage, never stepping onto the firm bank of viveka, of discrimination between the real and the unreal. Then the prayer turns to God: You are merciful and You dwell inside every heart, so why do You leave such souls wandering? The poem holds together the failure of the seeker and an appeal to the very God who lives within him to turn him around.

GATHA 4277

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, serve the all-capable Lord

मराठी मूळ

समर्थाचे सेवे बहु असे हित । विचार हृदयांत करुनी पाहें ॥1॥
 वरकडोऐसा नव्हे हा समर्थ । क्षणें चि घडित सृष्टी नाशें ॥ध्रु॥
 ज्याची कृपा होतां आपणा ऐसें करी । उरों नेदी उरी दारिद्राची ॥2॥
 ऐशालागीं मन वोळगे अहनिनशीं । तेणें वंद्य होशी ब्रह्मादिकां ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे हें चि आहे पै मुद्दल । सत्य माझा बोल हा चि माना ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is great benefit in serving the Capable One; reflect on this in your chitta. This Lord is not like any ordinary master; in an instant He creates and destroys the universe.

When His grace descends, He makes you equal to Himself and leaves no trace of poverty. If you devote your mind to Him day and night, you become worthy of reverence even to Brahma and the gods.

Says Tuka, this alone is the true capital; accept my words as truth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Great good lies in serving the Capable One. Turn it over in your heart and see. This Lord is not like any ordinary master; in a single moment he makes and unmakes the universe. When his grace comes, he makes you like himself; he leaves no remnant of poverty behind. Serve him with your mind day and night, and you become worthy of reverence even to Brahma and the gods. Tuka says: this alone is the real capital. Take my word for true.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram urges the listener to weigh, in his own heart, where real benefit lies, and points to service of the all-capable Lord. He sharpens the point by contrast: an ordinary master can give only ordinary things, but this Master creates and destroys whole worlds in an instant. When such a Lord's grace falls on you, he raises you to his own state and burns away every trace of want; constant devotion makes even the gods bow to you. The closing image is mercantile: of all the wealth a person could gather, this is the only true capital. Everything else is spent and gone, but this is what actually pays.

GATHA 4278

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the bitterness gone from the fruit

मराठी मूळ

पिकलिये सेंदे कडुपण गेलें । तैसें आह्मां केलें पांडुरंगें ॥१॥
 काम क्रोध लोभ निमाले ठायीं चि । सर्व आनंदाची सिष्ट जाली ॥२॥
 आठव नाठव गेले भावाभाव । जाला स्वयमेव पांडुरंग ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भाग्य या नांवें ह्मणीजे । संसारीं जन्मीजे या चि लागीं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

As the bitterness leaves a ripened wood-apple, so has Panduranga transformed us. Lust, anger, and greed have perished where they stood; all creation has become nothing but bliss.

Memory and forgetfulness, like and dislike, have all dissolved; Panduranga Himself has become everything. Says Tuka, this is what true fortune means; it is for this alone that one should take birth in this world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As the bitterness leaves the wood-apple once it ripens, so Panduranga has done with us. Lust, anger, and greed died on the spot. Everything became a world of pure bliss. Remembering and forgetting are gone, and liking and disliking with them. Panduranga himself has become everything. Tuka says: this is what should be called good fortune. It is for this alone that one should be born into this world.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the change God has worked in him through one homely image: the wood-apple that is bitter while green turns sweet of itself once it ripens. So with him, lust, anger, and greed did not have to be fought down one by one; they simply died where they stood as everything turned to bliss. The pairs the mind lives by, remembering and forgetting, liking and disliking, fall away too, and Panduranga alone remains as all that is. Tukaram names this state the only thing that truly deserves to be called good fortune. A human birth, he says, is worth taking for this and nothing less.

GATHA 4279

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the human birth and the Name

मराठी मूळ

येऊनि नरदेहा विचारारें सार । धरावा पै धीर भजनमागाअ ॥१॥
 चंचळ चित्तासी ठेवूनियां ठायीं । संतांचिये पायीं लीन व्हावें ॥२॥
 नामापरतें जगीं साधन सोपें नाहीं । आवडीनें गाईं सर्वकाळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धन्य वंश त्या नराचा । ऐसा निश्चयाचा मेरु जाला ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having obtained a human body, seek out the essence. Hold firm to the path of devotion.

Steady the restless mind and become humble at the feet of the saints. There is no easier spiritual practice in this world than the Name; sing it with love at all times.

Says Tuka, blessed is the lineage of that person who has become as firm as Mount Meru in this resolve.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have come into a human body; now seek out the essence. Hold firm; take the path of devotion. Set the restless mind down in one place and grow humble at the feet of the saints. In all the world there is no practice easier than the Name; sing it with love at every hour. Tuka says: blessed is the family of the one who has grown as firm in this resolve as Mount Meru.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram treats the human birth as a rare chance that must be used to find what is essential, not squandered. The path he names has three plain steps: take up devotion and hold steady, still the wandering mind and fix it in one place, and bow low at the feet of the saints. He then sets the Name above every other practice, not because it is lofty but because it is the easiest thing in the world, available to anyone who will sing it with love at all times. The closing blessing rests on firmness: the one who becomes as immovable as Mount Meru in this resolve sanctifies not only himself but his whole line.

GATHA 4280

Renunciation

Renunciation, the devotee leaves karma behind

मराठी मूळ

षडधर्मीं रांधिलें खापरीं घातलें । चोहोटा ठेविलें मध्यरात्रीं ॥१॥
 त्यासी सदाचारी लोक न शिवती । श्वानासी निश्चिती फावलें तें ॥२॥
 तैसें दुष्टकर्म जालें हरिभक्ता । त्यागिली ममता विषयासक्ति ॥३॥
 इहपरलोक उभय विटाळ । मानिती केवळ हरिचे दास ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा आवडे हे सेवा । अनुदिनीं व्हावा पूर्ण हेतु ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Food cooked in the six forbidden ways, placed in a broken pot, left at the crossroads at midnight: no virtuous person will touch it, but a dog surely finds it and eats it freely. Just so, when one becomes a devotee of Hari, all sinful karma is abandoned.

The pleasures of this world and the next are both considered defilement by the true servants of Hari. Says Tuka, O God, may this service be dear to You, and may my devotion be fulfilled day after day.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Food cooked in the six forbidden ways, dropped into a broken pot, left at the crossroads at midnight: no decent person will touch it, but a dog comes upon it and eats it freely. Just so, once a man becomes a devotee of Hari, his evil deeds are dropped behind him. He gives up the grip of attachment and the clinging to pleasures. This world and the next, both, the servants of Hari count as defilement. Tuka says: O God, may this service be dear to You, and may my whole purpose be fulfilled day after day.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses a stark image to show what happens to sin once a person turns to God. Impure food set out at midnight is refused by everyone respectable and left for a stray dog; in the same way, the devotee simply walks away from his evil karma and lets it fall to whatever will take it. With it he lets go of attachment and of the hunger for sense pleasures. He goes further: the true servant of Hari treats both the rewards of this world and the heavens of the next as defilement, wanting neither. The poem ends not in boasting but in prayer, asking that this very renunciation be pleasing to God and that the devotee's one aim be fulfilled each day.

GATHA 4281

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, the seed that cannot sprout again

मराठी मूळ

बीज भाजुनि केली लाही । आह्मां जन्ममरण नाहीं ॥१॥
 आकाराशी केंचा ठाव । देहप्रत्यक्ष जाला देव ॥२॥
 साकरेचा नव्हे उस । आह्मां केंचा गर्भवास ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने औघा योग । सर्वा घटीं पांडुरंग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The seed has been roasted into puffed grain; for us there is no more birth and death. Where can form find a foothold when the body itself has become God? Sugar cannot return to sugarcane; how then can we return to the womb? Says Tuka, by the common path of yoga, Panduranga dwells in every being.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The seed has been roasted into puffed grain; for us there is no more birth and death. Where can form find a place to stand, when the body itself has plainly become God? Sugar can never go back to being sugarcane. How then can there be any womb left for us? Tuka says: this is the whole of yoga. Panduranga is in every vessel.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states the fruit of his realization through two images of an irreversible change. A seed roasted into puffed grain can never sprout again, and sugar can never turn back into the cane it came from; in the same way, for him birth and death are finished, with no womb left to return to. He pushes the claim as far as it goes: form itself has nowhere to stand, because this very body has plainly become God. Then he closes by widening it past himself, saying this is the whole of yoga, the one thing it all comes to. The same Panduranga he has merged into dwells, he says, in every single being.

GATHA 4282

Sacred Stories

Praise of Pundalik, God brought to earth

मराठी मूळ

वैकुंठीचा देव आणिला भूतळा । धन्य तो आगळा पुंडलीक ॥१॥
 धारिष्ट धैर्याचा वरिष्ठ भक्तांचा । पवित्र पुण्याचा एकनिष्ठ ॥२॥
 पितृसेवा पुण्ये लाधला निधान । ब्रह्म सनातन अंगसंगे ॥३॥
 अंगसंगे रंगे क्रीडा करी जाणा । ज्या घरी पाहुणा वैकुंठीचा ॥४॥
 धन्य त्याची शक्ति भक्तीची हे ख्याति । तुका ह्याने मुक्ति पायीं लोळे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The God of Vaikuntha was brought down to earth. Blessed beyond all others is Pundalik.

He is the foremost in fortitude and patience, the greatest among devotees, singularly devoted and holy in merit. Through the merit of serving his parents, he attained the supreme treasure: the eternal Brahman, close as his own body.

In that intimacy, God plays and delights, for Pundalik's home hosts the Guest from Vaikuntha. Blessed is his power, renowned is his devotion.

Says Tuka, even liberation rolls at his feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The God of Vaikuntha was brought down to earth. Blessed above all others is Pundalik. He is the foremost in fortitude and patience, the greatest among devotees, single in his devotion, holy in his merit. By the merit of serving his parents he won the supreme treasure: the eternal Brahman, close as his own body. In that closeness God plays and delights, for in his house stays the Guest from Vaikuntha. Blessed is his strength; his devotion is renowned. Tuka says: even liberation rolls at his feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praising Pundalik, the devotee whose story stands behind Pandhari. By staying with his parents and serving them, Pundalik drew the Lord of Vaikuntha down to earth, where he waits even now on the brick. The poem names what made this possible: steady patience, single devotion, simple service of mother and father. Because he held God that close, in his own home, the highest goal that others strain for came to him on its own. Tuka ends with the measure of it: liberation itself, the thing seekers chase, lies down at the feet of one whose love was that plain and that whole.

GATHA 4283

Worldly Metaphors

The musk deer, worth unrecognized

मराठी मूळ

मृगाचिये अंगीं कस्तुरीचा वास । असे ज्याचा त्यास नसे ठाव ॥1॥
 भाग्यवंत घेती वेचूनियां मोलें । भारवाही मेले वाहतां ओझें ॥२॥
 चंद्रामृते तृप्तपारणें चकोरा । भ्रमरासी चारा सुगंधाचा ॥2॥
 अधिकारी येथें घेती हातवटी । परीक्षावंता दृष्टी रत्न जैसें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय अंधिळ्या हातीं । दिले जैसें मोतीं वांयां जाय ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The musk deer carries the fragrance of musk in its own body, yet it does not know where the scent resides. The fortunate purchase it at great price, while the beast of burden dies carrying the load.

The moon's nectar satisfies the chakor bird; the bee feeds on fragrance alone. Only those with the right capacity grasp the skill, just as a jeweler recognizes a gem.

Says Tuka, what use is it to place a pearl in the hand of a blind man? It only goes to waste.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The musk deer carries the scent of musk in its own body, yet it does not know where the scent lives. The fortunate buy it at a high price; the pack animal dies carrying its load. The moon's nectar fills the chakor bird; the bee feeds on fragrance alone. Those with the right capacity take up the skill, the way a jeweler knows a gem at sight. Tuka says: what use is a pearl placed in a blind man's hand? It only goes to waste.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying that the treasure can be carried and still be missed. The deer holds musk in its own body but does not know it, just as a soul can hold God within and never sense it. Worth answers only to capacity: the fortunate pay any price for the scent, while the beast of burden dies under a load it cannot value, and only the jeweler's eye knows the gem. The point turns back on the listener, not against the deer or the blind man: the Name and the Self are here, near as your own body, but they reach only the one ready to receive them. To stay unready is to be the hand that lets the pearl fall.

GATHA 4284

Devotion to Vitthal

Pilgrimage to Pandhari, the prayer to not return

मराठी मूळ

आलिया संसारीं देखिली पंढरी । कीतिन महाद्वारीं वानूं तुझी ॥१॥
 पताकांचे भार नामाचे गजर । देखिल्या संसार सफळ जाला ॥२॥
 साधुसंतांचिया धन्य जाल्या भेटी । सांपडली लुटी मोक्षाची हे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां हें चि पें मागणें । पुढती नाहीं येणें संसारासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having come into this world, I have seen Pandhari. I sing Your glory at the great gateway.

*Seeing the towering flags and hearing the resounding chant of the Name, this worldly life has become fruitful.
 Blessed were the meetings with saints and holy ones; the treasure of liberation was found.*

Says Tuka, this alone is my prayer now: may I never have to return to this world again.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Having come into this world, I have seen Pandhari. At the great gateway I sing your glory. The weight of the banners, the roar of the Name: seeing this, my worldly life has borne fruit. Blessed were the meetings with saints and holy ones; the treasure of liberation was found. Tuka says: now this alone is my prayer, that I never come back to this world again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram counts his birth worthwhile only because it brought him to Pandhari. The flags over the temple and the thunder of the Name turn an ordinary life into one that has reached its purpose, and the company of saints he met along the way is itself the treasure others call liberation. Having found this, he wants one thing more, and it is not more of the world. His closing prayer is to be done with rebirth altogether: let this visit be the last arrival, so there is no further return to suffering. The pilgrimage is not a stop on the road of life; it is the whole point of having lived.

GATHA 4285

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false ascetic

मराठी मूळ

ऐसे कैसे जाले भोंदू । कर्म करोनि ह्मणति साधु ॥१॥
 अंगा लावूनियां राख । डोळे झांकुनी करिती पाप ॥२॥
 दावुनि वैराग्याची कळा । भोगी विषयाचा सोहळा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सांगों किती । जळो तयांची संगती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How have such imposters come to be, performing rituals and calling themselves saints? They smear ash on their bodies and close their eyes, yet commit sin. They display the art of renunciation while enjoying the pleasures of the senses.

Says Tuka, how much more can I say? Cursed be their company.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How did such frauds come to be, doing the rites and calling themselves saints? They smear ash on their bodies and shut their eyes, yet they go on sinning. They put on the show of renunciation while they feast on the pleasures of the senses. Tuka says: how much can I say? Let their company burn.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing the gap between the costume of holiness and the conduct underneath it. The ash, the closed eyes, the performed detachment are all on display, while the senses are still being indulged in private. He is not mocking renunciation itself; he is naming the pattern of using its signs as cover for the same old appetites. The warning lands on the listener too: examine whether your own practice is real or a presentation. He refuses such company outright, because nearness to a fraud quietly teaches the fraud.

GATHA 4286

Faith and Trust

Faith, indifferent to praise or blame

मराठी मूळ

कोणी निंदा कोणी वंदा । आह्मां स्वहिताचा धंदा ॥१॥
 काय तुह्मांसी गरज । आह्मी भजूं पंढरिराज ॥२॥
 तुह्मांसारिखें चालावें । तेव्हां स्वहिता मुकावें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हो कां कांहीं । गळ दिला विठ्ठल पायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let some slander us, let some praise us; our business is our own spiritual welfare. What concern is it of yours? We worship the Lord of Pandhari.

If we were to follow your ways, we would lose our own good. Says Tuka, let whatever may happen; I have cast my anchor at Vitthal's feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let some slander us, let some praise us; our work is our own good. What is it to you? We worship the Lord of Pandhari. If we walked your way, we would lose our own welfare. Tuka says: let whatever comes, come; I have dropped my anchor at Vitthal's feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the opinions of others aside as none of his concern. Praise and blame are treated as the same noise, because his real business is his own spiritual good, kept through worship of the Lord of Pandhari. To bend his path to please the crowd would be to trade away that good, and he refuses the bargain. The closing image is the

firm one: he has cast his anchor at Vitthal's feet, so the surface weather of approval or insult cannot move him. Whatever happens, he stays held.

GATHA 4287

Prayers

Prayer, holding God to his pledge

मराठी मूळ

तुझे नामें दिनानाथा । आह्मी उघडा घातला माथा ॥१॥
 आतां न धरावें दुरी । बोल येईल ब्रीदावरी ॥२॥
 पतित होतो ऐसा ठावा । आधीं कां न विचारावा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझे पायीं । आह्मी मिरास केली पाहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Lord of the lowly, in Your Name I have laid bare my head. Do not keep me at a distance now, or it will reflect on Your own pledges.

You knew I was a wrongdoer beforehand; why did You not consider that before? Says Tuka, I have staked my claim at Your feet; know this well.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Lord of the lowly, in your Name I have laid my head bare before you. Do not keep me far off now, or the blame will fall on your own promise. You knew I was a fallen one; why did you not weigh that beforehand? Tuka says: at your feet I have made my claim; see this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram throws himself wholly on God's mercy and then presses the claim with surprising boldness. He has surrendered, head bared, trusting the title that names God the protector of the lowly. So he argues that to turn him away now would stain God's own reputation, the very pledge that drew him. His sharp question, why did you not consider my failings before accepting me, holds the Lord to the deal: you took me knowing what I was. The closing line states his right outright; the devotee's helplessness has become his standing ground, and he refuses to let God off the hook.

GATHA 4288

*The Necessity of Experience**Realization, the eye of pure consciousness*

मराठी मूळ

रक्त श्वेत कृष्ण पीत प्रभा भिन्न । चिन्मय अंजन सुदले डोळां ॥१॥
 तेणें अंजनगुणें दिव्यदृष्टि जाली । कल्पना निवाली द्वैताद्वैत ॥२॥
 देशकालवस्तुभेद मावळला । आत्मा निर्वाळला विश्वाकार ॥३॥
 न जाला प्रपंच आहे परब्रह्म । अहंसोहं ब्रह्म आकळलें ॥४॥
 तत्त्वमसि विद्या ब्रह्मानंद सांग । तें चि जाला अंगें तुका आतां ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Red, white, black, yellow: the lights appear different, yet the collyrium of pure consciousness has been applied to my eyes. By the virtue of that collyrium, divine sight has arisen; the duality of dual and nondual has been extinguished.

The distinctions of place, time, and object have dissolved; the Self has been revealed in the form of the universe. The world has not come into being; what exists is the supreme Brahman.

The truth of 'I am That' has been grasped. Says Tuka, the wisdom of 'Thou art That,' the bliss of Brahman, has now become his very being.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Red, white, black, yellow: the lights look separate, yet the collyrium of pure consciousness has been laid on my eyes. By the power of that collyrium a divine seeing has risen; the very split of dual and nondual has gone quiet. The differences of place, time, and thing have set like the sun; the Self stands clear as the form of the whole universe. The world has not come into being; what is, is the supreme Brahman. 'I am That' is grasped: aham so'ham, I am Brahman. The knowing of 'Thou art That,' the bliss of Brahman, is whole. Tuka says: that very thing Tuka has now become, in his own being.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram reporting a state of realization in the plain words of nondual seeing. Once the eye is anointed with pure consciousness, the many colored lights are seen as one; even the quarrel between dual and nondual falls silent, because both were ideas the new sight no longer needs. The ordinary frame of place, time, and separate objects dissolves, and the Self shows itself as the form of everything. He states the radical claim without softening it: the world never truly arose; only the supreme Brahman is, and the great sayings 'I am That' and 'Thou art That' are no longer phrases to learn but his very being now.

GATHA 4289

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the man without discipline

मराठी मूळ

नीत सांडोनि अवनीत चाले । भंडउभंड भलतें चि बोले ॥1॥
 त्यांत कोणाचें काय बा गेलें । ज्याचें तेणें अनहित केलें ॥ध्रु॥
 ज्यासि वंदावें त्यासी निंदी । मैत्री सांडोनि होतसे दंदी॥2॥
 आन यातीचे संगती लागे । संतसज्जनामध्ये ना वागे॥3॥
 केल्याविण पराक्रम सांगे । जेथें सांगे तेथें चि भीक मागे ॥4॥
 करी आपुला चि संभ्रम । परि पुढें कठीण फार यम ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं नित्यनेम । चित्तीं न धरी तो अधम ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Abandoning what is right, he walks the path of wrong. He speaks recklessly without restraint.

In this, whose loss is it? Each one has harmed only himself. He slanders those who deserve reverence and, forsaking friendship, picks quarrels.

He keeps the company of lowly people but will not move among saints and good folk. He boasts of feats he never performed, yet begs at the very place he brags.

He makes a great show of himself, but ahead lies the terrible reckoning of Yama. Says Tuka, he who holds no daily discipline in his chitta is truly the lowest of all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He drops what is right and walks the crooked way; he talks loosely, says whatever he likes. And whose loss is it? Each such man has only harmed himself. He slanders the one he ought to honor, and casting off friendship, he picks fights. He keeps the company of low people and will not move among saints and good folk. He brags of feats he never did, and he begs in the very place where he boasts. He makes a great show of himself, but ahead waits the hard reckoning of Yama. Tuka says: the man who holds no daily discipline in his heart is the lowest of all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws a portrait of the undisciplined man and lets the consequences speak. The loose tongue, the slander of those worthy of respect, the picking of quarrels, the boasting that collapses into begging: each is a way of harming no one so much as himself. He chooses low company and shuns the saints whose nearness might have steadied him, so nothing in his life pulls upward. The poem aims at the pattern, not at any one person to despise: a life with no fixed practice held in the heart drifts, and Tuka names the hard reckoning that waits to call it the lowest state. The remedy is implied in the charge: keep some daily discipline, and keep the company that holds it.

GATHA 4290

Renunciation

Renunciation, beyond honor and shame

मराठी मूळ

मानूं कांहीं आह्मी आपुलिया स्वइच्छा । नाहीं तरि सरिसा रंकरावो ॥१॥
 आपुल्या उदास आहों देहभावीं । मग लज्जाजीवीं चाड नाहीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे खेळों आह्मी सहजलीळे । ह्मणोनी निराळे सुख दुःख ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If we honored our own desires, then rich and poor would be equal. We are indifferent to the sense of the body; we have no craving for honor or the fear of shame.

Says Tuka, we play in the natural ease of being; therefore joy and sorrow stand apart from us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If we lived by our own wishes, then rich and poor would stand as one to us. We are indifferent to the sense of the body, so we have no greed for honor and no fear of shame. Tuka says: we play in the natural ease of being, and so joy and sorrow stand apart from us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the freedom of one who has let go of the body's claims. When the sense of being this body falls away, the difference between rich and poor loses its grip, and with it both the hunger for honor and the dread of disgrace. What others spend their lives managing simply does not move him. He calls his way of living a play in the natural ease of being, sahaja, effortless and unforced. From that ground the pairs that rule ordinary life, pleasure and pain, gain and loss, no longer reach him; they stand apart while he plays free.

GATHA 4291

The Saints

Saints, reverence for the one who lives his words

मराठी मूळ

बोले तैसा चाले । त्याचीं वंदीन पाउलें ॥१॥
 अंगें झाडीन अंगण । त्याचें दासत्व करीन ॥२॥
 त्याचा होईन किंकर । उभा ठाकेन जोडोनि कर ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देव । त्याचे चरणीं माझा भाव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who walks as he talks, I will bow at his feet. I will sweep his courtyard with my own body and serve him as his servant.

I will become his attendant, standing before him with folded hands. Says Tuka, such a one is God Himself; my devotion rests at his feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who walks as he talks, I will bow at his feet. With my own body I will sweep his courtyard; I will be his servant. I will become his attendant, standing before him with folded hands. Tuka says: such a one is God; my heart rests at his feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets a single test for the saint: that he lives what he speaks, word and deed as one. To such a person he offers not polite respect but full service, sweeping the courtyard with his own body, standing ready with folded hands like a servant. The lowliness is the point; he wants to serve, not be served. The closing line says why the bowing is no exaggeration: in the one whose life and teaching are one, God himself is present, so Tuka's whole devotion rightly rests at his feet.

GATHA 4292

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, attention held while the hands work

मराठी मूळ

पाण्या निघाली गुजरी । मन ठेविलें दो घागरीं । चाले मोकळ्या पदरीं । परी लक्ष तेथें ॥1॥
 वावडी उडाली अंबरीं । हातीं धरोनियां दोरी । दिसे दुरिच्या दुरी । परी लक्ष तेथें ॥धु॥
 चोर चोरी करी । ठेवी वनांतरीं । वर्ततसे चराचरीं । परी लक्ष तेथें ॥2॥
 व्यभिचारिणी नारी । घराश्रम करी । परपुरुष जिह्वारीं । परी लक्ष तेथें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे असों भलतिये व्यापारीं । लक्ष सर्वेश्वरीं । चुकों नेदी ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A water-carrier woman goes to fetch water, her mind fixed on the two pots on her head. She walks with her sari loose, yet her attention is there.

A kite soars high in the sky, held by a string in the hand. It appears far, far away, yet the attention is there.

A thief commits theft and hides his loot in the forest. He moves about in the world, yet his attention is there.

An unfaithful woman runs her household, but her chitta belongs to another man, and her attention is there. Says Tuka, let us be engaged in any occupation; let our attention never stray from the Lord of all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The water-carrier woman sets out for water, her mind kept on the two pots on her head. Her sari hangs loose as she walks, but her attention is there. The kite flies up into the sky, the string held in the hand. It looks far, far away, but the attention is there. The thief commits his theft and hides the loot in the forest; he moves about in the world, but his attention is there. The unfaithful woman runs her household, but her heart is with another man, and her attention is there. Tuka says: let us be busy in whatever work; let the attention stay on the Lord of all, and never lose it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is teaching how to keep God in mind through a working life. He gathers four ordinary figures, the woman balancing pots, the flyer holding the kite string, the thief minding his hidden loot, the unfaithful wife, and finds in each the same trait: the hands are busy with one thing while the attention stays fixed elsewhere, unbroken. He uses even the thief and the adulteress without flinching, because the lesson is about the power of held attention, not about their morality. The point lands on the seeker: you do not need to abandon your work; you need only fix your attention on the Lord of all and keep it there as steadily as these people keep theirs. Remembrance, not idleness, is the practice.

GATHA 4293

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, Pandhari greater than every holy place

मराठी मूळ

जनाचिया मना जावें कासियेसी । माझी वाराणसी पांडुरंग ॥१॥
 तेथें भागीरथी येथें भीमरथी । अधिक ह्यणती चंद्रभागा ॥२॥
 तेथें माधवराव येथें यादवराज । जाणोनियां भाव पुंडलिकाचा ॥३॥
 विष्णुपद गया ते चि येथें आहे । प्रत्यक्ष हें पाहे विटेवरी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्यणे हे चि प्रपंच उद्धरी । आतां पंढरपुरी घडो बापा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let the minds of the people go to Kashi if they wish. My Varanasi is Panduranga.

There flows the Ganges; here flows the Bhimrathi. The Chandrabhaga, they say, is even greater.

There is Madhavarao; here is Yadavaraj, who recognized Pundalik's devotion. The Vishnupada of Gaya is right here; see it for yourself on the brick.

Says Tuka, this alone will deliver our worldly existence; may a visit to Pandharpur be granted, dear father.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let the minds of people go to Kashi if they want. My Varanasi is Panduranga. There flows the Bhagirathi; here flows the Bhimrathi, and they say the Chandrabhaga is greater still. There is Madhavarao; here is Yadavaraj, who knew the love of Pundalik. The Vishnupada of Gaya is right here; see it with your own eyes on the brick. Tuka says: this alone will lift our worldly life; now, dear father, let a visit to Pandharpur be granted to me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the pull of the famous pilgrimage places by setting them all aside for Pandhari. Let others travel to Kashi and Gaya; his Varanasi is Panduranga himself, his sacred river the Chandrabhaga, his holy site the brick where the Lord stands. He matches each great place point for point and claims his own is greater, because here God is present in plain sight, not merely commemorated. The reason he gives is Pundalik, whose love drew the Lord to this very spot. So he ends not with more travel but with a plain prayer: this place alone will carry his worldly life across, so let him simply be granted the visit to Pandharpur.

GATHA 4294

Renunciation

Driving off shame, Rama my master

मराठी मूळ

नको येऊं लाजे होय तूं परती । भजों दे श्रीपती सखा माझा ॥१॥
 तुझे संगतीनें मोटा जाला घात । जालों मी अंकित दुर्जनाचा ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे रांडे घेइन काठीवरी । धनी सहाकारी राम केला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Do not come, O shame, turn back. Let me worship my friend Shripati in peace.**By your company, great harm has been done; I have become enslaved to the wicked. Says Tuka, O wretched shame, I will take a stick to you; I have made Rama my master and protector.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not come near me, shame. Turn back. Let me worship Shripati, my friend, in peace. Your company has done me great harm. Because of you I became the servant of the wicked. Tuka says: I will take a stick to you, you wretch. I have made Rama my master and my helper.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns on the social shame that keeps him from open worship and treats it as a person to be driven out. He says that shame, the fear of how others see him, has been ruinous: by obeying it he ended up enslaved to bad company instead of serving God. So he refuses it outright and even threatens it with a stick, naming Rama as his real master and protector. The point is that worry about reputation is itself the wicked master that must be beaten back before one can love God freely.

GATHA 4295

Worldly Metaphors

Devotion as a loan, settle the account

मराठी मूळ

भक्तिऋण घेतलें माझें । चरण गाहाण आहेत तुझे ॥१॥
 प्रेम व्याज देई हरी । माझा हिशेब लवकरी करीं ॥२॥
 माझें मी न सोडीं धन । नित्य करितों कीर्तन ॥३॥
 तुझें नाम आहे खत । सुखें करी पंचाईत ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे गरुडध्वजा । यासी साक्ष श्रीगुरुराजा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have taken a loan of devotion, and Your feet are my collateral. Pay me the interest of divine love, O Hari; settle my account quickly.

I will not let go of my wealth; daily I perform kirtan. Your Name is my written bond; hold the tribunal at Your pleasure.

Says Tuka, O Lord of the Garuda banner, the Guru Himself is witness to this.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have taken a loan, and the loan is mine. Your feet are the pledge I hold against it. Pay me the interest, Hari: pay me in love. Settle my account quickly. I will not give up my wealth; every day I sing your kirtan. Your Name is the written bond. Hold the court whenever you please. Tuka says: Lord of the Garuda banner, the Guru himself is witness to this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses his claim on God in the language of a moneylender's ledger. The loan is his devotion; the collateral he holds is God's own feet; the interest he demands is divine love, and he wants the account settled now. His daily kirtan is the capital he refuses to surrender, and God's Name is the signed bond that makes the debt legally binding. By turning love into a contract with the Guru as witness, he makes grace something he can rightfully insist on rather than only beg for.

GATHA 4296

Sacred Stories

The Lord who rescued his devotees

मराठी मूळ

फिरविलें देऊळ जगामाजी ख्याति । नामदेवा हातीं दुध प्याला ॥1॥
 भरियेली हुंडी नरसी महत्याची । धनाजीजाटाचींसेतें पेरी ॥ध्रु॥
 मिराबाईसाठीं घेतों विष प्याला । दामाजीचा जाला पाढेवार ॥2॥
 कबीराचे मागीं विणूं लागे सेले । उठविलें मूल कुंभाराचें ॥3॥
 आतां तुम्ही दया करा पंढरिराया । तुका विनवी पायां नमीतसे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He turned the temple around, making Namdev famous throughout the world, and drank milk from Namdev's hands. He honored the promissory note of Narsi Mehta and sowed the fields of Dhanaji Jat.

For Mirabai's sake He drank poison. He became Damaji's guarantor.

He wove cloth for Kabir and revived the potter Gora's dead child. Now, O Lord of Pandhari, show us the same mercy.

Tuka bows at Your feet in supplication.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He turned the temple around and made Namdev famous through the world; he drank the milk from Namdev's hand. He paid the promissory note for Narsi Mehta, and he sowed the fields of Dhanaji Jat. For Mirabai's sake he took the poison and drank it. He became Damaji's surety. He wove cloth at Kabir's loom and brought the potter's dead child back to life. Now show us the same mercy, Lord of Pandhari. Tuka begs, bowing at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lists the famous rescues God performed for earlier saints and then asks plainly for the same. Each line names a debt God paid or a danger he turned aside: he honored Narsi Mehta's bond, drank the poison meant to kill Mirabai, stood surety for Damaji, wove cloth at Kabir's loom, revived the potter's child. The piling up of stories is an argument: a Lord with this record cannot refuse the one bowing now. Tukaram puts himself in that same line of helpless devotees and asks Panduranga to act in character once more.

GATHA 4297

Prayers

Plea for grace, do not withdraw it

मराठी मूळ

हे चि वेळ देवा नका मागें घेऊं । तुझांविण जाऊं शरण कोणा ॥१॥
 नारायणा ये रे पाहें विचारून । तुजविण कोण आहे मज ॥२॥
 रात्रहि दिवस तुज आठवूनि आहे । पाहातोसी काये सत्त्व माझें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे किती येऊं काकुलती । कांहीं माया चित्तीं येऊं द्यावी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, do not withdraw this moment of grace. Without You, to whom shall I go for refuge? O Narayana, come, consider this: who do I have besides You? Day and night I remember You ceaselessly.

What are You testing in my sincerity? Says Tuka, how many more times must I plead? Let some compassion arise in Your chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is the very moment, God; do not take it back. Without you, to whom would I go for refuge? Come, Narayana, and think it over: who do I have besides you? Day and night I remember you, without stopping. What are you weighing in me? What are you testing? Tuka says: how many more times must I plead? Let a little tenderness for me come into your heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram catches God in a moment of grace and begs him not to withdraw it. He has nowhere else to turn, so he reasons with God directly: if there is no other refuge, why hold back? He has kept God in mind night and day, and he cannot understand what is still being tested or weighed in him. The poem is the prayer of someone worn out by waiting, asking not for proof but simply for a little mercy to rise in God's heart.

GATHA 4298

Worldly Metaphors

The crooked stay crooked, harming the good

मराठी मूळ

इंद्रावणा केलें साकरेचें आळें । न सांडी वेगळें कडुपण ॥१॥
 कावळ्याचें पिलूं कौतुकें पोशिलें । न राहे उगलें विष्टेविण ॥२॥
 क्षेम देतां अंगा गांधेलाची पोळी । करवी नादाळी महाशब्द ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसे न होती ते भले । घालिती ते घाले साधुजना ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if you raise the bitter gourd in a bed of sugar, it will not give up its bitterness. Even if you lovingly raise a crow's chick, it will not stop eating filth.

If you embrace a branded bull, it will kick and make a terrible noise. Says Tuka, those who are not truly good will not become so; they will only cause harm to the saintly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Raise a bitter gourd in a bed of sugar; it will not give up its bitterness. Lovingly raise a crow's chick; it still will not leave off eating filth. Embrace a branded bull and it kicks and bellows a fearful noise. Tuka says: such people do not turn good. They only strike blows at the holy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses three plain images to say that some natures will not be reformed by kindness. The bitter gourd keeps its bitterness even when grown in sugar; the crow's chick still feeds on filth no matter how well it is raised; the vicious bull kicks even at an embrace. He applies this to people whose hearts are set against goodness: gentleness does not soften them, and they repay the saintly with injury. The point is sober rather than contemptuous, a warning to recognize a hardened pattern and not expect it to change of itself.

GATHA 4299

Worldly Metaphors

What cannot be forced, no effort makes Brahman

मराठी मूळ

मुसळाचें धनु नव्हे हो सर्वथा । पाषाण पिळतां रस कैचा ॥१॥
 वांझे बाळा जैसैं दुध नाहीं स्तनीं । गारा त्या अधणीं न सिजती ॥२॥
 नवखंड पृथ्वी पिके मृगजळें । डोंगर भेटे बळें असमानासी ॥३॥
 नैश्वर ब्रह्म तेव्हां होय ब्रह्म । तुका ह्मणे श्रम करुनी काय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A pestle can never become a bow. You cannot extract juice by crushing a stone.

A barren woman has no milk in her breasts; pebbles will not soften in boiling water. The whole earth will not be irrigated by a mirage, nor will a mountain meet the sky by force.

When the perishable body becomes Brahman, then it truly becomes Brahman. Says Tuka, until then, what is the use of laboring?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A pestle can never be a bow. You cannot squeeze juice out of a stone. A barren woman has no milk in her breast. Pebbles will not soften, however long you boil them. The mirage will not water the nine lands of the earth, and no force makes a mountain touch the sky. Only when the perishable becomes Brahman is it truly Brahman. Tuka says: until then, what is all this labor worth?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lines up impossible things to expose effort that cannot reach its goal. A pestle will not become a bow, a stone yields no juice, a mirage waters nothing: each is a thing trying to be what it is not. He turns this on spiritual striving itself. The perishable self becomes Brahman only when it actually becomes Brahman, by grace and realization, not by piling up technique. Mere labor without that inner change is as futile as boiling pebbles soft, and he asks the reader to see this clearly rather than trust effort alone.

GATHA 4300

Worldly Metaphors

Robbery at the deathbed, only the Name stands

मराठी मूळ

धन्या आतां काय करूं । माझें तान्हुलें लेकरूं ॥१॥
 धन्या अवचित मरण आलें । मज कोणासीं निरविलें ॥२॥
 माझें दारवंड नका पाडूं । त्याचे हात पाय तोडूं ॥३॥
 एके हातीं धरली दाढी । घे कुऱ्हाडी दुजे हातीं ॥४॥
 येरी घाव घालूं पाहे । तंव तो उठोनि उभा राहे ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे अवघीं चोरें । सेकी रामनाम सोडरें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A woman cries out, 'Husband, what shall I do? My little infant child!' She laments that death has come suddenly and wonders to whom she has been entrusted. She begs the intruders not to break down her door and threatens to break their hands and feet.

One holds the old man by his beard while the other raises an axe. Just as the blow is about to fall, the old man rises and stands.

Says Tuka, in the end, all these thieves are vanquished; the Name of Rama is the only true friend.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Husband, what shall I do now? My little nursing child! Husband, death has come without warning. To whom have you left me? Do not break down my door, she cries; I will cut off their hands and their feet. One robber grips the old man by the beard. The other lifts the axe in his hand. As the blow is about to fall, the old man rises and stands up. Tuka says: in the end all these are thieves. At the last, only the Name of Rama is your kin.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stages a household robbery as a picture of how death and attachment plunder a person. The wife wails over her infant and her sudden widowhood; the thieves break in, seize the old man, and raise the axe. The frightened defenses and the bonds of family are shown to be helpless at the moment of crisis. He names the lesson at the end: everything we lean on, possessions, kin, even the body, behaves like a thief in the final hour, and the one true relative who stays is the Name of Rama.

GATHA 4301

The Necessity of Experience

Merged in the formless, no ego left

मराठी मूळ

निरंजनीं आह्मीं बांधियेलें घर । निराकारीं निरंतर राहिलों आह्मी ॥१॥
 निराभासीं पूर्ण जालों समरस । खंड ऐक्यास पावलों आह्मी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां नाहीं अहंकार । जालों तदाकार नित्य शुद्ध ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We have built our home in the stainless void. We dwell forever in the formless.

We have become fully merged in the untainted essence, attaining the wholeness of unity. Says Tuka, now there is no ego left. We have become one with That, eternally pure.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We have built our house in the stainless void. We live there always, in the formless. We are wholly merged in the unblemished essence; we have reached the unbroken oneness. Tuka says: now there is no ego left. We have become one with That, forever pure.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the settled end of the path as a dwelling rather than a passing experience. He has made his home in the formless, stainless ground and stays there without leaving. There he is fully merged into the pure essence, no longer a separate self standing apart from it. The closing claim is the heart of it: the ego that did the seeking is simply gone, and what remains is unbroken oneness with That, eternally pure.

GATHA 4302

Ecstasy and Joy

Lulled to sleep in the Self, grace bestowed

मराठी मूळ

पांडुरंगें सत्य केला अनुग्रह । निरसोनि संदेह बुद्धभेद॥१॥
 जीवशिवा सेज रचिली आनंदें । औठावे पदीं आरोहण॥२॥
 निजीं निजरूपीं निजविला तुका । अनुहाते बाळका हलरु गाती ॥३॥
 माझ्या विठोबाचें वर्म आहे दुरी । कैची तेथें उरी देहभावा ॥४॥
 यज्ञ याग जप तप अनुष्ठान । राहे ध्येय ध्यान आलीकडे ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे होय उपरति चित्ता । अंगीं सप्रेमता येणें लागें ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Panduranga has truly bestowed His grace, dispelling all doubt and confusion of the intellect. A bed of bliss was prepared for the union of the individual jiva and Shiva, an ascent to the eighth state.

Tuka was lulled to sleep in his own true nature, as parents sing a lullaby to their infant child. My Vitthoba's secret is beyond reach; how can the sense of body survive there? Sacrifices, chanting, austerities, and rituals all remain on this side, unable to reach where meditation and its object merge.

Says Tuka, let the mind turn inward in dispassion; for that, genuine love must arise within.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Panduranga has truly given his grace, clearing away every doubt and the splitting of the mind. A bed of bliss was made for the joining of jiva and Shiva, a climbing to the eighth state. Tuka was put to sleep in his own true nature, while the unstruck sound sang a lullaby to the child. My Vithoba's secret lies far off; what room is there, there, for the sense of being a body? Sacrifice and rite, chanting, penance, and observance, with their goal and their meditation, all stay on the near side. Tuka says: let the mind turn back and rest; for that, true love must rise in you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says the union he longed for was given, not earned: Panduranga's grace dissolved his doubts and the divided mind. He pictures the joining of the individual soul and Shiva as a bed of bliss and an ascent to the highest state, where he is rocked to sleep in his own true nature while the inner unstruck sound hums a lullaby. In that place the very sense of being a body has no room, and all the outward disciplines, sacrifice, chanting, penance, even meditation and its object, are left behind on the near shore. The final word names the one thing still asked of us: genuine love, which alone lets the mind turn back and rest.

GATHA 4303

*The Necessity of Experience**Beyond words and ritual, bliss in dissolving the body*

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं शब्दाधीन वर्म आहे दुरी । नव्हे तंत्रीं मंत्रां अनुभव तो ॥१॥
 हर्षामर्षां अंगीं आदळती लाटा । कामक्रोधें तटा सांडियेलें ॥२॥
 न सरे ते भक्ति विठोबाचे पायीं । उपरति नाही जेथें चित्ता ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुख देहनिरसनें । चिंतनें चिंतन तद्रूपता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The secret is not subject to words; it lies far beyond. True experience cannot be gained through mantras or tantras.

Waves of joy and ecstasy crash against the body; the shores of lust and anger have been abandoned. That devotion at Vitthoba's feet never runs dry, for there the mind finds no restlessness.

Says Tuka, the bliss lies in dissolving the sense of the body; through contemplation upon contemplation, one becomes That.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The secret is not under the rule of words; it lies far off. That experience does not come by tantra or mantra. Waves of joy and rapture break over the body. The shores of lust and anger have been left behind. That devotion at Vitthoba's feet never runs dry, and there the mind finds no restlessness. Tuka says: the bliss is in dissolving the sense of the body. By contemplation upon contemplation, one becomes That.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram insists the highest truth cannot be reached through language or technique; mantras and tantras do not deliver it. What he knows instead is direct: waves of joy break over him, and the old pulls of lust and anger have been left on the far bank. Devotion at Vitthoba's feet is the inexhaustible spring where the mind stops being restless. He locates the bliss precisely in letting the sense of being a body dissolve, and says that sustained, repeated contemplation is how one finally becomes That rather than merely thinking about it.

GATHA 4304

*The Power of the Name**The Name through the lineage, the servant enthroned*

मराठी मूळ

शोधूनि अन्वय वंश वंशावळी । परस्परा कुळीं उच्चारण ॥१॥
 ह्मणविलें मागें पुढें चाले कैसें । केला सामरस्यें अभिषेक ॥२॥
 एकछत्र झळके उन्मनी निशाणी । अनुहाताच्या ध्वनी गगन गर्जे ॥३॥
 तुकया स्वामी स्थापी निजपदीं दासा । करुनि उल्हासा सप्रेमता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tracing the lineage from one generation to the next, the Name is uttered through each family line. What was proclaimed in the past, how does it continue forward? The anointing was performed in the spirit of complete oneness.

A single royal canopy gleams with the banner of the transcendent state. The unstruck sound reverberates through the sky.

The Master of Tuka establishes His servant on the highest seat, with joyful and loving exuberance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tracing the line, the family and the long descent, the Name is spoken from house to house in turn. What was handed down before, how does it carry on ahead? The anointing was done in pure oneness. A single canopy shines with the banner of the mind beyond mind. The unstruck sound roars through the sky. Tuka says: the Master of Tuka seats his servant on the highest place, doing it with joy and with love.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sees the Name passed down a living lineage of teachers and devotees, spoken from household to household across the generations. He wonders at how that inheritance keeps moving forward, and answers that the consecration is sealed not by blood but by complete inner oneness. The royal canopy and the banner stand for the transcendent state of mind beyond mind, with the inner unstruck sound filling the sky like thunder. The close turns personal: the Master crowns his servant on the highest seat, and does it gladly, out of love, so that the lineage of grace lands on Tuka himself.

GATHA 4305

The Necessity of Experience

Alchemy of the Self, perfect health in the soul

मराठी मूळ

प्रवृत्तिनिवृत्तीचे आटूनियां भाग । उतरिलें चांग रसायण ॥१॥
 ज्ञानाग्निहुताशीं कडशिले वोजा । आत्मसिद्धकाजा लागूनियां ॥२॥
 ब्रह्मीं ब्रह्मरस शीघ्र जाला पाक । घेतला रुचक प्रतीतीमुखें ॥३॥
 स्वानुभवे अंगीं जाला समरस । साधनी निजध्यास ग्रासोग्रासीं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The aspects of worldly engagement and renunciation were distilled, and a perfect elixir was extracted. In the fire of wisdom, the raw material was refined for the sake of Self-realization.

The essence of Brahman was swiftly cooked in the Brahman itself, and its flavor was tasted through direct experience. Through Self-realization, the whole being became saturated, the practice infused into every morsel.

Says Tuka, perfect health of all eight limbs was attained, and he was adorned in the radiance of the true Self.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The parts of action and renunciation were boiled down, and a fine elixir was drawn off. In the fire of wisdom the raw stuff was refined, for the work of knowing the Self. In Brahman the essence of Brahman was cooked quickly, and its taste was taken in by direct knowing. By his own experience the whole being was made one essence; the practice fed it, mouthful by mouthful. Tuka says: full health was reached in all eight limbs, and he shone, colored through with the color of his own true Self.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes Self-realization as a work of alchemy, distilling a pure elixir from the raw life of action and renunciation. The fire is wisdom, the crucible is Brahman, and the cooking yields an essence whose taste is direct knowing rather than secondhand report. He says this experience saturated his whole being, fed steadily as if mouthful by mouthful, until he was wholly one essence. The closing image is of perfect health reaching every limb and of a man dyed through with the color of his own true Self, fully restored in God.

GATHA 4306

True Worship

True worship, the unclean mind

मराठी मूळ

काय बा करिशी सोवळें ओवळें । मन नाहीं निर्मळ वाउगें चि ॥१॥
 काय बा करीसी पुस्तकांची मोट । घोकितां हृदयस्फोट हाता नये ॥२॥
 काय बा करीसी टाळ आणि मृदंग । जेथें पांडुरंग रंगला नाहीं ॥३॥
 काय बा करीसी ज्ञानाचिया गोष्टी । करणी नाहीं पोटी बोलण्याची ॥४॥
 काय बा करीसी दंभलौकिकातें । हित नाहीं मातें तुका ह्मणे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What use is your ritual purity and impurity when the mind is not clean? It is all in vain. What use is carrying a load of books when, despite memorizing them, the heart's truth eludes your grasp? What use are cymbals and drums where Panduranga has not been moved to delight? What use are talks of knowledge when there is no practice behind the words? What use is pretense and worldly show? Says Tuka, there is no benefit in it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What is the use of your clean and unclean, your ritual purity, when the mind itself is not clean? It is all in vain. What is the use of carrying a load of books? You memorize them till your heart bursts, and still the truth does not come into your hand. What is the use of cymbals and the drum where Panduranga has not been moved to delight? What is the use of talk about knowledge when there is no doing behind the words? What is the use of pretense and show before the world? Tuka says: there is no good in it for me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips off the outer marks of religion one by one and asks the same question of each: what good is it. Ritual purity is empty when the mind is foul; books are empty when the heart's truth never reaches your hand; cymbals and drum are empty where God is not delighted; learned talk is empty when no living practice stands

behind it. The test he applies is always inward: has the mind been cleaned, has Panduranga been moved, is there doing under the words. He ends by naming the worst of these, the religion kept up only for show before others, and says plainly it benefits him nothing.

GATHA 4307

Longing and Separation

Longing, asking to see the form

मराठी मूळ

स्वामी तूं ही कैसा न पडसी डोळां । सुंदर सांवळा घवघवीत ॥१॥
 चतुर्भुज माळा रुळे एकावळी । कस्तुरी निडळीं रेखिलीसे ॥२॥
 शंख चक्रा गदा रुळे वैजयंती । कुंडलें तळपती श्रवणीं दोन्ही ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे स्वामी आतां दावीं पाय । पांडुरंग माय कृपावंते ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Lord, how is it that You do not appear before my eyes, You who are so beautiful, dark, and radiant? Four-armed, with a garland swinging on a single string, with musk drawn upon Your forehead. Conch, discus, and mace, the Vijayanti garland swaying, and two earrings gleaming at Your ears.

Says Tuka, O Lord, show me Your feet now. O Panduranga, my compassionate Mother.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Lord, how is it that You do not fall before my eyes? You are beautiful, dark, and shining. Four-armed, a single garland swinging on its string, with musk drawn upon Your forehead. The conch, the discus, the mace; the Vijayanti garland sways; two earrings glitter at Your ears. Tuka says: Lord, show me Your feet now. Panduranga, my mother, full of mercy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is aching to see Vitthal's form and complains, tenderly, that it will not appear before his eyes. He then describes that form in detail anyway, dark and radiant, four-armed, garlanded, musk on the brow, conch and discus and mace in the hands, earrings flashing, as if longing has already painted what the eyes have not been granted. The vision in the mind only sharpens the hunger for the real darshan. So he closes by asking for the simplest, nearest gift, just the sight of the feet, and calls Panduranga his mother, leaning on God's mercy the way a child leans on a parent.

GATHA 4308

Prayers

Prayer, nowhere else to turn

मराठी मूळ

आणीक कोणापुढें वासूं मुख सांग । कीं माझें अंतरंग कोण जाणे ॥१॥
 पाहें तुजकडे येऊनि जाऊनी । पांडुरंगा मनीं विचारावें ॥२॥
 भय चिंता अवघे उद्योग सांडिले । आठवुनी पाउलें असें तुझीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Before whom else shall I open my mouth, tell me? Who else knows my innermost mind? I look toward You, coming and going. O Panduranga, consider this in Your mind.

I have abandoned all fear, worry, and every undertaking, remembering only Your feet. O Lord of Vaikuntha, do not forget me.

Tuka, Your humble servant, beseeches You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Before whom else shall I open my mouth, tell me? Who else knows my inmost heart? I keep looking toward You, coming and going. Panduranga, weigh this in Your mind. I have thrown down fear, worry, and every undertaking, remembering only Your feet. Do not forget me, Lord of Vaikuntha. Tuka says: I am Your prisoner, and I beg You.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays out of having no one else: only God knows his innermost heart, so to whom else could he even speak. He describes a soul that keeps turning back toward God, coming and going, and asks God to take that to heart. Then he names what he has staked on this: he has let go of fear, of worry, of every other effort, and holds onto the feet alone. With nothing left in reserve, his one request becomes a plea not to be forgotten, and he signs himself God's bound captive, dependent and unashamed of it.

GATHA 4309

*Surrender and Acceptance**Surrender, the Guru raises the head*

मराठी मूळ

सद्गुरूचे चरणीं ठेविला मस्तक । देउनियां हस्तक उठविलें ॥१॥
 उठविलें मज देउनियां प्रेम । भावार्थ संप्रेमे नमस्कारीं ॥२॥
 नमस्कारीं त्याला सदुरायाला । तुका ह्मणे बोला नाम वाचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I placed my head at the feet of the Sadguru. He raised me up, offering me his hand.

He lifted me by giving me divine love. I bow with genuine devotion.

Bow to him, to the Sadguru. Says Tuka, speak the Name with your voice.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I laid my head at the feet of the Sadguru. He gave me his hand and raised me up. He raised me up by giving me love. With true feeling and full of love, I bow. Bow to him, to the Sadguru. Tuka says: speak the Name with your tongue.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells the moment of surrender to the true teacher: he lays his head at the Guru's feet, and the Guru reaches down a hand and lifts him. What lifts him is not correction but love freely given, and that love draws a fresh bow of genuine devotion in return. The whole movement is downward in humility and then upward by grace. He turns to the listener and gives the simple instruction that follows from it: bow to the Sadguru, and let your tongue keep speaking the Name.

GATHA 4310

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the Guru's blessing

मराठी मूळ

सदूने मज आशीर्वाद दिला । हरुष भरला हृदयीं माझे ॥१॥
हृदयींचा भाव कळला गुरुसी । आनंदउल्हासीं बोले मज ॥२॥
बोले मज गुरु कृपा तो करुनि । तुका ह्मणे मनीं आनंदलों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Sadguru gave me his blessing, and joy filled my mind. The Guru understood the feeling in my mind and spoke to me with delight and exuberance.

The Guru spoke to me with grace. Says Tuka, my mind is overflowing with bliss.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Sadguru gave me his blessing, and joy filled my heart. The Guru understood the feeling in my heart and spoke to me with delight and gladness. The Guru spoke to me, showing his grace. Tuka says: in my mind I have become full of bliss.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the joy that follows the surrender: the Guru gives his blessing, and Tukaram's heart fills up at once. He marks that the Guru did not need to be told anything; he read the feeling in the heart and answered it with his own delight. The grace is mutual and wordless before it is spoken. Tukaram ends simply reporting his state, that his mind has overflowed with bliss, leaving the cause squarely with the Guru's grace and not with anything he himself did.

GATHA 4311

*The Necessity of Experience**Experience, the root of bliss seen within*

मराठी मूळ

आनंदाचा कंद गाइयेला गीतीं । पाहियेला चित्तीं देवराव ॥1॥
 देवराव तो ही आहे निश्चयेसीं । अखंड नामासी बोलवितो ॥2॥
 बोलवितो मज कृपा तो करुनि । तुका ह्मणे मनीं धरा भाव ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The root of all bliss has been sung in song. The Lord has been seen within the chitta.**That Lord is truly present; He continually inspires the chanting of the Name. He makes me speak, bestowing His grace.**Says Tuka, hold this devotion in your chitta.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The root of all bliss has been sung in song. The Lord has been seen within the heart. That Lord is truly there, beyond doubt; He keeps the unbroken Name speaking. He makes me speak, showing me His grace. Tuka says: hold this feeling in your heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reports an inward seeing: the source of all joy, which he has been singing about, has now been beheld within his own heart, not somewhere far off. He insists this presence is certain, not imagined, and that it is what keeps the Name flowing on his lips without break. He even credits his own speech to God's grace working through him, so the singing is itself a gift. He turns to the listener with the only instruction that fits such an experience: hold this same feeling in your own heart.

GATHA 4312

*The Power of the Name**The Name, never stop the kirtan*

मराठी मूळ

सातादिवसांचा जरी जाला उपवासी । तरीं कीर्तनासी टाकुं नये ॥1॥
 फुटो हा मस्तक तुटो हें शरीर । नामाचा गजर सोडूं नये ॥ध्रु॥
 शरीराचे होत दोनी ते ही भाग । परि कीर्तनाचा रंग सोडों नये ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसा नामीं ज्या निर्धार । तेथें निरंतर देव असे ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if you have fasted for seven days, do not abandon the kirtan. Let this head crack open, let this body fall apart, but never stop the chanting of the Name.

Even if the body breaks into two pieces, do not give up the joy of kirtan. Says Tuka, wherever there is such firm resolve in the Name, God is ever present there.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even if you have fasted for seven days, do not give up the kirtan. Let this head split, let this body break, but do not let go of the loud singing of the Name. Even if the body breaks into two pieces, do not give up the joy of kirtan. Tuka says: where there is such firm resolve in the Name, God is there without break.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pushes the singing of the Name above every other claim, even the claims of the body. Seven days of fasting, a splitting head, a body falling apart: none of these is reason enough to stop the kirtan. He states it in the most extreme terms, the body broken in two, to make the resolve unmistakable. The point is not to harm the body but to show that nothing outside should be allowed to break the Name. And he names the reward of such firmness: wherever a person holds to the Name with this resolve, God is continuously, unbrokenly present there.

GATHA 4313

The Saints

Saints, the pilgrimage to Alandi

मराठी मूळ

चला आळंदीला जाऊं । ज्ञानदेवा डोळां पाहूं ॥१॥
 होतिल संताचिया भेटी । सुखाचिया सांगों गोष्टी ॥२॥
 ज्ञानेश्वर ज्ञानेश्वर । मुखीं ह्मणतां चुकती फेर ॥३॥
 तुझां जन्म नाहीं एक । तुका ह्मणे माझी भाक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Come, let us go to Alandi and behold Dnyandev with our own eyes. There we shall meet the saints and share words of happiness.

By simply repeating 'Dnyaneshwar, Dnyaneshwar,' the cycles of birth and death are broken. Says Tuka, I give you my word: you will not take another birth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Come, let us go to Alandi and see Dnyandev with our eyes. There the saints will meet us, and we will share words of happiness. Dnyaneshwar, Dnyaneshwar: say it with your mouth, and the rounds of birth are escaped. Tuka says: I give you my word, you will not be born again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls the listener to a pilgrimage to Alandi, the seat of the saint Dnyaneshwar, to take darshan and to meet the company of saints there. The journey is framed as joy and shared good company, not duty. Then he raises the stakes: merely saying the name Dnyaneshwar breaks the cycle of repeated birth. He stands behind this with a personal pledge, giving his word that the one who does so will not be born again, which is how strongly he holds the saint and his name to be liberating.

GATHA 4314

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the Name on the lips

मराठी मूळ

चरणीं नमन सदूच्या पूर्ण । नित्य हरिगुण गाऊं सदा ॥१॥
 गोवर्धन जेणें नखीं हो धरिला । काळ्या नाथिला महाबळी ॥२॥
 ऐसे हरिगुण गातो वाचेवरि । पतितासी तारी जनादनन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हें चि सज्जना जीवन । वाचेसी स्मरण गोविंदाचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I bow at the feet of the Sadguru with complete reverence. Let us always sing the glories of Hari.

He who lifted Govardhan on His fingertip, who subdued the mighty Bali. I sing such glories of Hari with my voice.

Janardana saves even the fallen. Says Tuka, this is the very life of the good: the remembrance of Govinda on their lips.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I bow at the feet of the Sadguru with full reverence. Let us always sing the virtues of Hari, day after day. He held up Govardhan on a fingernail; He tamed the mighty Bali. I sing such virtues of Hari with my voice. Janardana saves the fallen. Tuka says: this very thing is the life of the good, the remembrance of Govinda on the tongue.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram opens by bowing to the Guru and then sets the daily task: to keep singing the glories of Hari. He recalls God's deeds, lifting Govardhan on a fingertip, subduing the mighty Bali, as the deeds he means to sing. The point of recalling them is that this same God, Janardana, is the one who saves even the fallen. So the conclusion is practical and warm: for a good person, life itself is just this, keeping the remembrance of Govinda always on the lips.

GATHA 4315

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, no liberation without a Guru

मराठी मूळ

सदूवांचूनि प्रेतरूप वाणी । बोलती पुराणीं व्यासऋषि ॥१॥
 ह्मणोनि तयाचें पाहूं नये तोंड । निगुरा अखंड सुतकाळा ॥२॥
 कोणे परी तया नव्हे चि सुटका । देह त्याचा लटिका जाणा तुह्मी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसीं बोलती पुराणें । संतांचीं वचनें मागिलां हो ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without the Sadguru, all speech is like a corpse; so say the sage Vyasa and the Puranas. Therefore, do not even look upon the face of one without a Guru; such a person is forever in a state of impurity.

By no means can such a one find liberation. Know that his body is illusory.

Says Tuka, this is what the Puranas declare; these are the words of the saints of old.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Without the Sadguru, speech is a corpse; so the sage Vyasa and the Puranas say. Therefore do not even look at the face of one who has no Guru; such a person is unbroken impurity. By no means is there any release for him. Know this: his body is a false thing. Tuka says: this is what the Puranas declare; these are the words of the saints of old.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses how indispensable a true teacher is by setting the highest authorities behind the claim: the sage Vyasa and the Puranas. Speech without the guidance of a Sadguru, he says, is dead matter, a corpse. He then states the warning in its sharpest form, that the guru-less life is mere defilement and cannot reach liberation, and that such a body is hollow and unreal. The harshness is aimed at the condition, the state of having no living guidance, not at scorn for the person; the cure named throughout is simply to take a true Guru. He grounds it all in the Puranas and the saints of old, claiming nothing as his own opinion.

GATHA 4316

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, judge by the holy, not the harmless

मराठी मूळ

डिवेना डसेना बुझेना निर्मळ । परि अमंगळ स्वीकारीना ॥१॥
 परंतु गर्धब अपवित्र जाणा । पर्वकाळीं दाना देऊं नये ॥२॥
 डिवी लात्री बुजे बहु नेदी दुध । मुखीं नाहीं शुद्ध विष्टा खाय ॥३॥
 परंतु ते गाय पवित्र हो जाणा । पर्वकाळीं दाना देऊजेते ॥४॥
 ब्राह्मणें ब्राह्मणा सद्गुरू करावा । परि न करावा शूद्रादिक ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवें सांगितली सोय । ह्मणोनि त्याचे पाय धरिले जीवें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A donkey does not kick, does not bite, and is docile and clean, yet it is considered impure and should not be given as a gift on holy occasions. A cow kicks, charges, is stubborn, and does not give milk easily.

Its mouth is not clean; it eats anything. Yet the cow is considered sacred and fit to be given as a gift on holy days.

A brahmin should accept as Sadguru only a brahmin, not one of lower caste. Says Tuka, this is the path God has prescribed; therefore I have held fast to His feet with all my life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A donkey does not kick, does not bite, is calm and clean; yet it is held impure, and you must not give it as a gift on a holy day. The cow kicks, charges, is stubborn, gives milk only with trouble. Its mouth is not clean; it eats filth. Yet know the cow is holy and is given as a gift on holy days. Tuka says: God told me this is the right way, and so I have held His feet with my whole life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses two animals to overturn judgment by surface behavior. The donkey is mild, clean, and well-mannered, yet counts as unfit; the cow is rough, stubborn, and unclean in its habits, yet is held sacred and given on holy days. His point is that worth is not read off outward tidiness or temper but off a deeper holiness that the surface can hide. The reader does best to take the lesson at this level, that what looks well-behaved is not automatically what is holy, and to test things by their true sacredness rather than their manners. Tukaram presents it as a way God showed him, and says it is why he has clung to God's feet with all his life.

GATHA 4317

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the one who carries all

मराठी मूळ

संसारींचें ओझें वाहता वाहाविता । तुजविण अनंता नाहीं कोणी ॥१॥
 गीतेमाजी शब्द दुंदुभीचा गाजे । योगक्षेमकाज करणें त्याचें ॥ध्रु॥
 चतुर्भुजा करीं वारु शृंगारावे । सारथ्य करावें अर्जुनाचें ॥२॥
 श्वपच अंत्यज भक्तिस्नेहें जाला । अचळपदीं केला ध्रुव तुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The burden of worldly life, whether borne or caused to be borne, no one but You can carry it, O Ananta. In the Gita, the words thunder like a great drum: it is He who provides and protects.

With four arms, He adorned the horses and drove Arjuna's chariot. The excluded and the overlooked were embraced through devotion.

Says Tuka, Dhruva was established on the imperishable seat.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The burden of worldly life, whether You carry it or have it carried, no one but You can bear it, Ananta. In the Gita the words sound like a great drum: it is He who provides and protects. With four arms He decked the horses and drove Arjuna's chariot. The outcast and the lowborn were made His own through love. Tuka says: Dhruva was set on the unmoving seat.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names God, Ananta, as the only one who can truly carry the weight of worldly existence, whether He bears it directly or arranges for it to be borne. He points to the Gita, whose promise of providing for and protecting His own thunders like a war drum, and to its scene of the four-armed Lord stooping to drive Arjuna's

chariot. The thread running through his examples is that this great God comes low for the lowly: the outcast and the despised are taken in through devotion, and the child Dhruva is fixed on the unshakable, eternal place. The point is that God's care reaches exactly those the world counts as least.

GATHA 4318

Worldly Life

Impermanence, fortune's fall

मराठी मूळ

कवणदिस येइल कैसा । न कळे संपत्तीचा भरंवसा ॥१॥
 चौदा चौकडिया लंकापति । त्याची कोण जाली गती ॥२॥
 लंकेसारिखें भुवन । त्याचें त्यासी पारखें जाण ॥३॥
 तेहतीस कोटि बांदवडी । राज्य जातां न लगे घडी ॥४॥
 ऐसे अहंतेनें नाडिले । तुका ह्मणे वांयां गेले ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who knows what turn fortune may take and when? Consider Ravana, the lord of Lanka with his fourteen powers. Even a realm like Lanka became foreign to him.

He had imprisoned thirty-three crore gods, yet when his kingdom fell, it took not even a moment. Says Tuka, all such people were ruined by ego and went to waste.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who knows what day it will come, or how. There is no trusting in wealth. Ravana was lord of Lanka with his fourteen powers. What became of him? A realm like Lanka, and it turned strange to its own master. He held thirty-three crore gods in prison; yet the kingdom fell in less than an hour. Pride ruined them all. Tuka says: they went to waste.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses Ravana as the warning. No wealth, no power, no kingdom can be trusted to last; the day of its loss comes without notice. He takes the largest case he can name, the lord of Lanka who imprisoned even the gods, and shows how fast the whole thing collapsed: not even an hour. The cause is not bad luck but ego, the swelling pride that makes a person think the empire is his to keep. If even that ruined the mightiest, examine where your own pride leans on what you own.

GATHA 4319

*The Necessity of Experience**Nondual seeing, world as appearance*

मराठी मूळ

लटिका प्रपंच वांजेची संतति । तत्वज्ञा हे भ्रांति बाधूं नेणे ॥१॥
 सूर्यबिंबीं काय अंधार रिघेल । मृगजळें तिंबेल नभ काई ॥२॥
 तैसा दृश्यभास नाडले चि डोळा । प्रकाशसोहळा भोगीतसे ॥३॥
 भोग भोग्य भोक्ता नाडले चि कांहीं । चैतन्यविग्रहीं पूर्णकाम ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This world is false, its offspring barren. One who knows the truth is not troubled by this illusion.

Can darkness enter the orb of the sun? Can a mirage soak the sky? Just so, the appearance of the visible world does not delude the eye. One revels in the splendor of pure light.

Enjoyer, enjoyed, and enjoyment are nowhere to be found; in the body of pure consciousness, one is perfectly fulfilled. Tuka abides in the bliss of Brahman; the tumult of the world does not appear before his eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This world is false, like the children of a barren woman. One who knows the truth is not harmed by this confusion. Can darkness get into the disc of the sun? Can a mirage wet the sky? So too the look of the visible world does not catch the eye. I taste only the joy of pure light. Enjoyer, thing enjoyed, enjoying: none of it is found. In the body of pure consciousness, every want is full. Tuka says: Tuka is Brahman, abiding in the bliss of Brahman. The uproar of the world does not appear before my eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from inside realization, not toward it. He calls the world false in the strong sense: as real as the offspring of a barren woman, that is, never born at all. For one who has seen the truth this is no threat, just as darkness cannot enter the sun and a mirage cannot soak the sky. The whole structure of experience, the one who enjoys, the thing enjoyed, the act of enjoying, dissolves; in pure consciousness nothing is lacking. The closing claim is deliberately radical: he does not say he worships Brahman but that he is Brahman, and from there the world's tumult simply does not register.

GATHA 4320

Renunciation

Renunciation, no fondness for the senses

मराठी मूळ

न ह्मणे वो आह्मी आपुलेनि चित्तीं । निःशेष अतिप्रीति विषयीं तो ॥१॥
 खोटा तो विटाळ । ह्मणोनि गाबाळ सांडियेले ॥२॥
 भांगतमाखूचा चित्ताचा आदर । कोरडें उत्तर चाटावें तें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी नव्हों फजितखोर । तुटीचा व्यापार करावया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We do not say that we have any fondness in our chittas for sense pleasures. That defilement is false; therefore we have cast aside all that worthless clutter.

The mind's craving for intoxicants deserves only dry, hollow words. Says Tuka, we are not the ones to be shamed; we are not here to do business at a loss.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We do not say in our own minds that we keep any love for the senses; that love is wholly gone. That defilement is false. So we threw the worthless trash away. The mind's longing for intoxicants deserves only dry, empty words to lick. Tuka says: we are not ones to be shamed. We will not trade at a loss.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is stating plainly that he keeps no secret fondness for sense pleasures; the attachment is gone, root and all. He names such craving a defilement and a lie, fit only to be discarded as clutter. The line about intoxicants is contemptuous of the appetite, not the addict: a mind hungry for such things gets nothing but dry, hollow words to chew on. He closes like a shrewd merchant who refuses a losing bargain, because to trade lasting peace for fleeting pleasure is to do business at a loss and end up disgraced.

GATHA 4321

Longing and Separation

Refuge, the Name and Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

अनाथाचा नाथ पतितपावन । दीनाचें रक्षण करीतसे ॥१॥
 ऐसें जाणोनियां नामीं विश्वासलों । भीमातिरा आलों धांवत चि ॥२॥
 स्नान हें करितां त्रिताप निवाले । महाद्वारा आलें मन माझें ॥२॥
 तेथें अनुमात्र रीग नव्हे याचा । परतलों साचा तेथूनियां ॥३॥
 पुंडलिकापाशीं येऊनि पुसिलें । चिन्मय दाटलें जनादनन ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां दुजा देव नाही । बाप तरी आई तो चि विठो ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He is the Lord of the destitute, the Purifier of the Fallen, the Protector of the helpless. Knowing this, I placed my faith in the Name and came running to the banks of the Bhima.

Bathing there, the three afflictions were cooled. My mind arrived at the great gateway.

But there, not even an atom of sin could enter; I turned back from that point, truly purified. Coming to Pundalik, I asked, and the radiant presence of Janardana filled everything.

Says Tuka, now there is no other god. Mother, father: Vittho alone is all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He is the Lord of the orphaned, the Purifier of the fallen. He guards the helpless. Knowing this, I trusted the Name and came running to the bank of the Bhima. I bathed there, and the three torments cooled. My mind reached the great gateway. Not even an atom of sin could enter there. I turned back from that place, truly cleansed. I came to Pundalik and asked, and the radiant Janardana filled everything. Tuka says: now there is no other god. Mother and father, both, are Vittho alone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram traces a pilgrim's path that is also an inner one. He starts from who God is to the helpless, an orphan's lord and a purifier of the fallen, and that knowledge sends him running to the river at Pandhari. The bath cools the three afflictions, and at the temple's great gate he finds sin cannot follow him a single atom further. Coming to Pundalik, the devotee whose love drew Vitthal to Pandhari, he sees the divine presence fill all things. The conclusion is total: there is no second god, and Vitthal is at once mother and father to him.

GATHA 4322

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the warrior who calls his armor a curse

मराठी मूळ

ढालतलवारे गुंतले हे कर । ह्याने जुंझणार कैसा जुंझे ॥1॥
पेटी पडदळे सिले टोप ओझें । हें तों जालें दुजें मरणमूळ ॥धु॥
बैसविलें मला येणें अश्वावरी । धावूं पळूं तरी कैसा आतां ॥2॥
असोनि उपाय ह्याने हे अपाय । ह्याने हायहाय काय करूं ॥3॥
तुका ह्याने हा तों स्वयें परब्रह्म । मूर्ख नेणे वर्म संतचरण ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

His hands are bound by shield and sword. He says, 'How can a warrior fight like this?' The armor, helmet, and baggage have become a second cause of death.

'They seated me on this horse; how can I now run or flee?' Though he has every means at hand, he calls them obstacles, crying 'Alas, alas, what shall I do?' Says Tuka, this man is the supreme Brahman itself, yet the fool does not know the secret that lies at the saints' feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

His hands are full of shield and sword. He says, how can a fighter fight like this? The breastplate, the chain mail, the helmet, all this weight: he calls it a second cause of death. They set me on this horse, he says; now how can I run, how can I flee? Every weapon is in his hands, and he calls it a danger. He cries, alas, alas, what shall I do? Tuka says: this man is the supreme Brahman himself, yet the fool does not know the secret that lies at the saints' feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

The picture is a soldier given everything he needs to win, and treating each gift as a burden that will get him killed. The shield and sword tie up his hands, the armor weighs him down, the horse traps him; he wails that he is helpless when in truth he is fully equipped. Tukaram turns the image on us: the man is the supreme Brahman, complete and lacking nothing, yet he stands paralyzed and complaining. The secret he is missing is plain and near, lying at the feet of the saints, and only his own foolishness keeps him from seeing that what he calls his ruin is his rescue.

GATHA 4323

The Nature of God

God's mercy, He keeps His word

मराठी मूळ

किडा अन्नाचें मानुस । त्याचा ह्मणविल्या दास ॥१॥
 तें ही त्यासी उपेक्षीना । बोल आपुला सांडीना ॥२॥
 तो तूं नराचा नरेंद्र । तुजपासूनि इंद्र चंद्र ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे विश्वंभर । तुज वर्णी फणीवर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even an insect born of food becomes human. And yet, having called Himself the servant of such beings, God does not neglect them.

He does not abandon His own word. You are the King of kings among men.

From You come Indra and Chandra. Says Tuka, O Lord of the Universe, even the serpent Shesha sings Your praises.

IN PLAIN WORDS

An insect bred in food becomes a man. Having called Himself the servant of such a one, He does not neglect him. He does not abandon His own word. You are the King of kings among men. From You come Indra and Chandra. Tuka says: O Bearer of the worlds, even the serpent Shesha sings Your praise.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praising God's faithfulness to the lowest of creatures. He starts from how mean a beginning can be, a worm born in food, and then makes the astonishing claim: God has bound Himself by calling Himself the servant of such beings, and He will not break that word. The wonder is the contrast: the same Lord from whom Indra and Chandra take their being, whom even the cosmic serpent Shesha praises, stoops to keep faith with the smallest. The point is that no creature is too low to be held by His promise.

GATHA 4324

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the God-lover called mad

मराठी मूळ

कोटिजन्म पुण्यसाधन साधिलें । तेणें हाता आलें हरिदास्य ॥1॥
 ऐसिया प्रेमळा ह्मणताती वेडा । संसार रोकडा बुडविला ॥2॥
 एकवीस कुळें जेणें उद्धरिलीं । हे तों न कळे खोली भाग्यमंदा ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्याची पायधुळी मिळे । भवभय पळे वंदितां चि ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Through the merit of countless births, the service of Hari came into one's hands. People call such a lover of God a madman, saying he has drowned his worldly prospects.

Yet he has liberated twenty-one generations of his family. This depth is beyond the understanding of the unfortunate.

Says Tuka, if one obtains the dust of his feet, the fear of worldly existence flees at the mere act of bowing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Through the merit gathered over countless births, the service of Hari came into his hands. People call such a lover of God mad and say he has drowned his worldly future right before their eyes. Yet he has lifted up twenty-one generations of his family. The unlucky cannot see this depth. Tuka says: if you get the dust of his feet, the fear of this world flees the moment you bow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the world's verdict on the devotee. To outsiders the man who gives himself to Hari looks insane, throwing away his livelihood and prospects. But Tukaram reverses the account: that service was earned across countless lifetimes of merit, and far from ruining himself, the devotee redeems twenty-one generations of his line. Those who call him mad are simply too unfortunate to see how deep this goes. The closing turn makes the devotee himself a means of grace: merely bowing to take the dust of his feet drives off the fear of worldly existence.

GATHA 4325

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, death sits close by

मराठी मूळ

उपजला प्राणी न राहे संसारीं । बैसला सेजारी काळ उसां ॥1॥
 पाहा तो उंदीर घेउन जाय बोका । तैसा काळ लोका नेत असे ॥ध्रु॥
 खाटिकाचे घरीं अजापुत्र पाहें । कसाबाची गाय वांचे कैसी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं करा काढाकाढी । जाती ऐसी घडी पुन्हा नये ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Every being that is born does not remain in this world forever. Death sits close by, watching for its moment.

See how a cat seizes a mouse and carries it away; just so, Death carries people off. Look at the goat's kid in the butcher's house.

How can the slaughterhouse cow survive? Says Tuka, do something quickly; such a moment, once gone, never returns.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Every being that is born does not stay in this world. Death sits at the bedside, its head on the same pillow. Look how the cat picks up the mouse and carries it off; just so death is carrying people away. Look at the goat's kid in the butcher's house. How will the slaughterhouse cow survive? Tuka says: do something quickly, set it right. The moment that goes like this does not come again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram drives home that no one born stays, and death is not far off but lying right beside us, sharing the pillow. He piles up images of the doomed: the mouse already in the cat's mouth, the kid and the cow in the butcher's yard, all of them living out their last moments without escape. We are no different, carried off the same way. So the urgency is practical: do something now, while you still can, because this present moment, once spent, will never return to be used for your liberation.

GATHA 4326

Devotion to Vitthal

Pilgrimage, the road to Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

पंढरीस जाऊं ह्मणती । यम थोर चिंता करि ती ॥1॥
 या रे नाचों ब्रह्मानंदें । विठ्ठलनामाचिया छंदें ॥२॥
 धरिली पंढरीची वाट । पापें रिगालीं कपाट ॥3॥
 केलें भीमरेचें स्नान । यमपुरी पडिले खान ॥4॥
 दुरोनि देखिली पंढरी । पापें गेलीं दुस्च्यादुरी ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं जाणें । अखंड पंढरिराहणें ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who say they will go to Pandhari cause great worry to Yama. Come, let us dance in the bliss of Brahman, in the joyful chanting of Vitthal's Name.

The moment one sets foot on the road to Pandhari, sins retreat behind closed doors. Bathing in the Bhimra river, the realm of Yama crumbles.

Seeing Pandhari from afar, sins flee far, far away. Seeing the temple from a distance, the cowherds dance with delight.

Says Tuka, there is no need to leave; one should dwell in Pandhari forever.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When people say they will go to Pandhari, Yama himself worries greatly. Come, let us dance in the bliss of Brahman, in the joy of Vitthal's Name. The moment one takes the road to Pandhari, sins shut themselves behind doors. Bathe in the Bhimra, and the city of Yama crumbles. See Pandhari from far off, and sins flee far, far away. See the temple from a distance, and the cowherds dance with delight. Tuka says: there is no need to go away. Stay in Pandhari forever.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes the pilgrimage to Pandhari a rout of death itself. Yama, the lord of death, grows anxious the moment a soul sets out, because each step on that road slams the door on sin and each act of worship dismantles his kingdom. The call is to dance now in the Name of Vitthal rather than wait. He builds the relief in stages: setting out, bathing in the Bhima, the first far sight of the town and the temple, with sins fleeing further at each step. The closing line turns the journey inward: the true goal is not to arrive and leave but to dwell in Pandhari without ever departing.

GATHA 4327

The Nature of God

Nonduality, the one and the many

मराठी मूळ

पय दधि घृत आणि नवनीत । तैसें दृश्यजात एकपणें ॥१॥
 कनकाचे पाहीं अलंकार केले । कनकत्वा आले एकपणें ॥२॥
 मृत्तकेचे घट जाले नानापरी । मृत्तका अवधारीं एकपणें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे एक एक ते अनेक । अनेकत्वीं एक एकपणा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Milk, curd, ghee, and butter are all one in essence, just as all visible things share a single nature. Ornaments made of gold, when examined, are all gold in their oneness.

Pots made of clay come in many forms, yet it is all clay in its oneness. Says Tuka, the One appears as the many, and within the many there is only the One.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Milk, curd, ghee, and butter: just so the whole visible world is one. Look at the ornaments made of gold; in being gold they are one. Pots of clay are made in many shapes; know that as clay they are one. Tuka says: the one is these many, and within the many there is the oneness of the one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram teaches nonduality through plain household substances. Milk that becomes curd, ghee, and butter is one thing throughout; gold worked into many ornaments is still only gold; clay shaped into countless pots is still only clay. By this he says the whole visible world, in all its variety, has a single nature underneath. The forms are real enough as forms, but they add nothing to the substance and take nothing from it. The conclusion holds both sides together: the one appears as the many, and the many never stops being the one.

GATHA 4328

Autobiography

Realization, the body burned away

मराठी मूळ

पंधरा दिवसांमाजी साक्षात्कार जाला । विठोबा भेटला निराकार ॥१॥
 भांबगिरिपाठारीं विस्त जाण केली । वृत्त थिरावली परब्रह्मीं ॥२॥
 निर्वाण जाणोनि आसन घातलें । ध्यान आरंभिलें देवाजीचें ॥३॥
 सर्प विंचू व्याघ्र आंगासी झोंबले । पीडूं जे लागले सकळीक ॥४॥
 दीपकीं कर्पूर कैसा तो विराला । तैसा देह जाला तुका ह्मणे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Within fifteen days, direct realization came to pass. The formless Vitthoba was met.

On the plateau of Bhambanath, the inner quest was undertaken, and the mind became steady in the supreme Brahman. Knowing the final truth, the seat of meditation was established, and contemplation on the Lord began.

Serpents, scorpions, and tigers clung to the body, tormenting it in every way. As camphor dissolves entirely in flame, so did the body dissolve.

Says Tuka, just so was this body consumed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Within fifteen days the vision came. I met the formless Vithoba. On the plateau of Bhambanath I made my search, and my awareness grew steady in the supreme Brahman. Knowing the final end, I set my seat and began meditation on the Lord. Snakes, scorpions, and tigers seized my body and set about tormenting it in every way. As camphor melts away in a flame, so did this body become. Tuka says: just so was this body consumed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reports an intense passage of his own practice. Going to the Bhambanath hill, he sat for meditation as one ready for the end, and within a short span the formless Vitthal was directly seen, his attention fixed steady in Brahman. He does not hide the ordeal: snakes, scorpions, and tigers came at the body and tormented it. The closing image carries the meaning, for camphor set alight leaves nothing behind. So the body, and the self bound up with it, was burned away entirely in the fire of that realization, consumed without remainder.

GATHA 4329

*The Necessity of Experience**Realization, the mind at rest in the Self*

मराठी मूळ

अज्ञान हा देह स्वरूपीं मीनला । सर्व बोसावला देहपात ॥१॥
 ज्ञानस्वरूपाची सांगड मिळाली । अंतरीं पाहिली ज्ञानज्योती ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे चित्त स्वरूपीं राहिलें । देह विसावलें तुझ्या पायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The ignorant body has merged into the true Self. All bodily consciousness has come to rest.**The support of the nature of pure knowledge has been found, and the inner light of wisdom has been seen. Says Tuka, the mind has settled in its true nature; the body has found rest at Your feet.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

This ignorant body has merged into the true Self. All falling away of the body is over. The bond with the nature of knowledge has been found. Within, I have seen the light of knowledge. Tuka says: the mind has stayed in its own true nature. The body has come to rest at Your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the settling that follows realization. The body, which he calls ignorant because it is the seat of not-knowing, has dissolved into the true Self, and with it ends all the anxiety of bodily decline. He has found his union with knowledge itself and seen the inner light of wisdom directly. The result is quiet rather than dramatic: the restless mind simply stays put in its own real nature and stops wandering. He gives the rest a direction, laying the body down at God's feet, so that knowledge and devotion close as one.

GATHA 4330

Sacred Stories

Legend, God settles the account

मराठी मूळ

दामाजीपंताची रसद गुदरली । लज्जा सांभाळली देवरायें ॥1॥
 तयाचें चरित्र परिसा हो सादरें । करितों नमस्कार संतजना ॥धु.॥
 मंगळवेढा असे विस्त कुटुंबेंसी । व्यापारी सर्वासी मान्य सदा ॥2॥
 कर्म काय करी ठाणाचा हवाला । तों कांहीं पडला कठिण काळ ॥3॥
 धान्याचीं भांडारें होतीं तीं फोडिलीं । पंढरी रिक्षली दुष्काळांत ॥4॥
 दुबळें अनाथ तें हि वांचविलें । राष्ट्रधांत ते जाली कीर्त मोठी ॥5॥
 मुजुम करीत होता कानडा ब्राह्मण । फिर्याद लिहून पाठविली ॥6॥
 अविंदाचें राज्य बेदरीं असतां । कागद पाहतां तलब केली ॥7॥
 दामाजीपंतासी धरोनि चालविलें । इकडे या विठ्ठलें माव केली ॥8॥
 विकते धारणे सवाईचें मोल । धान्याचें सकळ द्रव्य केलें ॥9॥
 दामाजीपंताच्या नांवें अर्जदास्त । लिहून खलेती मुद्रा केली ॥10॥
 विठो पाडेवार भक्तां साहए जाला । वेदरासी गेला रायापासीं ॥11॥
 जोहार मायबाप पुसती कोठील । तंव तो ह्मणे स्थळ मंगळवेढें ॥12॥
 दामाजीपंतांनीं रसद पाठविली । खलेती ओतिली अर्जदास्त ॥13॥
 देखोनियां राजा संतोष पावला । ह्मणे व्यर्थ त्याला तलब केली ॥14॥
 काय तुझे नांव पुसती यंत्रधारी । तो ह्मणे बेगारी विठा कां जी ॥15॥
 पावल्याचा जाब द्यावा मायबाप । करोनि घेतों माप ह्मणती ते ॥16॥
 पावल्याचा जाब दिधला लिहून । तसरीफ देऊन पाठविला ॥17॥
 छत्री घोडा शिबिका आभरणांसहित । दिला सवें दूत पाठवूनि ॥18॥
 वाटे चुकामुक जाली याची त्यांची । ते आले तैसे चि मंगळवेढा ॥19॥
 दामाजीपंतासी बेदरासी नेलें । राजा ह्मणे जालें कवतुक ॥20॥
 काल गेला विठा बेगारी देऊन । तसरीफ देऊन जाब दिला ॥21॥
 काय तुमचें काज बोला जी सत्वर । बोलाजी निर्धार वचनाचा ॥22॥
 केंचा विठा कोण पाठविला कधीं । काढोनियां आधीं जाब दिला ॥23॥
 पहातां चि जाब हृदय फुटलें । नयन निडारले राजा देखे ॥24॥
 सावळें सकुमार रूप मनोहर । माथां तेणें भार वाहियेला ॥25॥
 दामाजीपंतासी रायें सन्मानिलें । तो ह्मणे आपुलें कर्म नव्हे ॥26॥
 आतां तुमची सेवा पुरे जी स्वामिया । शिणविलें सखया विठोबासी ॥27॥
 निरोप घेऊनि आला स्वस्थळासी । उदास सर्वासीं होता जाला ॥28॥
 दामाजीपंतांनीं सेविली पंढरी । ऐसा त्याचा हरि निकटवृत्त ॥29॥
 तुका ह्मणे विठो अनाथ कैवारी । नुपेक्षी हा हरि दासालागीं ॥30॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Damajipant's revenue account was settled, and the Lord Himself preserved his honor. Listen with attention to his story.

I bow to the holy ones. Damajipant lived at Mangalvedha with a large family, a merchant respected by all.

His duty was to manage the revenue of the district, but hard times befell him. He broke open the grain stores and fed the people of Pandhari during the famine.

He saved the poor and the destitute, and great fame spread throughout the land. The Kannada brahmin who was auditing the accounts wrote a complaint and sent it to the court.

The kingdom of the Bahmani sultan was at Bidar. Upon reading the letter, a summons was issued.

Damajipant was seized and taken away. Meanwhile, Vitthal assumed a disguise.

He sold grain at the market rate plus a surcharge and converted it all into cash. He wrote a receipt in Damajipant's name with a sealed document.

Vittho became the guarantor and went to Bidar before the king. 'Greetings, my lord,' they ask, 'where are you from?' He replies, 'From Mangalvedha.' 'Damajipant has sent the revenue, with receipts and documents.' Seeing this, the king was pleased and said, 'We summoned him for nothing.' 'What is your name?' asks the officer.

He replies, 'Vitha the laborer, sir.' They ask him to certify the receipt with measurement. He gave a written acknowledgment, and the king honored him with a robe, a parasol, a horse, a palanquin, and ornaments, sending an escort with him.

On the road, they missed each other. The escorts arrived at Mangalvedha as they were.

Damajipant was taken to Bidar, and the king said, 'A marvel has occurred. Yesterday a man named Vitha the laborer came and settled the accounts.' 'State your business quickly; speak your conviction plainly.' 'What Vitha? Who sent him? The accounts were already settled before I arrived.' When he examined the receipt, his heart burst with emotion; his eyes filled with tears.

The king saw a dark, tender, beautiful form. That One had carried the burden on His own head.

The king honored Damajipant, who said, 'This is not my doing.' 'Enough of your service now, my lord. You have exhausted my dear Vitthoba.' Taking leave, he returned home and became detached from all worldly things.

Damajipant devoted himself to Pandhari. Such is the closeness of his Hari.

Says Tuka, Vittho is the champion of the helpless; Hari never forsakes His devotee.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Damajipant's revenue account came due, and the Lord himself kept his honor. Listen with care to his story. I bow to the holy ones. Damajipant lived in Mangalvedha with a large family, a merchant whom all respected. His duty was to manage the district's grain. Then a hard time fell. He broke open the grain stores and fed the people of Pandhari through the famine. He saved the poor and the helpless, and his fame spread through the land. The Kannada brahmin auditing the accounts wrote a complaint and sent it on. The sultan's kingdom was at Bidar. When the king read the letter, a summons was issued. Damajipant was seized and led away. Meanwhile Vitthal put on a disguise. He sold grain at the market rate with a surcharge and turned it all into cash. He wrote a receipt in Damajipant's name and sealed the document. Vittho became the guarantor and went to Bidar before the king. They greet him and ask where he is from. He says, from Mangalvedha. Damajipant has sent the revenue, with receipts and papers. The king was pleased and said, I summoned him for nothing. The officer asks his name. He says, Vitha the laborer, sir. They ask him to certify the receipt with the measure. He gave a written acknowledgment, and was sent off honored with a robe, a parasol, a horse, a palanquin, and ornaments, with an escort. On the road they missed each other; the escort arrived at Mangalvedha. Damajipant was brought to Bidar. The king said, a marvel has happened. Yesterday Vitha the laborer came and settled the accounts. State your business quickly; speak plainly. What Vitha? Who sent him, and when? The accounts were settled before I arrived. When he looked at the receipt, his heart broke open; his eyes filled. The king saw a dark, tender, lovely form: that One had carried the burden on his own head. The king honored Damajipant, who said, this is not my doing. Enough of your service now, my lord; I have worn out my dear Vithoba. He took his leave, came home, and grew detached from everything. Damajipant gave himself to Pandhari. So near is his Hari. Tuka says: Vittho is the champion of the helpless; this Hari never forsakes his servant.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a telling of the Damajipant legend, and Tukaram lets the story carry the claim. A revenue officer opens the state granaries to feed famished people and is summoned to answer for the loss. While he is dragged toward the king's court, Vitthal himself takes the form of a low laborer, sells the grain, pays the account in full, and gets it sealed and acknowledged before the officer ever arrives. The point lands when Damajipant sees the receipt and recognizes who paid: the dark, tender form that bore the burden on his own head. The frame the poem leaves unspoken is that God does not stay above the ledger; he steps in disguised as a servant to cover the debt of one who served his people, then disappears. Tuka closes by naming the law he draws from it: Hari is the protector of the helpless and never abandons the one who is his.

GATHA 4331

Devotion to Vitthal

Grinding-songs, God everywhere

मराठी मूळ

पहिली माझी ओवी ओवीन जगत्र । गाईन पवित्र पांडुरंग ॥1॥
 दुसरी माझी ओवी दुजें नाहीं कोठें । जनीं वनीं भेटे पांडुरंग ॥२॥
 तिसरी माझी ओवी तिळा नाहीं ठाव । अवघा चि देव जनीं वनीं ॥2॥
 चवथी माझी ओवी वैरिलें दळण । गाईन निधान पांडुरंग ॥3॥
 पांचवी माझी ओवी ते माझिया माहेरा । गाईन निरंतरा पांडुरंगा ॥4॥
 साहावी माझी ओवी साहा ही आटले । गुरुमूर्त भेटले पांडुरंग ॥5॥
 सातवी माझी ओवी आठवे वेळोवेळां । बैसलासे डोळां पांडुरंग ॥6॥
 आठवी माझी ओवी आठावीस योग । उभा चंद्रभागे पांडुरंग ॥7॥
 नववी माझी ओवी सरलें दळण । चुकलें मरण संसारीचें ॥8॥
 दाहावी माझी ओवी दाहा अवतारा । न यावें संसारा तुका ह्मणे ॥9॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My first ovi I shall weave for the whole world: I shall sing of the holy Panduranga. My second ovi says there is no second anywhere; in village and forest, Panduranga is met.

My third ovi says there is not a sesame seed's space without Him; God is everywhere, in field and forest. My fourth ovi: the grinding has been assigned, and I shall sing of the treasure, Panduranga.

My fifth ovi is for my mother's home: I shall sing ceaselessly of Panduranga. My sixth ovi: the six philosophies have been exhausted, and I have met the Guru incarnate, Panduranga.

My seventh ovi I remember again and again: Panduranga is seated before my eyes. My eighth ovi unites the twenty-eight yogas: Panduranga stands on the bank of the Chandrabhaga.

My ninth ovi: the grinding is done and the death of worldly life is ended. Says Tuka, my tenth ovi: O Ten Incarnations, may there be no more returning to this world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My first ovi I weave for the whole world: I will sing of the holy Panduranga. My second ovi: there is no second anywhere; in village and forest, Panduranga is met. My third ovi: there is not a sesame seed's space without him; it is all God, in field and forest. My fourth ovi: the grinding has been set before me, and I will sing of the treasure, Panduranga. My fifth ovi is for my mother's home; I will sing of Panduranga without ceasing. My sixth ovi: the six schools are spent, and I have met the Guru in person, Panduranga. My seventh ovi I remember again and again: Panduranga is seated before my eyes. My eighth ovi joins the twenty-eight yogas: Panduranga stands on the bank of the Chandrabhaga. My ninth ovi: the grinding is done, and the death of worldly life is ended. Tuka says: my tenth ovi, O Ten Incarnations, let me not come back to this world again.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a grinding-song, an ovi sung at the millstone, and Tukaram counts the verses one to ten while turning each number into a confession of where God is. He moves from singing for the whole world, to there being no second anywhere, to not a seed's width of space without God, until the very labor and the household become places God fills. The frame the plain layer holds back is that the count is also a ladder: the six philosophies wear out, the Guru is met in person, the twenty-eight yogas converge, and the milling of ordinary life turns out to be the end of rebirth. By the tenth verse the song is no longer about grinding grain but about the grinding of worldly existence coming to a stop. Tuka's last line names the stake plainly: let this be the last return to this world.

GATHA 4332

Devotion to Vitthal

Praise of Ganesha, remover of obstacles

मराठी मूळ

धरोनियां फरश करी । भक्तजनाचीं विघ्नें वारी ॥1॥
 ऐसा गजानन महाराजा । त्याचें चरणीं हालो लागो माझा ॥ ध्रु. ॥
 सेंदुर शमी बहुप्रिय ज्याला । तुरा दुर्वाचा शोभला ॥2॥
 उंदिर असे जयाचें वहन । माथां जडितमुगुट पूर्ण ॥3॥
 नागयज्ञोपवीत रुळे । शुभ्र वस्त्र शोभित साजिरें ॥4॥
 भावमोदक हराभरी । तुका भावें हे पूजा करी ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wielding the axe in hand, He removes the obstacles of His devotees. Such is the great Lord Gajanan.

May my allegiance rest forever at His feet. He is fond of vermilion and shami leaves; a tuft of durva grass adorns Him.

A mouse is His mount, and a jeweled crown graces His head. The sacred thread of a serpent hangs across His chest, and bright garments shine beautifully upon Him.

Says Tuka, I worship Him with modakas of pure devotion, offered in abundance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He holds the axe in his hand and clears away the obstacles of his devotees. Such is the great Lord Gajanan. Let my allegiance rest at his feet. He loves vermilion and shami leaves; a tuft of durva grass adorns him. A mouse is his mount; a jeweled crown is full upon his head. The serpent's sacred thread hangs across him; bright, lovely garments shine on him. Tuka says: I offer him modakas of pure feeling, in plenty, and worship him with love.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram praises Gajanan, the elephant-faced Ganesha, the one called on to remove obstacles before any undertaking. He names the god by his familiar marks: the axe that clears the way, the vermilion and shami and durva offerings, the mouse he rides, the jeweled crown, the serpent worn as a sacred thread. The frame the plain layer withholds is that this is itself an act of worship, an invocation at a beginning. The closing turn is the heart of it: the true offering is not the ritual modaka but the modaka of feeling, devotion shaped into the sweet placed before God. Tuka asks only that his allegiance stay fixed at those feet.

GATHA 4333

The Power of the Name

The Name, who has been saved by it

मराठी मूळ

नाम आहे जयापाशीं । जेथें राहे तेथें चि काशी॥१॥
 ऐसा नामाचा महिमा । जाणे वाल्मीक शंकर उमा ॥२॥
 नाम प्रह्लादबाळ । जाणे पापी आजामेळ ॥३॥
 नाम जाणे तो नारद । नामें ध्रुवा अक्षय पद ॥४॥
 नाम गणिकेतें तारी । पशु गजेंद्र उद्धारी॥५॥
 नाम जाणे हणुमंत । जाणताति महासंत ॥६॥
 नाम जाणे शुकमूतिन । जाणे राजा परिक्षिती ॥७॥
 नाम जाणे तुका । नाहीं संसाराचा धोका ॥८॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wherever the Name resides, that place itself becomes Kashi. Such is the greatness of the Name; Valmiki, Shankara, and Uma know it well.

The child Prahlad knew the Name; so did the wrongdoer Ajamila. Narada knew the Name; through the Name, Dhruva attained an imperishable seat.

The Name delivered the courtesan and delivered the elephant Gajendra. Hanuman knew the Name; the great saints know it.

The sage Shuka knew it; so did King Parikshit. Says Tuka, I too know the Name; there is no fear of worldly existence.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wherever the Name lives, that place itself becomes Kashi. Such is the greatness of the Name; Valmiki, Shankara, and Uma know it. The child Prahlad knew the Name; so did the sinner Ajamila. Narada knew the Name; through the Name Dhruva won an undying seat. The Name saved the courtesan; it lifted up the elephant Gajendra. Hanuman knows the Name; the great saints know it. The sage Shuka knew it; so did King Parikshit. Tuka says: I too know the Name; there is no fear of worldly life for me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes his case for the Name by calling a long roll of witnesses. He says the Name carries Kashi within it: wherever it is spoken, that spot becomes the holy city, so a pilgrimage is not needed where the Name is. Then he lists who has been carried by it, deliberately mixing the great and the fallen: sages like Valmiki, Narada, and Shuka stand beside a wrongdoer like Ajamila and a courtesan, even an animal like Gajendra. The unspoken frame is that the Name does not check your record before it saves you; it reached a child, a king, a sinner, and a beast alike. Tuka places himself last in the line and draws the only conclusion he needs: he too holds the Name, so worldly existence holds no fear for him.

GATHA 4334

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the rare human birth

मराठी मूळ

बहुतां जन्मां अंतीं जन्मलासी नरा । देव तूं सोडरा करीं आतां ॥१॥
 करीं आतां बापा स्वहिताचा स्वार्थ । अनर्थाचा अर्थ सांडीं आतां ॥२॥
 सांडि आतां कुडी कल्पनेची वाट । मार्ग आहे नीट पंढरीचा ॥३॥
 पंढरीस जावें सर्व सुख घ्यावें । रूप तें पाहावें विटेवरि ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

After countless births, you have at last been born as a human. Now make God your true companion.

Now, dear one, pursue the goal of your own welfare; abandon the pursuit of what leads to ruin. Give up the crooked path of false imagination.

The road to Pandhari is straight and clear. Go to Pandhari and receive all happiness.

Behold that form standing on the brick, the root of all bliss. Says Tuka, I dance in the joy of the Name's resounding chant.

IN PLAIN WORDS

After many births, at last you are born a human, man. Now make God your kin. Now, dear one, work for your own true good; let go of the pursuit that ends in ruin. Give up the crooked road of false imagining. The road to Pandhari is straight. Go to Pandhari and take all happiness. Look at that form standing on the brick, the root of all joy. Tuka says: I dance to the rhythm, in the loud chant of the Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks straight to the listener about how rare this moment is. A human birth has come only after countless lives, and he treats it as a narrow opening that must not be wasted on what leads to ruin. The frame he names is the choice between two roads: the crooked path of false imagining, and the straight road to Pandhari. He tells the person to drop the first and take the second, because the form standing on the brick at Pandhari is the root of all happiness and is there to be received. The poem ends not in argument but in example, with Tuka himself dancing in the loud chant of the Name, showing what taking that road looks like.

GATHA 4335

Appeals and Exhortations

Warning, the company you keep

मराठी मूळ

किती सांगों तरि नाइकति बटकीचे । पुढें सिंदळीचे रडतील ॥१॥
 नका नका करुं रांडेची संगती । नेवोनी अधोपाती घालिल यम ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे जरी देवीं नाहीं चाड । हाणोनि थोबाड फोडिल यम ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No matter how much I tell them, the stubborn ones will not listen. In the end they will weep over their own ruin.

Do not, do not keep the company of wickedness; Yama will drag you down to the lowest depths. Says Tuka, if there is no longing for God, Yama will smash your face and cast you down.

IN PLAIN WORDS

However much I tell them, the stubborn ones will not listen. Later the loose ones will weep. Do not, do not keep wicked company; Yama will carry you down and throw you into the lowest place. Tuka says: if there is no longing for God in you, Yama will strike your mouth and break it.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a blunt warning, and Tukaram does not soften it. He has spoken again and again, and the people set in their ways still will not hear, so he says plainly where their course ends: in grief, and in Yama, the lord of death, dragging them down to the lowest place. The harshness is aimed at the pattern, not at scorn for the person: it is the refusal to listen and the clinging to corrupt company that he is striking at. The hinge of the whole poem is its last line, that the real danger is having no longing for God at all. The threat is meant to wake that longing before it is too late, not to consign anyone to contempt.

GATHA 4336

Worldly Metaphors

Satire, the show outshines the wedding

मराठी मूळ

उधानु काटीवरि चोपडुची आस । नवरा राजस मिरवतसे ॥१॥
 जिह्वाळ्याचा काठी उबाळ्याच्या मोटा । नवरा चोहटा मिरवतसे ॥२॥
 तुळसीची माळ नवरीचे कंठी । नोवरा वैकुंठी वाट पाहे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसी नोवऱ्याची कथा । परमार्थ वृथा बुडविला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The groom rides on a mare, hoping for sweets, parading himself as a handsome bridegroom. Bundles of firewood and rolls of bedding: the bridegroom parades through the crossroads.

A tulsi garland hangs at the bride's neck, while the groom waits at the gates of Vaikuntha. Says Tuka, this is the story of the groom whose spiritual life was drowned in worldly show.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The groom rides up hoping for sweets, parading himself as a fine bridegroom. With sticks for the tongue and bundles for show, the groom struts through the crossroads. A tulsi garland hangs at the bride's neck, while the groom stands waiting at the gate of Vaikuntha. Tuka says: this is the tale of the groom whose spiritual life was drowned in show.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells a small wedding scene as a parable and lets the irony do the work. A groom parades through the crossroads making a great display, hungry for sweets and praise, all surface and noise. The contrast the poem sets up is the quiet bride wearing the tulsi garland of devotion while the showy groom is left waiting at the gate of liberation, never entering. The frame left unspoken is that the groom stands for a life that turns religion into spectacle: busy with appearances, it loses the thing it was for. Tuka names the loss plainly at the end, that the man's whole spiritual life was drowned in show. The warning is pointed at the impulse to perform devotion rather than live it.

GATHA 4337

The Nature of God

God's greatness, the child and the Mother

मराठी मूळ

न कळे महिमा वेद मोनावले । जेथें पांगुळले मनपवन ॥१॥
चंद्र सूर्य ज्याचें तेज वागविती । तेथें माझी मती कोणीकडे ॥२॥
काय म्यां वाणावें तुझ्या थोरपणा । सहस्रवदना वर्णवेना ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे आह्मी बाळ तूं माउली । कृपेची साउली करीं देवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

His greatness cannot be known; the Vedas have fallen silent before it. The mind and breath falter and grow lame.

The sun and moon carry His radiance; where then does my small intellect stand? How can I describe Your greatness when even the thousand-headed Shesha cannot express it? Says Tuka, I am a child and You are my Mother. Spread the shade of Your grace over me, O God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

His greatness cannot be known; the Vedas fall silent before it, where mind and breath go lame. The sun and moon only carry his light; what is my small wit beside that? How can I describe your greatness, when even thousand-mouthed Shesha cannot tell it? Tuka says: we are children and you are the Mother. Spread the shade of your grace over me, O God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram admits at the start that praise has a limit. He stacks up the greatest witnesses he knows, the Vedas, the mind and breath, the sun and moon, the thousand-mouthed serpent Shesha, and shows that all of them fall silent or come up short before God's greatness. The frame is the gap between an immeasurable God and a small human intellect that cannot hope to describe him. Rather than despair at that gap, the poem turns it into intimacy: if I cannot reach you with words, let me come as a child to a mother. The closing prayer changes the whole key, asking not for understanding but simply for the shade of grace, which a child receives without needing to comprehend it.

GATHA 4338

The Saints

The saints, grace through the dust of their feet

मराठी मूळ

संतचरणरज लागतां सहज । वासनेचें बीज जळोन जाय ॥१॥
 मग रामनामीं उपजे आवडी । सुख घडोघडी वाढीं लागे ॥२॥
 कंठीं प्रेम दाटे नयनीं नीर लोटे । हृदयीं प्रगटे रामरूप ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे साधन सुलभ गोमटें । परि उपतिष्ठे पूर्वपुण्यें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the dust of the saints' feet touches one spontaneously, the very seed of desire is burned away. Then love for Rama's Name arises, and happiness grows moment by moment.

Emotion chokes the throat, tears stream from the eyes, and the form of Rama appears in the heart. Says Tuka, this path is simple and beautiful, but it comes only through the merit of past lives.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the dust of the saints' feet touches you of its own accord, the very seed of desire burns away. Then love for Rama's Name is born, and happiness grows moment by moment. Love swells in the throat, tears stream from the eyes, the form of Rama appears in the heart. Tuka says: this path is easy and lovely, yet it comes only by the merit of past lives.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the chain of grace that begins with the saints. He says the touch of the dust of their feet, when it comes on its own, burns the very seed of craving, so the change does not start with effort but with contact. From that follows a sequence the plain layer simply reports: love for Rama's Name arises, joy grows, the throat chokes with feeling, tears come, and Rama's form shows itself in the heart. The frame he adds at the end holds two truths together without softening either: the path is easy and beautiful, and yet it is not had on demand. He says it ripens only through the merit of past lives, which is his way of marking such an encounter as grace, not as something one can simply seize.

GATHA 4339

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, hold me as your only one

मराठी मूळ

विधवेसि एक सुत । अहनिनशीं तेथें चित्त ॥१॥
 तैसा तूं मज एकला । नको मोकलूं विठ्ठला ॥२॥
 सुपुत्रालागीं बाप । अवघे तेथें चि संकल्प ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे चितीं । पतिव्रते जैसा पति ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A widow has but one son, and day and night her chitta is fixed on him. Just so, You are my only one; do not abandon me, O Vitthal.

As a father devotes all his hopes to a worthy son, so is my devotion to You. Says Tuka, as a faithful wife holds her husband in her chitta, so do I hold You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A widow has one son, and day and night her chitta is fixed on him. So are you to me, my only one: do not let me go, O Vitthal. As a father puts all his hopes in a worthy son, so my whole intent rests there. Tuka says: as a faithful wife holds her husband in her chitta, so I hold you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays by piling up images of single-hearted attachment. He compares his hold on Vitthal to a widow with one son, a father pledged to a worthy child, and a faithful wife fixed on her husband, three bonds in which the whole heart is given to one and there is no second to fall back on. The frame the plain layer leaves unspoken is that each image is also a claim of dependence: the widow has no one else, so the loss would be total. That is why the refrain turns into a plea not to be let go. Tuka is asking God to honor the same exclusiveness he himself feels, to be to him what these undivided loves are to their object.

GATHA 4340

Devotion to Vitthal

Indignation, defending God's devotees

मराठी मूळ

ह्मणे विठ्ठल पाषाण । त्याच्या तोंडावरि वाहाण ॥१॥
 नको नको दर्शन त्याचें । गलितकुष्ट भरो वाचे ॥२॥
 शिळग्रामासि ह्मणे धोंडा । कोड पडो त्याच्या तोंडा ॥३॥
 भावी सद्गु मनुष्य । त्याचें खंडो का आयुष्य ॥४॥
 हरिभक्ताच्या करी चेष्टा । त्याचे तोंडीं पडो विष्टा ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे किती ऐकों । कोठवरी मर्यादा राखों ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He who calls Vitthal a mere stone deserves a shoe across his face. May I never see the face of such a person; may his mouth rot with leprosy.

He who calls the Shaligrama a rock, may sores cover his mouth. He who considers the true Guru a mere mortal, may his life be cut short.

He who mocks the devotees of Hari, may filth fall upon his tongue. Says Tuka, how much more can I hear? How long can I endure such insults to the Lord?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whoever calls Vitthal a mere stone, a shoe belongs across his face. I do not want the sight of such a one; let his mouth fill with rotting sores. Whoever calls the Shaligram a rock, let sores break out on his mouth.

Whoever takes the true Guru for an ordinary man, let his life be cut short. Whoever mocks the devotees of Hari, let filth fall on his tongue. Tuka says: how much am I to hear? How long am I to keep my patience?

WHAT IT MEANS

This is one of Tukaram's fiercest poems, and it is the cry of a man whose limit has been reached by those who jeer at God, the sacred image, the Guru, and the devotees. The curses are violent on the surface, but the target is a pattern of speech: the habit of reducing the holy to dead stone and mocking those who love it. The honest way to read it is to feel the heat as the measure of his devotion rather than as a sentence on any soul; the final lines, asking how much he can bear and how long he can hold his patience, show a man at the edge, not a man dispensing judgments calmly. It is a warning against the contempt in oneself, the easy sneer that empties the sacred of meaning, more than a wish of harm on a neighbor. The stakes Tuka names are how much insult to the Lord a lover of God can stand to hear.

GATHA 4341

The Power of the Name

The Name, even gods envy human birth

मराठी मूळ

स्वगाअचे अमर इच्छताति देवा । मृत्युलोकीं व्हावा जन्म आह्वां ॥1॥

नारायणनामं होऊं जिवनमुक्त । किर्तनीं अनंत गाऊं गीती ॥ध्रु॥

वैकुंठीचे जन सदा चिंतिताति । कडं येथं येती हरिचे दास ॥2॥

यमधर्म वाट पाहे निरंतर । जोडोनियां कर तिष्ठतसे ॥3॥

तुका ह्मणे पावावया पैल पार । नामंत्र सार भाविकासि॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The immortals of heaven desire, O God, to take birth in the mortal world. Through Narayana's Name we shall become liberated while alive, singing the songs of the Infinite in kirtan.

The beings of Vaikuntha constantly wonder when the servants of Hari will come among them. Yama himself waits ceaselessly, standing with folded hands.

Says Tuka, for crossing to the far shore, the mantra of the Name is the essence for the faithful.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The immortals of heaven long, O God, to be born in the mortal world. Through Narayana's Name we become liberated while still alive, and sing the songs of the Infinite in kirtan. The people of Vaikuntha keep wondering when the servants of Hari will come among them. Yama himself waits without end, standing with folded hands. Tuka says: to reach the far shore, the mantra of the Name is the essence for the faithful.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the usual ranking of worlds upside down. The immortals in heaven, who are supposed to be the lucky ones, actually long to be born here in the mortal world, because only here can one sing the Name and become liberated while still alive. The frame the plain layer holds back is why earth is the privileged place: the Name and kirtan are available to a living body, and through them one is freed now, not after death. He sharpens it with two images, the residents of Vaikuntha eagerly awaiting Hari's servants, and Yama, the lord of death, standing with folded hands before such a devotee instead of dragging him off. Tuka's closing line states the means simply: for the faithful, the mantra of the Name is the one essential thing that carries them across.

GATHA 4342

The Nature of God

Nondual vision, hold the feet

मराठी मूळ

व्यापक हा विश्वंभर । चराचर याचेनी ॥१॥
 पंढरिराव विटेवरि । त्याचींच धरीं पाउलें ॥२॥
 अवघियांचा हा चि ठाव । देवोदेवीं सकळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणें न करीं सोस । भेदें दोष उफराटे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Lord pervades all; He sustains all that moves and is still. The Lord of Pandhari stands upon the brick; hold fast to His feet alone.

He is the refuge of all, present in every god and goddess. Says Tuka, do not exhaust yourself in vain; making distinctions only leads to error.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Lord fills everything. He holds up all that moves and all that stays still. The Lord of Pandhari stands on the brick. Hold onto those feet alone. He is the one resting place of all. He is in every god and every goddess. Tuka says: do not wear yourself out. To see things as separate is the upside-down error.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram begins from the widest claim and brings it down to one point. The Lord is not somewhere far off: he pervades all that moves and is still, and lives inside every god and goddess people run to. So there is no need to scatter your effort across many objects of worship. The single resting place of everything is standing right there on the brick at Pandhari; hold those feet alone. To treat things as separate, as if devotion must be spread among rival deities, is the error turned upside down.

GATHA 4343

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the secret sweetness

मराठी मूळ

पसरोनि मुखें । कैसे धालों बा हारीखें ॥1॥
 ब्रह्मादिका दुर्लभ वांटा । आह्मां फावला राणटां ॥धु.॥
 गोड लागे काय तरि। कृपावंत जाला हरि ॥2॥
 उडती थेंबुटें । अमृताहुनि गोमटें ॥3॥
 गोडाहुनि गोड । जिह्वा नाचे वाटे कोड ॥4॥
 खुणावुनि तुका । दावी वर्म बोलों नका ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With mouths wide open, how happily we are satisfied. What is rare even for Brahma and the gods has been freely granted to us, the simple folk.

Why does it taste so sweet? Because Hari has become gracious. The drops that splash are sweeter than nectar itself.

Sweeter than sweet, the tongue dances with delight. Says Tuka, making a sign: know the secret, but do not speak of it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Our mouths are open wide. How happily we are filled. The share that is hard for Brahma and the gods to get has fallen freely to us, the simple ones. Why does it taste so sweet? Because Hari has turned gracious. Even the splashing drops are sweeter than nectar. Sweeter than sweet; the tongue dances with wonder. Tuka says, making a sign: know the secret, but do not speak it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing the taste of grace and guarding it at the same time. What the highest gods can barely earn has been handed freely to ordinary people, and the only reason is that Hari chose to be kind. The poem keeps reaching for the flavor and failing to hold it: sweeter than nectar, sweeter than sweet, until the tongue itself dances. The last line turns to a gesture instead of words. Some things in this taste can be pointed to but not explained; Tuka signals to keep the secret rather than cheapen it by talking.

GATHA 4344

Devotion to Vitthal

Belonging, Pandhari as home

मराठी मूळ

आमुचि मिरास पंढरी । आमुचें घर भीमातिरीं ॥१॥
 पांडुरंग आमुचा पिता । रकुमाबाई आमुचि माता ॥२॥
 भाव पुंडलीक मुनि । चंद्रभागा आमुची बहिणी ॥३॥
 तुका जुन्हाट मिराशी । ठाव दिला पायांपाशीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Pandhari is our ancestral estate. Our home is on the banks of the Bhima.

Panduranga is our father, and Rukmini is our mother. The sage Pundalik is our brother, and the Chandrabhaga is our sister.

Says Tuka, ours is an ancient inheritance; a place has been given at His feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Pandhari is the land we have inherited. Our house stands on the bank of the Bhima. Panduranga is our father. Rakhumai is our mother. The sage Pundalik is our brother. The Chandrabhaga is our sister. Tuka says: ours is an old inheritance. A place has been given at his feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram claims the holy town not as a place he visits but as the family estate he was born into. He names each member of that household: Panduranga as father, Rakhumai as mother, the saint Pundalik as brother, the river Chandrabhaga as sister. By doing this he turns devotion into kinship; belonging at Pandhari is not earned by merit but received like a birthright. The closing line names the gift plainly: an ancient inheritance, and within it a place granted at the Lord's feet.

GATHA 4345

Longing and Separation

Longing, the cry against God's silence

मराठी मूळ

गंगा गेली सिंधुपाशीं । जरी तो ठाव नेदी तिशी ॥१॥
 तिणें जावें कवण्या ठाया । मज सांगा पंढरिराया ॥२॥
 जळ क्षोभलें जलचरां । माता बाळा नेदी थारा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे आलों शरण । देवा त्वां कां धरिलें मौन्य ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If the Ganga goes to the ocean and the ocean refuses her a place, where shall she go? Tell me, O Lord of Pandhari. If the water turns hostile to the fish, if a mother denies shelter to her child, what then? Says Tuka, I have come seeking refuge. O God, why have You maintained this silence?

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Ganga goes down to the ocean. If the ocean will not give her a place, where is she to go? Tell me that, Lord of Pandhari. If the water turns against the fish that live in it, if a mother gives her child no shelter, then what? Tuka says: I have come to you for refuge. God, why have you kept silent?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses his complaint as a string of impossible refusals. The river belongs in the ocean, the fish belong in the water, the child belongs with its mother; if even these last refuges turned someone away, there would be nowhere left to go. He sets himself in that place: he has come to the only one who could shelter him, and the Lord has answered with silence. The poem is not doubt so much as a wounded demand, holding God to the bond a refuge owes whoever runs to it.

GATHA 4346

The Moral Ideal

Integrity, inner and outer as one

मराठी मूळ

बैसो आतां मनीं । आले तैसें चि वदनीं ॥१॥
 मग अवघें चि गोड । पुरे सकळ हि कोड ॥२॥
 बाहेरील भाव । तैसा अंतरीं हि वाव ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मणि । शोभा दाखवी कोंदणीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let what is within settle in the mind; let it come out through the lips just as it is. Then everything becomes sweet, and all longing is fulfilled.

Let the outer feeling be the same as the inner space. Says Tuka, a gem reveals its beauty when set in the right mounting.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let it settle in the mind now, and let it come to the lips exactly as it is. Then everything turns sweet, and every longing is satisfied. Let the feeling you show outside be the same as the space within. Tuka says: a gem shows its beauty when it is set in the right mounting.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is teaching that words are sweet only when they match the heart behind them. Let what truly rests in the mind be what comes out of the mouth, with nothing added or staged. When the inner and the outer agree, speech itself becomes sweet and the heart's longing is met. The closing image makes the standard concrete: a gem needs its proper setting to shine, and a feeling needs honest expression to show its real worth. The opposite, saying one thing while feeling another, is the flaw the poem warns against.

GATHA 4347

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, vigilant nearness

मराठी मूळ

वेठी ऐसा भाव । न करी अहाच उपाव ॥१॥
 रूप डसवी न जिवा । अवघा ये च ठायीं हेवा ॥२॥
 कृपणाचेपरि । लेखा पळनिमिषेवरि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आस । संनिध चि जगदीशा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not approach devotion as forced labor; do not practice it merely as a calculated remedy. Let the divine form be fixed in the soul.

Let all desire be concentrated at this one place. Like a miser who counts every passing moment, so should one watch over one's devotion.

Says Tuka, longing for the Lord of the world, keep Him ever near.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not take to devotion as forced labor. Do not work it like a clever bargain. Let the form take root in your soul, and let every desire gather at this one place. Like a miser who counts each passing moment, watch over it that closely. Tuka says: keep your longing for the Lord of the world right beside you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns against two cheap ways of approaching God: dragging through devotion as though it were a chore, and treating it as a calculated trade for some return. Instead the Lord's form should sink into the soul until every other desire is drawn to that single point. He borrows the miser as a model, not for greed but for attentiveness: a miser guards each moment of his hoard, and devotion deserves that same unbroken watch. The aim is nearness, keeping the longing for God close at every instant rather than setting it aside.

GATHA 4348

The Power of the Name

The Name, the one assurance

मराठी मूळ

सर्वसुखा अधिकारी । मुखें उच्चारी हरिनाम ॥१॥
 सर्वांगें तो सवौत्तम । मुखीं नाम हरीचें ॥२॥
 ऐशी उभारिली बाहे । वेदीं पाहें पुराणीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे येथें कांही । संदेह नाहीं भरवसा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He who utters Hari's Name with his mouth is entitled to all happiness. He who has Hari's Name on his lips is supreme among all.

The Vedas and Puranas raise their arms and declare this truth. Says Tuka, in this matter there is not the slightest doubt; you may be fully assured.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whoever says Hari's Name with his mouth has a claim to every joy. With Hari's Name on his lips, he is best of all, through and through. The Vedas and the Puranas raise their arms and tell it so. Tuka says: in this there is no doubt at all. You can rest sure of it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes the spoken Name the whole qualification for blessedness. The one who utters Hari's Name is entitled to all happiness and counts as supreme, no other credential required. He calls the Vedas and Puranas as witnesses, picturing them raising their arms to proclaim the same thing. The closing line removes any hedging: there is no doubt here, and the listener can rest fully assured. The teaching levels the field, since the Name is open to anyone who will speak it.

GATHA 4349

Krishna Leela

Krishna, the formless takes form

मराठी मूळ

जो का निर्गुण निराकार । तेथें धरियेले अवतार ॥१॥
 निर्गुण होता तो सगुणासि आला । भक्तिसाटीं प्रगटला ॥२॥
 जो का त्रिभुवनचाळक । तो हा नंदाचा बाळक ॥३॥
 सोडविलें वसुदेवदेवकीसि । अवतार धरिला तिचे कुशी ॥४॥
 मारियेला कंसराणा । राज्यीं स्थापिलें उग्रसेना ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवादिदेव । तो हा उभा पंढरिराव ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He who is formless and without qualities took on an incarnation. The One without attributes came into the world of form, manifesting for the sake of His devotees.

He who governs all three worlds became Nanda's little child. He freed Vasudeva and Devaki, taking birth from her womb.

He slew the tyrant Kamsa and established Ugrasena on the throne. Says Tuka, this God of gods stands here in Pandhari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who has no qualities and no form took on a body here. The one beyond attributes came into form. For his devotees he appeared. The one who governs all three worlds became the little child of Nanda. He set Vasudeva and Devaki free, taking birth from her womb. He killed the tyrant king Kamsa and set Ugrasena on the throne. Tuka says: this God of gods is the one who stands here in Pandhari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells the descent of the formless into form and then names where it ends. The one without qualities or shape, the ruler of all three worlds, became Nanda's small child for the sake of his devotees. The poem runs through the story: birth from Devaki's womb, the release of his imprisoned parents, the killing of the tyrant Kamsa, the restoring of Ugrasena to the throne. Then it lands the claim that matters for the worshipper: that same God of gods is the figure standing on the brick at Pandhari. The far-off absolute and the near, visible Lord are one.

GATHA 4350

The Power of the Name

The Name, the treasure that never runs out

मराठी मूळ

जुनाट हें धन अंत नाही पार । खात आले फार सरलें नाही ॥१॥
 नारद हा मुनि शुक सनकादिक । उरलें आमुप तुम्हां आम्हां ॥२॥
 येथूनियां धना खाती बहु जन । वाल गुंज उणें जालें नाही ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This is an ancient treasure without end or limit. So many have partaken of it, yet it has never been exhausted.

The sage Narada, Shuka, and the Sanakadiks have all drawn from it. What remains is enough for you and for us.

Says Tuka, though countless people feed from this treasure, not even a grain has diminished.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is an old treasure with no end and no edge. Many have fed on it for a long time, and it has not run out. The sage Narada, Shuka, the Sanaka brothers, all took from it, and there is still plenty left for you and for us. Many people feed from this treasure, yet not a grain of it has grown less.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures the Name, the wealth of God, as a treasure that cannot be spent. It is ancient and without limit; ages of people have drawn on it and it has never been depleted. He names great seekers, Narada, Shuka, the sons of Brahma, who all fed from it, and notes that the supply for ordinary people like us is undiminished. The point is reassurance: no matter how many partake, this riches loses nothing, so no one need fear arriving too late or finding the store empty.

GATHA 4351

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the proud man's rot

मराठी मूळ

कोडियाचें गोरेपण । तैसें अहंकारीज्ञान ॥१॥
 त्यासि अंतरीं रिझे कोण । जवळी जातां चिळसवाण ॥२॥
 प्रेतदेह गौरविलें । तैसें विटंबवाणें जालें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे खाणें विष्टा । तैशा देहबुद्धिचेष्टा ॥४॥
 पाया जाला नारु । तेथें बांधला कापूरु ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The fairness of a leper is only skin-deep; just so is the knowledge of the egotist. Who in their chitta is pleased with him? Coming close, one feels only revulsion.

Adorning a corpse does not lend it dignity; it only becomes more grotesque. Says Tuka, eating filth is what the body-bound intellect amounts to.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A leper's fair skin is only on the surface. The knowledge of a proud man is just like that. Who is pleased with him at heart? Go near him and you feel only disgust. Dress up a corpse and it gains no dignity; it only grows more grotesque. Tuka says: the schemes of a body-bound mind are like eating filth. A sore opens on the foot, and there they bind camphor over it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks the hollowness of learning carried by an egotist. Knowledge worn for show is like the fair skin of a diseased man: pleasant only at first glance, repellent once you come close. Decorating it is as futile as dressing a corpse, which only makes the ruin more obvious. The harshness aims at the pattern, not at any person's worth: when the mind is bound to the body and to pride, even its cleverness is foul, like binding fragrant camphor over a festering sore. The poem asks the listener to check whether their own learning serves truth or only feeds the ego.

GATHA 4352

Worldly Metaphors

Social criticism, caste as self-degradation

मराठी मूळ

तेथें बिबव्याचें काम । अधमासि तों अधम ॥१॥
 रुसला गुलाम । धणी करीतो सलाम ।
 तेथें चाकराचें काम । अधमासि तों अधम ॥२॥
 रुसली घरची दासी । धणी समजावी तियेसि ।
 तेथें बटकीचें काम । अधमासि तों अधम ॥३॥
 देव्हाः यावरि विंचू आला । देवपूजा नावडे त्याला ।
 तेथें पैजारेचें काम । अधमासि तों अधम ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाती । जातीसाठीं खाती माती ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where a shoe is the remedy, one worse than the lowest is at work. When a slave sulks, the master bows to him; there, a servant's work is needed.

When the household maid is offended, the master must console her; there, a handmaid's work is needed. When a scorpion climbs onto the altar, the worship of God becomes impossible; there, a sandal is what is needed.

Says Tuka, those who cling to caste end up eating dirt for its sake.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where a beating is the cure, the lowest gets something lower still. When a slave sulks, the master bows to him; there a servant's handling is what is needed. When the house maid takes offense, the master must coax her; there a handmaid's handling is what is needed. When a scorpion climbs onto the shrine, worship cannot go on; there a sandal is what is needed. Tuka says: those who live for caste end up eating dirt for the sake of it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lines up cases where the right response is plain force or correction, not flattery. A sulking slave or an offended maid may have to be coaxed by a soft master, but a scorpion on the altar gets the sandal, because it only blocks the worship. He is naming people who, out of pride, insist on being handled gently when what they truly need is to be put in their place. The closing turns the blade on caste-pride itself: those who cling to caste and live by its rankings end up degraded, eating dirt for the sake of a thing that lifts no one. The poem invites self-examination about the pride one defends as honor.

GATHA 4353

The Power of the Name

The Name, the final weapon

मराठी मूळ

ब्राह्मणा न कळे आपुलें तें वर्म । गंवसे परब्रह्म नामें एका ॥1॥
 लहानथोरासि करितों प्रार्थना । दृढ नारायणा मनीं धरा ॥धु॥
 सर्वाप्रति माझी हे चि असे विनंती । आठवा श्रीपती मनामाजी ॥2॥
 केशव नारायण करितां आचमन । ते चि संध्या स्नान कर्म क्रिया ॥3॥
 नामें करा नित्य भजन भोजन । ब्रह्मकर्म ध्यान याचे पायीं ॥4॥
 तुका ह्याने हें चि निर्वाणीचें शस्त्र । ह्याणोनि सर्वत्र स्मरा वेगीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The brahmin does not know his own true essence. The supreme Brahman is found through the Name alone.

I entreat all, young and old: hold Narayana firmly in your minds. This is my humble prayer to everyone: remember Shripati in the depths of your mind.

Uttering 'Keshava, Narayana' while performing the daily rituals, that itself becomes the evening prayer, the bathing, and every observance. Let the Name be your daily worship, your sustenance, your meditation at His feet.

Says Tuka, this is the ultimate weapon; therefore, remember it everywhere without delay.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The brahmin does not know his own secret. The supreme Brahman is found through the one Name. I pray to small and great alike: hold Narayana firmly in your mind. This is my one request to all of you: remember Shripati within your mind. Say Keshava, Narayana while you sip the water, and that itself is your evening prayer, your bath, your every rite. Make the Name your daily worship and your daily food, and let your sacred duty and your meditation be at his feet. Tuka says: this is the weapon for the last hour. So remember it everywhere, and quickly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells even the learned brahmin that the essence he searches for in ritual is reached only through the Name. He pleads with everyone, high and low, to hold Narayana fast in the mind. Then he folds all the prescribed observances into the Name: utter Keshava and Narayana, and that single act stands in for the twilight prayer, the ritual bath, and every duty, becoming worship, food, and meditation at once. He calls the Name the weapon for the moment of death, the one thing that holds when nothing else can. The closing urgency, remember it everywhere and without delay, makes the practice immediate rather than something saved for later.

GATHA 4354

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the body's one use

मराठी मूळ

नरदेह वांयां जाय । सेवीं सदूचे पाय ॥१॥
 सांडोनियां अहंभाव । धरीं भक्ती पूजीं देव ॥२॥
 थोराचिये वाटे । जातां भवशोक आटे ॥३॥
 प्रल्हादातें तारी । तुका ह्मणे तो कंठीं धरीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This human body will go to waste without serving the Sadguru's feet. Abandon the ego and worship God with devotion.

Walking the path of the great ones, the sorrow of worldly existence is consumed. Says Tuka, He who saved Prahlad, hold Him close to your chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This human body goes to waste if you do not serve the Sadguru's feet. Let go of the ego. Hold to devotion and worship God. Walk the path of the great ones, and the sorrow of this world burns away. He saved Prahlad. Tuka says: hold that One close in your heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells you what a human birth is for and what wastes it. The body is not an end in itself; if it never bends to serve the teacher's feet, it is thrown away. The way through is plain: drop the ego, worship God with devotion, and follow the road the great souls already walked, for on that road the grief of worldly existence is consumed. He grounds the promise in fact, the same Lord who rescued the child Prahlad, and tells you to keep that Lord pressed close in your heart.

GATHA 4355

Worldly Life

Worldly life, character and destiny

मराठी मूळ

संचित तैशी बिद्ध उपजे मनामधीं । सांगितलें सिद्ध नव जाय ॥१॥
 ज्याचा जैसा ठेवा तो त्यापार्शीं धांवे । न लगती करावे उपदेश ॥२॥
 घेऊन उठती आपुलाले गुण । भविष्याप्रमाणें तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

As is one's accumulated karma, so does the intellect arise in the mind. What has been foretold cannot be undone by advice.

Whatever treasure lies within a person, it runs toward him on its own; no teaching is needed. Says Tuka, people rise carrying their own inherent qualities, according to their destiny.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As your accumulated karma is, so the intellect rises in your mind. What is already written cannot be undone by advice. Whatever treasure lies inside a person runs toward him on its own; no teaching is needed for it. People stand up carrying their own inborn qualities. Tuka says: it goes according to what is to come.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming how stubbornly a person's nature follows them. The mind you think with is shaped by the karma you have stored, so the kind of intellect that arises is already set, and counsel from outside cannot reverse what is fixed. He pushes the point further: whatever a person carries within, good or bad, comes to them by itself, without anyone needing to teach it. Each one rises into life bearing their own inherent traits, unfolding as destiny requires. It is a sober look at how character runs ahead of advice.

GATHA 4356

Longing and Separation

Longing, the exiled fawn

मराठी मूळ

कुरंगीपाडस चुकलेसे वनीं । फुटे दुःखेंकरोनि हृदय त्याचें ॥१॥
 तैसा परदेशी जालों तुजविण । नको हो निर्वाण पाहूं माझें ॥२॥
 अपराध्याच्या कोटि घालीं सर्व पोटीं । नको या शेवटीं उपेक्षूं गा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे असों द्यावी माझी चिंता । कृपाळु अनंता पांडुरंगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Like a fawn separated from its mother in the forest, my heart breaks with anguish. Just so have I become an exile without You.

Do not look on at my final destruction, O Lord. Forgive millions of offenses; put them all into Your belly.

Do not forsake me at this end. Says Tuka, let my worry remain with You, O merciful Ananta, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Like a fawn that has lost its mother in the forest, its heart breaking with grief, so I have become an exile without You. Do not stand and watch my final ruin. I have committed millions of offenses; take them all into Your belly. Do not forsake me at this end. Tuka says: let my care be Yours to carry, O merciful Ananta, O Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cries out from the pain of feeling cut off from God. He compares himself to a fawn that has lost its mother in the forest, its heart splitting with anguish, and says that without the Lord he is exactly that lost and that homeless. He begs God not to be a bystander to his destruction, and asks Him to swallow up the millions of wrongs he has done, to take them inside and make them disappear. The final plea is total surrender: do not abandon me now, and let my worry no longer be mine but Yours, merciful Ananta, Panduranga.

GATHA 4357

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the free gift at Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

धन्य जालों हो संसारीं । आह्मी देखिली पंढरी ॥१॥
 चंद्रभागे करुं स्नान । पुंडलीकाचें दर्शन ॥२॥
 करुं क्षेत्रप्रदिक्षणा । भेटूं सत या सज्जनां ॥३॥
 उभे राहूं गरुडपारीं । डोळेंभरुनी पाहों हरी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे वाळवंटीं । महालाभ फुकासाठीं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Blessed am I in this world, for I have seen Pandhari. Let us bathe in the Chandrabhaga and take darshan of Pundalik.

Let us circumambulate the holy place and meet the true saints. Let us stand at the Garuda pillar and gaze upon Hari to our full satisfaction.

Says Tuka, in the sand-bed of Pandhari, the greatest gain comes freely.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Blessed am I in this world, for I have seen Pandhari. Let us bathe in the Chandrabhaga and take darshan of Pundalik. Let us walk around the holy place and meet the true saints. Let us stand at the Garuda pillar and look at Hari until our eyes are full. Tuka says: on the sand-bed of Pandhari the great gain costs nothing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is overflowing at the pilgrimage town and counting its blessings one by one. To have simply seen Pandhari makes a life worthwhile, and he calls others to share the round of it: bathe in the river Chandrabhaga, take darshan of Pundalik, circle the holy ground, and meet the saints gathered there. The heart of the visit is to stand at the Garuda pillar and gaze at Hari until the eyes are satisfied. He ends with the wonder of it: the highest gain a soul can win is handed out free on the sand of Pandhari, with no price asked.

GATHA 4358

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the pilgrim bound for Vaikuntha

मराठी मूळ

पंढरीचा वारकरी । खेपा वैकुंठबंदरीं ॥१॥
 तया नाहीं आणखी पेणें । सदा वैकुंठीं राहाणें ॥२॥
 आला गेला केल्या यात्रा । उद्धरिलें कुळा सर्वत्रा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं । यासि संदेह कल्पांतीं ही ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The pilgrim of Pandhari makes his journeys to the port of Vaikuntha. He needs no other destination; his dwelling is forever in Vaikuntha.

By coming and going on pilgrimage, he has delivered his entire lineage. Says Tuka, there is not the slightest doubt about this, even at the end of time.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The pilgrim of Pandhari makes his trips to the port of Vaikuntha. He needs no other destination; he dwells in Vaikuntha forever. By coming and going on pilgrimage, he has saved his whole lineage. Tuka says: there is not the slightest doubt about this, even at the end of time.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes the Pandhari pilgrim's repeated journey mean something far larger than a road trip. Each visit, he says, is really a voyage to the harbor of Vaikuntha, God's own abode, so the pilgrim has no other goal and already lives there always. The merit does not stop at the pilgrim: by his comings and goings he lifts up his entire family line. Tukaram seals it with full certainty, saying there is no doubt in this at all, not even when the ages dissolve at the end of time.

GATHA 4359

Krishna Leela

Krishna, the cowherd dawn

मराठी मूळ

सोडियेल्या गाई नवलक्ष गोपाळीं । सवें वनमाळी चालियेला ॥1॥
 सुदीन समय भाग्याचा उदय । चारावया गाई वनामाजी ॥ध्रु॥
 गाईगोपाळांच्या संगें चाली हरि । क्रीडा नानापरि खेळताति ॥2॥
 काठी कांबळीया मोहरीया पोंवा । सिदोरी गांजिवा खांद्यावरि ॥3॥
 गोधनें संवगडे खेळे नानापरी । आले भीमातीरीं वेणुनादा ॥4॥
 तेथें उभा ठेला गोपाळांसहित । सिदोरिया सोडीत बैसे तेथें ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे ज्यांनीं आणिल्या भाकरी । नेऊनियां हरीपुढें देती ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The nine hundred thousand cowherds released their cows, and the Lord Vanamali walked along with them. It was the blessed dawn of good fortune, going to graze the cows in the forest.

Hari walked with the cows and cowherds, playing games of every kind. Staffs, blankets, nose-rings, scarves, and lunch bundles and quivers slung over their shoulders.

The cattle and friends played in every way, coming to the banks of the Bhima, drawn by the sound of the flute. There He stood with the cowherds.

They untied their bundles and sat down together. Says Tuka, those who had brought their bread offerings placed them before Hari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The cowherds let loose nine hundred thousand cows, and Vanamali walked along with them. It was a blessed dawn, a rising of good fortune, going out to graze the cows in the forest. Hari walked among the cows and cowherds, playing games of every kind. Staffs, blankets, nose-flutes, panpipes, lunch bundles and pouches were slung over their shoulders. The cattle and the friends played in every way, and they came to the bank of the Bhima, drawn by the sound of the flute. There He stood with the cowherds. They untied their bundles and sat down. Tuka says: those who had brought their bread carried it forward and laid it before Hari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is painting the simple morning when Krishna goes out herding with the cowherd boys. A vast number of cows are turned loose and Vanamali walks among them; the poet calls the hour itself blessed, a sunrise of good fortune, just because the Lord is going to the forest. He fills in the homely detail: the boys carry their staffs and blankets, their nose-flutes and panpipes, their lunch bundles over their shoulders, romping with the cattle until the flute draws them to the river Bhima. The scene closes in tender reverence: they sit, open their food, and the ones who brought bread bring it first to Hari, the meal turned into an offering.

GATHA 4360

Krishna Leela

Krishna, the meal that astonishes heaven

मराठी मूळ

ज्यां जैसी आवडी त्यां तैसा विभाग । देत पांडुरंग तृप्त जाली ॥१॥
 मुखींचें उच्छष्ट हिरोनियां खात । विस्मत विधाता देखोनियां ॥२॥
 दिलें जें गोपाळां तें नाहीं कोणासि । विस्मत मानसीं सुरवर ॥३॥
 देव ऋषि मुनि सिद्ध हे चारण । शिव मरुद्गण चंद्र सूर्य ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आले सकळ हि सुरवर । आनंदें निर्भर पाहावया ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To each according to their desire, Panduranga distributed portions, and all were satisfied. He snatched morsels from their mouths and ate them, astonishing even the Creator who watched.

What He gave the cowherds is available to no one else; the gods themselves were amazed in mind. Gods, sages, munis, siddhas, celestials, Shiva, the Maruts, the sun and moon, all came, filled with bliss, just to watch.

Says Tuka, all the divine hosts arrived, overflowing with joy, to behold this sight.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To each as he liked, Panduranga handed out portions, and everyone was satisfied. He snatched the half-eaten morsels from their mouths and ate them, and the Creator was amazed to see it. What He gave the cowherds is given to no one else; the gods were astonished in their hearts. Gods, sages, munis, siddhas, celestial singers, Shiva, the Maruts, the moon and the sun, all came, full of bliss, just to watch. Tuka says: every one of the divine hosts arrived, brimming with joy, to behold it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is marveling at how God shares food with His cowherd friends. Panduranga gives each boy the portion he wants and even eats the leftover, spit-touched morsels straight from their mouths, an intimacy so far beyond ceremony that the Creator Himself is stunned to watch. The point is that this nearness, this eating from the cowherds' hands, is granted to no one else, and the whole of heaven knows it. So gods, sages, siddhas, Shiva, the wind-gods, the sun and moon all gather, not to be served, but simply to witness a love that the highest beings can only stand and admire.

GATHA 4361

Krishna Leela

Krishna, the gods begging the leftovers

मराठी मूळ

आले सुरवर नानापक्षी जाले । सकळ अवतरले श्वापदवेषें ॥१॥
 श्वानखरूपी होऊनियां आले । उच्छष्ट कवळ वेचिताति ॥२॥
 होऊनियां दीन हात पसरिती । मागोनियां घेती उष्टावळी ॥३॥
 अभिमान आड घालोनि बाहेरि । तयां ह्मणे घ्या रे धणी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे धणी लाधली अपार । तया सुखा पार काय सांगों ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The gods came disguised as birds of many kinds, some incarnating as wild beasts. Taking the forms of dogs and donkeys, they arrived to gather the leftover morsels.

Becoming humble beggars, they stretched out their hands, asking for the leavings of the meal. Casting aside their pride, they stood outside, and He called out, 'Take your fill!' Says Tuka, they received an abundance beyond measure. How can one describe the extent of that joy?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The gods came as birds of many kinds, and some came down in the shapes of wild beasts. Taking the forms of dogs and donkeys, they came to pick up the leftover morsels. Becoming lowly beggars, they stretched out their hands and asked for the leavings of the meal. Setting their pride aside, they stood outside, and He called to them, take your fill. Tuka says: they received an abundance beyond measure. How can I tell the limit of that joy?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram drives home what the gods will lower themselves to do for a taste of Krishna's grace. They cannot share the cowherds' meal as themselves, so they slip in disguised as birds, as beasts, even as dogs and donkeys, just to scavenge the scraps left from the boys' plates. They make themselves into beggars with outstretched hands and lay down the pride that is the very mark of a god, standing humbly outside until the Lord calls, take your fill. The reversal is the teaching: heaven's mighty ones gladly trade rank for leftovers, and what they then receive is a joy so vast the poet says he cannot measure it.

GATHA 4362

Krishna Leela

Krishna, the cowherds at rough play

मराठी मूळ

एकमेकीं घेती थडका । पाडी धडका देऊनि ॥१॥
 एकमेका पाठीवरि । बैसोनि करिती ढवाळी ॥२॥
 हाता हात हाणे लाही । पळतां घाई चुकविती ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे लपणी चपणी । एका हाणी पाठीवरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

They bump into one another, pushing and jostling each other. They ride on each other's backs, tussling and roughhousing.

They slap hands, playing tag, dodging blows while running. Says Tuka, they play hide and seek, one of them slapping another on the back.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They bump into one another, knocking each other down with the blow. They climb on each other's backs and wrestle and tussle. Hand smacks hand in a game of tag, and they dodge the blows as they run. Tuka says: they play hide and seek, one of them slapping another on the back.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lingers on the plain rough-and-tumble of Krishna and the cowherd boys at play. They shove and bump and topple each other, ride piggyback, and wrestle in the dirt like any band of children. There is hand-slapping tag, dodging as they sprint, and hide and seek with a smack on the back when someone is caught. The poet records it without a lesson tacked on, and the wonder is exactly that: God in the thick of ordinary boyish games, fully one of the gang.

GATHA 4363

Krishna Leela

Krishna, calling the cows home

मराठी मूळ

चला वळूं गाई । दूर अंतरल्या भाई ॥१॥
 खेळ खेळतां जाला शीण । कोण करी वणवण ॥२॥
 गाई हकारी कान्हया । ह्मणोनि लागती ते पायां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे द्यावें । नाम संकीर्तन बरवें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Come, let us round up the cows; they have wandered far away, brothers. Playing all these games has been tiring; who wants to keep searching? Krishna calls the cows, and they come to His feet.

Says Tuka, offer the Lord the beautiful gift of singing the Name in kirtan.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Come, brothers, let us round up the cows; they have strayed far off. All this playing has worn us out; who wants to go wandering after them? Krishna calls the cows, and they come to His feet. Tuka says: offer the Lord the good gift of singing His Name in kirtan.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram closes the herding day with the boys tired and the cows scattered. They are spent from their games and reluctant to tramp around searching, so the work falls to Krishna, who simply calls and the cows come straight to His feet, the herd answering its master with no chase needed. On that small picture the poet turns to us with the one thing he always wants offered: the way to come to the Lord's feet ourselves is to give Him the beautiful gift of singing His Name in kirtan.

GATHA 4364

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the Name over the world

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं संसाराची चाड । गाऊं हरिचें नाम गोड ॥१॥
हो का प्राणाचा ही घात । परि हा न सोडीं अनंत ॥२॥
जन्मोजन्मीं हा चि धंदा । संतसंग राहो सदा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे भाव । तो हा जाणा पंढरिराव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have no desire for worldly life; let me sing the sweet Name of Hari. Even if it costs my very life, I will not let go of this Infinite One.

Birth after birth, let this be my occupation: may the company of saints remain with me always. Says Tuka, this devotion, know it well, is the Lord of Pandhari Himself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have no appetite for worldly life; let me sing the sweet Name of Hari. Even if it costs my very life, I will not let go of this Infinite One. Birth after birth let this be my one trade; let the company of saints stay with me always. Tuka says: know that this devotion itself is the Lord of Pandhari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram weighs worldly life against the Name and chooses the Name without hesitation. He has no hunger left for the world and wants only to sing the sweet Name of Hari, and he swears he will not release this Infinite One even if holding on costs him his life. His prayer reaches past this birth: let singing the Name be his occupation through every lifetime, and let the company of saints never leave him. The closing line lands the claim, that this very devotion is not a means to reach God but is itself the Lord of Pandhari, Vitthal present in the loving.

GATHA 4365

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, a corpse in ornaments

मराठी मूळ

हरीविण जिणें व्यर्थ चि संसारीं । प्रेत अळंकारीं मिरवत ॥१॥
 देवाविण शब्द व्यर्थ चि कारण । भांड रंजवण सभेसि गा ॥२॥
 आचार करणें देवाविण जो गा । सर्पाचिया अंगा मृदुपण ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय बहु बोलों फार । भक्तीविण नर अभाग्य कीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Life without Hari is worthless in this world, like a corpse adorned with ornaments being paraded about. Words spoken without reference to God are futile, like a jester entertaining a crowd.

Performing rituals without devotion to God is like the smoothness of a serpent's skin. Says Tuka, what more need I say? Without devotion, a human being is truly unfortunate.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Life without Hari is worthless in this world, a corpse paraded about in ornaments. A word that does not point to God is wasted breath, a jester amusing the crowd. Doing your rituals without God is like the smoothness of a snake's skin. Tuka says: what more should I say? Without devotion a person is wretched.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips the shine off a religious life that has no real love of God in it. A lifetime without Hari, however decorated, is a dead body dressed up and carried in procession; words that never point to God are empty noise, like a clown working a crowd for a laugh. Even careful ritual, done without devotion, he likens to the smooth skin of a snake, sleek on the surface and poison underneath. The warning is turned at the pattern, not at any one person: pile up observance all you like, but without bhakti the human being is left genuinely poor, and Tukaram says there is nothing more to add.

GATHA 4366

Autobiography

Self-knowledge over learning

मराठी मूळ

जालासि पंडित पुराण सांगसी । परि तूं नेणसी मीं हें कोण ॥१॥
 गाढवभरी पोथ्या उलथिशी पानें । परि गुरुगम्यखुणे नेणशी बापा ॥२॥
 तुका कुणबियाचा नेणे शास्त्रमत । एक पंढरीनाथ विसंबेना ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have become a scholar and expound the Puranas, yet you do not know 'Who am I?' You load books on a donkey and turn the pages, but you do not know the Guru's secret, dear one. Says Tuka, I am a farmer's son and know nothing of scriptural learning, yet I never part from the Lord of Pandhari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have become a scholar. You expound the Puranas. But you do not know who I am. You pile books on a donkey and turn the pages, dear one, but you do not know the Guru's secret sign. Tuka says: I am a farmer's son. I know nothing of the doctrines of the scriptures. Yet I never let go of Panduranga, the Lord of Pandhari, for a moment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets two kinds of knowing against each other and chooses the smaller-looking one. The learned man can recite the Puranas, yet he has missed the one question they exist for: who is the self that knows. Stacking books on a donkey is the image he gives for learning carried but not lived; the beast bears the weight and understands none of it. Against that he places his own poverty of learning, a farmer's son with no scriptural standing, and one thing he does have: he never parts from the Lord of Pandhari. The poem's point is that the Guru's secret is held in the heart, not on the page.

GATHA 4367

The Necessity of Experience

Satire, knowledge sold for the belly

मराठी मूळ

स्वप्नींच्या व्यवहारा काळांतर लेखा । जागृतीसि रुका गांठ नाहीं ॥१॥
 तेवीं शब्दज्ञानें करिती चावटी । ज्ञान पोटासाठीं विकों नये ॥२॥
 बोलाची च कढी बोलाचा ची भात । जेवूनियां तृप्त कोण जाला ॥३॥
 कागदीं लिहिली नांवाची साकर । चाटितां मधुर केवीं लागे ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे जळो जळो त्याचें ज्ञान । यमपुरी कोण दंड साहे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who does business in a dream reckons up great accounts, but upon waking has not a single coin in hand. Just so, those who boast through mere verbal knowledge are peddling wisdom for their belly's sake; true knowledge should not be sold.

A curry made of words, rice made of words: who has ever been satisfied by eating that meal? If you write the word 'sugar' on paper and lick it, how can it taste sweet? Says Tuka, burn, burn such knowledge. Who can endure the punishment in the city of Yama?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A man does business in a dream and reckons up huge accounts. He wakes, and there is not one coin in his hand. So it is with those who chatter from mere word-knowledge. Knowledge should not be sold for the belly's sake. Curry made of words, rice made of words: who was ever filled by eating that meal? Write the word sugar on paper and lick it. How can it taste sweet? Tuka says: burn, burn such knowledge. Who can bear the punishment in the city of Yama?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks the trade in spiritual talk that has no living taste behind it. The dream-merchant is his picture of it: vast accounts that vanish the moment you wake, because nothing real ever changed hands. Words about food do not feed you, and the word sugar licked off paper stays bitter; knowledge recited but not realized is exactly that empty. The sharp turn is that he says such selling of wisdom for one's belly is not merely useless but dangerous, drawing punishment in Yama's city. The examination he presses is on the pattern of trading in borrowed words, not on any one teacher; the test is whether your knowing has ever actually nourished you.

GATHA 4368

Sacred Stories

Pandharpur, Pundalik's power

मराठी मूळ

भूत नावरे कोणासी । पुंडलीकें छिळलें त्यासी ॥१॥
 समचरण असे विटे । कटिकर उभें नीट ॥ध्रु॥
 वाळुवंटीं नाचती संत । प्रेमामृते दुल्लत ॥२॥
 तुका ह्याने पुंडलीका । भक्तिबळें तूं चि निका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This spirit could not be controlled by anyone, yet Pundalik nailed Him to that spot. With even feet on the brick He stands, hands on hips, perfectly still.

In the sand-bed the saints dance, swaying in the nectar of divine love. Says Tuka, O Pundalik, by the power of your devotion, you alone are truly great.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This spirit could be controlled by no one. Pundalik nailed Him to that spot. He stands with even feet on the brick, hands on His hips, perfectly still. On the sand by the river the saints dance, swaying in the nectar of love. Tuka says: O Pundalik, by the strength of your devotion, you alone are truly great.

WHAT IT MEANS

The poem celebrates how love held God still. The wild, ungraspable spirit that no one could master was fixed in place at Pandharpur, and Tukaram credits the devotee Pundalik for it: love, not force, pinned the unpinnable. So Vitthal stands waiting on the brick, hands on hips, while the saints dance on the riverbank drunk on the sweetness of that love. The closing turn gives the glory not to the God who stands but to the devotee whose longing made Him stand, naming devotion itself as the greatness worth praising.

GATHA 4369

Longing and Separation

Complaint of love, the withholding God

मराठी मूळ

आपुले वरदळ नेदा । एवढी गोविंदा कृपणता ॥१॥
 यावर बा तुमचा मोळा । हा गोपाळा कळेना ॥२॥
 सेवा तरी घेतां सांग । चोरिलें अंग सहावेना ॥३॥
 तुका जरी क्रियानष्ट । तरी कां कष्ट घेतसां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He will not give even His own leftover garland. Is this Your miserliness, O Govinda? This stubbornness of Yours is beyond my understanding, O Gopala.

You do accept our service, that much is clear; yet You cannot bear to give even a bit of Yourself. Says Tuka, even if I am unworthy in action, then why do You keep laboring over me?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You will not give even Your leftover garland. Is this Your stinginess, O Govinda? This way of Yours, O Gopala, I cannot make out. You do accept our service, that much is plain. Yet You cannot bear to hand over even a scrap of Yourself. Tuka says: if I am ruined in my conduct, then why do You keep taking such trouble over me?

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the lover's grievance, half scolding and half pleading. Tukaram accuses God of meanness: He takes all the service offered and gives back not even His worn garland, withholding His own self. The complaint sharpens into a logical trap he springs on God: if I am truly worthless, why do You bother laboring over me at all. The hidden frame is that God's continued effort is itself the proof of love the poet pretends not to receive, so the charge of stinginess is really a way of begging to be given more.

GATHA 4370

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the divine enchanter

मराठी मूळ

भीमातिरींचा नाटक । यानें लावियेलें चेटक ॥१॥
 मन बिद्ध जाली ठक । नेणे संसाराची टुक ॥२॥
 कैशी प्रसंगीक वाणी । प्रत्यादर कडसणी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मोठा ठक । जेथें तेथें उभा ठाके ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The enchanter of the Bhima's banks has cast His spell upon me. My mind and intellect have been bewitched; I no longer know the tricks of worldly life.

How timely are His words, how masterful His engagement. Says Tuka, He is the supreme trickster; wherever you look, there He stands.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The actor on the banks of the Bhima has cast His spell on me. My mind and intellect are tricked; I no longer know the smallest bit of worldly life. How timely His speech is, how skillful His handling. Tuka says: He is a great trickster. Wherever you look, there He stands.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes being captured by God with delight, calling Him a player and a cheat. The Lord who stands at Pandharpur on the Bhima's bank has, like a magician, bewitched the poet's mind and intellect so that ordinary worldly cleverness has fallen away. He marvels at how perfectly timed God's word is and how deftly He works His charm. The affectionate insult, great trickster, names the way grace overtakes a person against his calculation and then turns out to be everywhere at once, standing wherever the freed mind happens to look.

GATHA 4371

The Nature of God

Nondual presence, no you and I

मराठी मूळ

कां रे दाटोन होतां वेडे । देव आहे तुझांपुढें ॥१॥
ज्यास पाठ नाहीं पोट । करी त्रैलोक्याचा घोंट ॥२॥
तुमची तुझां नाहीं सोय । कोणाचें काय जाय ॥३॥
तुका गातो नामीं । तेथें नाहीं आह्मी तुझी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why do you crowd about in confusion? God is standing right before you. He who has no back or front can swallow all three worlds in a gulp.

You cannot find your own way; what does anyone else lose by that? Says Tuka, I sing the Name. There, there is no 'you' or 'I'.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why do you crowd about in confusion? God is standing right before you. He who has no back and no front swallows all three worlds in one gulp. You cannot find your own way. What does anyone else lose by that? Tuka says: I sing the Name. There, there is no you and no I.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram rebukes the bewildered crowd and points straight at the obvious: God is already standing in front of them. The God he names is beyond shape, with no back or front, large enough to drink down all three worlds at a swallow, so the seeking that runs in every direction is the very confusion that hides Him. He notes drily that

people lose only themselves by missing the way, no one else. The resolving claim is in the Name: when he sings it the separation between worshipper and worshipped dissolves, and there is no you and I left to stand apart.

GATHA 4372

Autobiography

The poet's gift, forced upon God

मराठी मूळ

नव्हे हें कवित्व टांकसाळी नाणें । घेती भले जन भले लोक ॥1॥
लागलासे झरा पूर्ण नवनीतें । सेविलियां हित फार होय ॥2॥
तुका ह्मणे देवा केला बलात्कार । अंगा आलें फार महंतपण ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This is not mere poetry; it is coin minted in the royal mint. Good and worthy people accept it gladly.

A spring of pure butter has begun to flow; consuming it brings great benefit. Says Tuka, I forced myself upon God, and the mantle of a great saint descended on me of its own accord.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is not poetry; it is coin struck in the royal mint. Good and worthy people take it gladly. A spring of pure butter has begun to flow. Whoever takes it gains great good. Tuka says: I forced myself upon God, and great sainthood came upon me of itself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks plainly about the worth of his own verse and where it came from. He insists his words are not mere literature but true coin from the king's mint, currency that good people accept at full value, and he likens them to a flowing spring of fresh butter that nourishes whoever takes it. The striking admission is in the last line: he did not earn this by qualification but seized God by force, pressing his demand until it was granted. The sainthood that resulted, he says, descended on its own, a gift answering insistence rather than a reward for merit.

GATHA 4373

Appeals and Exhortations

Address to the mind, keep holy company

मराठी मूळ

सांवळें सुंदर पाहे दृष्टभरि । ऐसैं कांहीं करीं मन माझें ॥1॥
मना तुज ठाव दिला त्याचे पायीं । राहें विठाबाईसवें सदा ॥ध्रु॥
मना नको धरूं आणिकांचा संग । नाहीं पांडुरंग जयां मनीं ॥2॥
वरपंग भाव नको ह्मणे तुका । करीं प्राणसखा नारायणा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O my mind, gaze upon that beautiful dark form until your eyes are filled. I have given you a place at His feet; stay always with Vitthabai.

O mind, do not keep the company of those who do not hold Panduranga in their minds. Says Tuka, do not settle for shallow devotion; make Narayana the beloved friend of your very life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Gaze on that beautiful dark form until your eyes are full. Do this for me, my mind. O mind, I have given you a place at His feet. Stay always with Vithabai. O mind, do not keep the company of others, of those who do not hold Panduranga in their hearts. Tuka says: do not settle for surface devotion. Make Narayana the friend of your very life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns and instructs his own mind, treating it as a wayward companion he must direct. He tells it to drink in the dark beautiful form of Vitthal until satisfied, and reminds it that he has already lodged it at the Lord's feet, so it should stay there always. The warning is about company: do not consort with people who have no place for Panduranga in their hearts, since their company pulls the mind away. The closing demand raises the standard from outward, show devotion to inward bond, asking the mind to make Narayana not a habit but the dearest friend of one's life.

GATHA 4374

Longing and Separation

Longing, the soul's lone journey

मराठी मूळ

एकली वना चालली राना । चोरुनि जना घराचारी ॥१॥
 कोणी नाहीं संगीसर्वें । देहभावें उदास ॥२॥
 जाउनि पडे दुर्घटवर्नीं । श्वापदांनीं वेढिली ॥३॥
 मार्ग न चले जातां पुढें । भय गाढें उदेलें ॥४॥
 मागील मार्गें अंतरलीं । पुढील चाली खोळंबा ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे चित्तीं यासि । हृदयस्थासी आपुल्या ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

She set out alone into the wilderness, stealing away from her household and family. No one is with her as companion; she is indifferent to the body's concerns.

She enters a dense, impassable forest, surrounded by wild beasts. The path ahead will not yield to her steps; a great fear has arisen.

Those behind have fallen far away; the way forward is blocked. Says Tuka, at such a time, let this soul call upon the One who dwells within its own chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

She set out alone into the forest, into the wilds, stealing away from household and family. No one goes with her. She is indifferent to the body and its concerns. She comes to a dense, trackless forest, ringed by wild beasts. The path ahead will not yield as she goes on. A great fear has risen. Those behind have fallen far away. The way forward is blocked. Tuka says: at such a time let this soul call, in its heart, on the One who dwells within its own chitta.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells the soul's journey as the tale of a woman who slips away alone from home into the wilderness. The flight from family and the indifference to the body mark a turn away from worldly attachment; she wants God enough to leave everything. But the path grows dark and impassable, wild beasts close in, what she left is gone for good and what lies ahead is shut, the exact terror of one who has renounced the old life and not yet reached the new. The resolution is inward: with every outward road blocked, the only way left is to call on the One already dwelling within her own heart.

GATHA 4375

Longing and Separation

Longing, the dark night of abandonment

मराठी मूळ

पडली घोर रजनी । संगी कोणी नसे चि ॥१॥
 पहा हो कैसें चालविलें । पिसें गोवले लावूनि ॥२॥
 कोठें लपविलें तें अंग । होता संग दिला तो ॥ ॥३॥
 मज कधीं नव्हतें ठावें । दोही भावें वाटोळें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे कैची उरी । दोहीपरि नाडिलें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A deep, dark night has fallen, and there is no one for company. See how He has led me along, attaching me to this madness.

Where has He hidden His form? The companionship He once gave is gone. I never knew it would come to this: ruin from both sides.

Says Tuka, what chance is left? I have been deceived in every way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A deep, dark night has fallen. There is no one for company. See how He has led me along, fastening this madness on me. Where has He hidden His form? The companionship He once gave is gone. I never knew it would come to this: ruined on both sides. Tuka says: what chance is left to me? I have been cheated every way.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the cry from the dark night, when the love God once gave is withdrawn. Tukaram looks back and sees that the Lord led him on, fastening on him a madness for the divine, and now hides His form and takes away the nearness he had known. He feels ruined from both sides: he gave up the world for God's sake, and now God too

has vanished, so he is left with neither. The poem does not resolve the abandonment; it lets the complaint stand, the bewildered grief of one who feels deceived by the very love that drew him.

GATHA 4376

Longing and Separation

Plea, hold God to His own name

मराठी मूळ

उदार कृपाळ पतितपावन । िब्रदें नारायणा जाती वांयां ॥1॥
 वणिनलासि श्रुति नेणे तुझा पार । राहे मौनाकार नेति ऐसें ॥धु.॥
 तेथें माझा धांवा पावे कोणीकडे । अदृष्ट हें पुढें वोडवलें ॥2॥
 कोण ऐसा भक्त लाधला भाग्यासी । आठवण ऐसी द्यावी तुज ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे नको पाहों माझा अंत । जाणोनि हे मात उडी घालीं ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Generous, compassionate, Purifier of the Fallen: are these pledges of Yours, O Narayana, to go to waste? The Vedas, having tried to describe You, remain silent, saying 'not this, not this,' unable to know Your extent. So how can my cry reach You from here? Misfortune has overtaken me.

What devotee has been so blessed as to be able to remind You of Yourself? Says Tuka, do not test my limits. Knowing my plight, take the leap and come to me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Generous, compassionate, Purifier of the fallen: are these names of Yours, O Narayana, to go to waste? The Vedas tried to describe You and fell silent, saying not this, not this, unable to reach Your end. Then where can my cry reach You from here? This misfortune has risen up before me. What devotee was ever so blessed that he could remind You of Your own self? Tuka says: do not test how far I can go. Knowing my state, leap in and save me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays by holding God to His own titles. He names Him generous, compassionate, the Purifier of the fallen, and then presses the point: if these names are true, they cannot be allowed to go empty, for then God Himself is at stake. He measures the distance honestly, that the Vedas themselves could only say not this, not this and stop short, so his small cry seems to have no way of reaching across. His boldness is to remind God of His own nature, then plead that God not see how far his endurance can be stretched but instead, knowing his plight, leap down and save him.

GATHA 4377

The Nature of God

Nature of God, He meets each devotion

मराठी मूळ

ज्याचें जैसें भावी मन । त्यासि देणें दुरुषण ॥१॥
 पुरवूं जाणे मनिंची खूण । समाधान करोनि ॥२॥
 आपणियातें प्रगट करी । छाया वरी कृपेची ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे केले दान । मन उन्मन हरिनामीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

According to the devotion in one's chitta, He grants His vision. He knows how to fulfill the innermost longing and bring contentment.

He reveals Himself and spreads the shade of His grace. Says Tuka, He has given this gift: the mind has become absorbed in Hari's Name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As the devotion in a heart is, so He grants His vision. He knows how to fulfill the inmost longing and to bring it peace. He makes Himself plain and spreads the shade of His grace over it. Tuka says: He has given the gift; the mind, beyond mind, rests in Hari's Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes how God answers each devotee according to that devotee's own heart. The form of the vision matches the form of the love that seeks it, and God knows exactly how to meet the secret longing within and settle it into peace. He does not stay hidden but reveals Himself and lays the cool shade of His grace over the one who longs. The gift named at the end is the highest: the mind passes beyond its restless thinking state into the stillness of unmani and comes to rest in Hari's Name.

GATHA 4378

Sacred Stories

Wonder, Pundalik's bold love

मराठी मूळ

कां रे पुंडेया मातलासी । उभें केलें विठ्ठलासि ॥१॥
 विस्त क्षीरसागरवासीं । आला उभा पंढरीसि ॥२॥
 भक्ती देखोनि निकट । देवें सोडिलें वैकुंठ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बळी । तूं चि एक भूमंडळीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Pundalik, why did you become so bold as to make Vitthal stand? He who resided in the ocean of milk has come to stand in Pandhari. Seeing such intimate devotion, God left Vaikuntha behind.

Says Tuka, you alone are the mightiest one on this earth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Pundalik, why did you grow so bold? You made Vitthal stand still. He who lives in the ocean of milk has come and stands here in Pandhari. He saw devotion this close, and for it God left Vaikuntha behind. Tuka says: you alone, Pundalik, are the mightiest on this whole earth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is marveling at Pundalik, the devotee whose love first drew Vitthal to Pandhari. The story is that God, who dwells in the milk-ocean, came down and simply stood on the brick, waiting, because one man's love held Him there. Tukaram turns this into a claim about the power of devotion: it can pull the Lord out of His own heaven and fix Him in place. So he calls Pundalik the strongest being on earth, not for any feat of arms, but because his nearness of heart moved God Himself.

GATHA 4379

Prayers

Prayer, the Name on the lips

मराठी मूळ

शेवटींची विनंती । ऐका ऐका कमळापती ॥१॥
जीवपरमात्मा ऐक्यासि। सदा वसो हृदयेसीं ॥२॥
तुका ह्याने देवा । कंठी वसावे केशवा॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This is my final supplication. Listen, O Lord of Lakshmi.

May the jiva and the Supreme Self remain united, dwelling forever in my chitta. Says Tuka, O Keshava, please reside in my throat so Your Name may always be on my lips.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is my last request. Listen, listen, Lord of Lakshmi. Let the jiva and the Supreme Self be one, and stay forever in my heart. Tuka says: O God, O Keshava, live in my throat, so Your Name is always on my lips.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram offers what he calls his final petition, and it has two parts. First he asks that the soul and the Supreme Self be joined and never leave his heart, the union the scriptures point toward. Then he names a homelier wish: that Keshava live in his throat itself, so the Name keeps rising even without effort. The high goal of oneness and the simple practice of constant remembrance are asked for together, as if one carries the other.

GATHA 4380

Prayers

Prayer, God already knows

मराठी मूळ

माझें परिसावें गाढाणें । चित्त द्यावें नारायणें ॥१॥
 माझे हृदयीचें वर्म । देवा जाणशी तूं कर्म ॥२॥
 सबाहएअंतरसाक्ष । ऐसा वेदीं केला पक्ष ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नेणां । काय सांगों नारायणा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Hear my plea, O Narayana; give me Your attention. You know the secret of my chitta, O God; You know all my deeds.

You are the witness both within and without; the Vedas affirm this truth. Says Tuka, I am at a loss for words. What more can I tell You, O Narayana?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Hear my complaint; give it Your attention, Narayana. You know the secret of my heart, O God; You know what I have done. You are the witness within and without; the Vedas have said so. Tuka says: You know it already. What is there for me to tell You, Narayana?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes to lay out his case before God and then stops short. The reason is that God already knows the inmost secret of his heart and every deed he has done; the Vedas call Him the witness inside and outside all things. So the prayer collapses into honesty: there is nothing to confess, nothing to explain, because the listener sees it all anyway. What is left is not a report but a surrender to being fully known.

GATHA 4381

*The Necessity of Experience**Experience, love past intellect*

मराठी मूळ

गुरुचिया मुखें होइल ब्रह्मज्ञान । न कळे प्रेमखुण विठोबाची ॥१॥
 वेदातें विचारा पुराणातें पुसा । विठोबाचा कैसा प्रेमभाव ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे सांडा जाणिवेचा शीण । विठोबाची खूण जाणती संत ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Through the Guru's mouth one may gain knowledge of Brahman, but the secret of Vitthoba's love cannot be known that way. Examine the Vedas, inquire of the Puranas: what is the nature of Vitthoba's love? Says Tuka, abandon the weariness of intellectual knowing. Only the saints truly know the secret of Vitthoba.

IN PLAIN WORDS

From the Guru's mouth you may come to know Brahman. But the secret of Vithoba's love cannot be known that way. Search the Vedas; ask the Puranas: what is Vithoba's love really like? Tuka says: drop the weariness of trying to know with the mind. Only the saints know the secret of Vithoba.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws a sharp line between knowledge and love. A teacher can hand you knowledge of Brahman, and the Vedas and Puranas can be studied, but none of that reaches the actual secret of Vithoba's love. That secret is not information; it is a relationship, tasted not analyzed. So he tells the seeker to set down the exhausting effort to grasp it intellectually, because only the saints, those who have loved, hold the key.

GATHA 4382

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, single-minded devotion

मराठी मूळ

देव आतां आह्मीं केला असे ऋणी । आणिका वांचूनि काय गुंता ॥१॥
 एकाचें आर्जव करु एकनिष्ठ । आणिकांचा बोभाट कामा नये ॥२॥
 बहुतांचे आर्जव केलिया खटपट । नाही हा शेवट शुद्ध होत ॥३॥
 पुरता विचार आणोनी मानसीं । अंतरलों सर्वासि पई देखा ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा चरणीं असो भाव । तेणें माझा जीव संतोष हा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have now placed God in my debt. What other entanglement is there? I devote myself single-mindedly to the One; the clamor of others is of no use.

Trying to please many only leads to confusion and never reaches a pure conclusion. Having thought it over thoroughly, I have distanced myself from all else.

Says Tuka, let my devotion rest at God's feet; that alone is my contentment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have now made God my debtor. Apart from Him, what else should tie me down? Let me serve the One alone, with a single heart; the noise of others is no use to me. Trying to please many is only trouble; it never comes to a clean end. I have thought it through fully, and so I have stepped back from everything else. Tuka says: let my love rest at God's feet. That alone is my soul's contentment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram argues for undivided devotion by weighing it against the alternative. Serving many masters only breeds confusion and never reaches a clean conclusion, so after thinking it through he withdraws from all of them. He keeps one bond: single-minded service to God, whom his love has, in a sense, placed in his debt. The payoff he names is not gain but peace: with his heart fixed at God's feet, his soul is content.

GATHA 4383

Prayers

Prayer, guard the senses

मराठी मूळ

पापाची वासना नको दावूं डोळां । त्याहुनि अंधळा बराच मी ॥1॥
 निंदेचें श्रवण नको माझे कानीं । बधिर करोनि ठेवीं देवा ॥ध्रु॥
 अपवित्र वाणी नको माझ्या मुखा । त्याजहुनि मुका बराच मी ॥2॥
 नको मज कधीं परस्त्रीसंगति । जनांतुन माती उठतां भली ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज अवघ्याचा कांटाळा । तूं एक गोपाळा आवडसी ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not let my eyes see sinful sights; I would rather be blind than that. Let my ears not hear slander; make me deaf instead, O God.

Let no impure speech come from my mouth; I would rather be mute than that. Never let me fall into the company of another's wife; let the earth swallow me rather than that.

Says Tuka, I am weary of everything else. You alone, O Gopala, are dear to me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not show my eyes the desire for sin; I would rather be blind than that. Let no slander reach my ears; make me deaf instead, O God. Let no impure speech leave my mouth; I would rather be mute than that. Never let me near another man's wife; let the earth swallow me before that. Tuka says: I am sick of everything else. You alone, Gopala, are dear to me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays for protection by way of his own senses, and he means it starkly: he would sooner lose a faculty than misuse it. Better blind than to look with sinful longing, better deaf than to hear slander, better mute than to speak impurely, better dead than to go near another's wife. The harshness is aimed at the temptations themselves, not at the body, which he is willing to sacrifice to stay clean. Underneath it all is one positive wish: he is weary of everything that is not God, and Gopala alone is dear.

GATHA 4384

Social Criticism

Social criticism, selling the kirtan

मराठी मूळ

कीर्तनाचा विकरा मातेचें गमन । भाड खाई धन विटाळ तो ॥1॥
 हरिभक्ताचि माता हे हरिगुणकीर्त । इजवर पोट भरिती चांडाळ ते ॥ध्रु॥
 अंत्यज हा ऐसें कल्पांतीं करीना । भाड हे खाईना जननीची ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्याचें दर्शन ही खोटें । पूर्वजांसि नेटें नरका घाडी ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Selling kirtan for profit is like trafficking in one's own mother. The glory of Hari's devotion is the mother of all devotees, and those who make a living from her are the lowest of the low.

Even one cast out by society would never, until the end of time, do such a thing as selling his own mother for gain. Says Tuka, even the sight of such a person is inauspicious; he sends his own ancestors to hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To sell kirtan for money is to traffic in your own mother. You eat the wage; that is filth. The praise of Hari's virtues is the devotee's mother; the lowest wretches fill their bellies off her. Even an outcast would never, to the end of time, do such a thing; he would not eat a wage taken from his own mother. Tuka says: even the sight of such a man is false and foul; he drives his own ancestors into hell.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks the practice of turning sacred song into a trade. He calls the glory of Hari the very mother of every devotee, so to charge a fee for kirtan is, in his image, to live off the sale of one's mother. The point is the pattern, not contempt for any person: selling what should be given freely poisons the singer and even, he says, his lineage. The verse is a warning to examine whether devotion is being kept pure or quietly turned into income.

GATHA 4385

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the generous Lord

मराठी मूळ

पंढरी पावन जालें माझें मन । आतां करुं ध्यान विठोबाचें ॥१॥
 आतां ऐसें करुं नाम गाऊं गीतीं । सुखाचा सांगाती विठो करुं ॥२॥
 संग करुं त्याचा तो सखा आमचा । अनंतां जन्मांचा मायबाप ॥३॥
 परतोनि सोई धरीं कां रे मना । विठ्ठलचरणा घालीं मिठी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My mind has been purified by Pandhari. Now let me meditate on Vitthoba.

Now let me sing the Name in song and make Vittho my companion of happiness. Let me keep His company, for He is my friend, my parent through countless births.

Turn your attention inward, O mind, and embrace the feet of Vitthal. I have embraced His feet.

The devotion may not yet be perfect, but the Lord of Pandhari is generous. Says Tuka.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Pandhari has made my mind clean. Now let me meditate on Vithoba. Now let me do this: sing the Name in song, and make Vittho my companion in joy. Let me keep His company, for He is my friend, my mother and father through countless births. Turn back inward, O my mind, and throw your arms around the feet of Vitthal. I have thrown my arms around them. My devotion may not be true and full, yet the Lord of Pandhari is generous. Tuka says.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a mind washed clean by Pandhari and the simple resolve that follows: meditate on Vithoba, sing His Name, take Him as friend and companion in joy. He calls the mind back from its wandering and tells it to embrace Vitthal's feet, then reports that he has done so. He is honest that his own devotion is not yet perfect. His confidence rests not on the quality of his love but on the generosity of the Lord of Pandhari, who accepts even an imperfect embrace.

GATHA 4386

Longing and Separation

Longing, come and embrace me

मराठी मूळ

येईं गे विठ्ठले विश्वजीवनकले । सुंदर घननीळे पांडुरंगें ॥१॥
 येईं गे विठ्ठले करुणाकल्लोळे । जीव कळवळे भेटावया ॥२॥
 न लगती गोड आणीक उत्तरे । तुझें प्रेम झुरे भेटावया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धांव घालीं कृष्णाबाई । क्षेम चाहूंबाही देईं मज ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Come, O Vitthale, the life-giving art of the universe. O beautiful dark-hued Panduranga.

Come, O Vitthale, O tide of compassion. My jiva yearns to meet You.

No other words taste sweet to me. My love longs to meet You.

Says Tuka, rush to me, O Krishnabai. Give me an embrace of welcome with both arms.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Come, O Vitthale, life of the whole world. Beautiful dark cloud-blue Panduranga. Come, O Vitthale, You wave of compassion. My soul aches to meet You. No other words taste sweet to me. My love pines to meet You. Tuka says: come running, O Krishnabai. Give me a welcoming embrace with both Your arms.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a cry of longing addressed straight to the Lord, here called Vitthale and Krishnabai in tender, almost motherly terms. Tukaram names God as the life of the universe and a wave of compassion, then turns from praise to ache: his soul yearns only to meet Him, and no other words are sweet. The verse ends not with theology but with a plain physical request, that God come running and hold him with both arms. The whole abhanga is the impatience of one who wants only the meeting.

GATHA 4387

Longing and Separation

Longing, when will You meet me

मराठी मूळ

कटावरी कर कासया ठेविले । जननी विठ्ठले जीवलगे ॥१॥
 शंखचक्रगदाकमळमंडित । आयुधें मंडित कृष्णाबाई ॥२॥
 क्षण एक धीर होत नाहीं चित्ता । केव्हां पंढरिनाथा भेटशील ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हें चि करीं देई । तई च विश्रामा पावईन ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why have You placed Your hands on Your hips, O Mother Vitthale, O beloved one? Adorned with conch, discus, mace, and lotus, arrayed with sacred weapons, O Krishnabai. Not for a moment can my heart find peace.

When will You meet me, O Lord of Pandhari? Says Tuka, grant me this one thing, and only then shall I find rest.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why have You set Your hands upon Your hips, Mother Vitthale, dear one? Adorned with conch and discus and mace and lotus, arrayed with Your weapons, O Krishnabai. Not for a single moment can my heart hold steady. When will You meet me, Lord of Pandhari? Tuka says: grant me just this one thing, and only then will I find rest.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gazes at the standing image of Vitthal, hands on hips, holding the conch, discus, mace, and lotus, and addresses Him as Mother. The beauty of the form only sharpens his impatience: his heart cannot stay calm even for a moment while the meeting is withheld. So the prayer narrows to a single question and a single request, when will You meet me, and grant me only this. He says his rest depends on nothing else; until the meeting comes, there is no peace.

GATHA 4388

Longing and Separation

Longing, hold the merciful to His word

मराठी मूळ

आतां मोकलावें नव्हे हें उचित । तरी कृपावंत ह्मणवावें ॥१॥
 पूवाअ भक्त जाले सर्व आपंगिले । नाहीं उपेक्षले तुझीं कोणी ॥२॥
 माझिया वेळेसि कां गा लपालासी । विश्व पोसितोसि लपोनियां ॥३॥
 करावी ह्मणावी सर्वा भूतीं दया । तरी भेटावया येईन मी ॥४॥
 तरी माझे हाती देई मनबुद्ध । जरि दयानिधि येशील तूं ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे तूं चि अवघा सूत्रधारी । माझी सत्ता हरी काय आहे ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It is not right to abandon me now; if You are to be called compassionate, prove it. All previous devotees were accepted by You; You never neglected any of them.

Why do You hide when it is my turn? You sustain the whole world, yet You hide from me. You say one must show compassion to all beings.

Then come and meet me. But give my mind and intellect into my own hands, if You, the treasure of mercy, will truly come.

Says Tuka, You alone are the master of all strings. What power do I have, O Hari?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is not right to abandon me now; not if You are to be called merciful. All the devotees before me were taken in by You; You neglected none of them. So why, when my turn comes, do You hide? You feed the whole world, and yet You hide from me. You yourself say one must show mercy to all beings. Then come and meet me. But put my mind and intellect into my own hands, if You, the treasure of mercy, will really come. Tuka says: You alone pull every string. What power, Hari, is mine?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses God with God's own reputation. If He is truly called compassionate, and if He took in every devotee before and neglected none, then to hide now, on Tukaram's turn, breaks His own word and His own teaching that mercy is owed to all. So he demands the meeting, half complaint and half plea. Yet at the close he undercuts his own bargaining: he admits he has no power of his own, that God alone moves every string, so even his mind and intellect must be given back into his hands by grace before anything can happen.

GATHA 4389

Prayers

Surrender, make me Your own

मराठी मूळ

माझें कोण आहे तुजविण देवा । मुकुंदा केशवा नारायणा ॥१॥
 वाट पाहतसें कृपेच्या सागरा । गोपीमनोहरा पांडुरंगा॥२॥
 साच करीं हरी आपुली िब्रदावळी । कृपेनें सांभाळीं महाराजा ॥३॥
 क्षमा करीं सर्व अपराध माझा । लडिवाळ मी तुझा पांडुरंगा ॥४॥
 साहए होसी तरी जाती साही वैरी । मग सुखें अंतरीं ध्यान तुझें ॥५॥
 कृपा करोनि देई दया क्षमा शांती । तेणें तुझी भक्ति लाभईल ॥६॥
 माझें हें सामर्थ्य नव्हे नारायणा । जरी कांहीं करुणा येइल तुज ॥७॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज कैसें आपंगा जी । आपुलेंसें करा जी पांडुरंगा ॥८॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who do I have besides You, O God? O Mukunda, Keshava, Narayana. I await You with folded hands, O ocean of mercy, O enchanter of the gopis, O Panduranga.

Make Your own pledges come true, O Hari. Protect me with Your grace, O great King.

Forgive all my offenses. I am Your spoiled child, O Panduranga.

If You come to my aid, the six inner enemies will depart. Then I shall meditate on You in peace.

Grant me compassion, forgiveness, and tranquility, so that devotion to You may flourish. This is not within my own power, O Narayana.

Only if some mercy arises in You can it happen. Says Tuka, accept me as Your own. Make me Yours, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who is mine but You, O God? Mukunda, Keshava, Narayana. I am watching the road for You, ocean of mercy, charmer of the gopis, Panduranga. Make Your own promises true, Hari; keep me with Your grace, great King. Forgive all my offenses. I am Your spoiled child, Panduranga. If You stand by me, my six enemies leave; then in peace my heart can dwell on You. By Your grace give me mercy, forgiveness, and peace, so that devotion to You can grow. This is not in my own strength, Narayana; only if some pity rises in You. Tuka says: somehow take me in. Make me Your own, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram throws himself wholly on God, saying he has no one else, and waits like a watcher on the road. He asks God to honor His own pledges, forgive his faults, and treat him as a spoiled child who can presume on a parent's love. He is clear that everything he wants, the routing of the six inner enemies of lust, anger, greed and the rest, and the growth of devotion itself, is beyond his own strength and can come only if mercy rises in God. The whole prayer ends in surrender: not I will earn You, but You make me Your own.

GATHA 4390

Prayers

Pleading on the Name, a spoiled child

मराठी मूळ

अपराध जाले जरी असंख्यात । तरी कृपावंत नाम तुझें ॥१॥
 तुझें लडिवाळ तुज कृपा यावी । म्यां वाट पाहावी कवणाची ॥२॥
 मायबाप माझा रुक्मादेवीवर । हा दृढ निर्धार अंतरीचा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने कोणे गोष्टीचें संकष्ट । न घालीं मज भेट नारायणा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if my offenses are beyond counting, Your Name is still compassionate. I am Your spoiled child; You should show mercy.

Whose path shall I look to, if not Yours? My mother and father is the husband of Rukmadevi. This is the firm conviction within my chitta.

Says Tuka, do not put me through any ordeal. Simply grant me Your presence, O Narayana.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even if my offenses are beyond counting, your Name is still full of mercy. I am your spoiled child; the mercy should come to me. Whose path should I watch for, if not yours? My mother and father is the husband of Rukmadevi. This is the firm resolve inside my heart. Tuka says: do not put me through any ordeal. Just come and meet me, Narayana.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram brings his sins forward on purpose and then sets the Name against them, betting that the Name's mercy is larger than his failings. He does not plead innocence; he pleads relationship, calling himself a spoiled child who has nowhere else to look. Naming Vitthal, the husband of Rukmadevi, as his own mother and father, he makes God responsible for him the way a parent is responsible for a child. The closing ask is small and total at once: skip the testing, just show up and meet me.

GATHA 4391

Longing and Separation

Longing, you taught me this need

मराठी मूळ

आधीं कां मज लावियेली सवे । आतां न राहावे तुजविण ॥१॥
 पहिलें चि तोंडक कां गा नाहीं केलें । आतां उपेक्षलें न सोडीं मी ॥२॥
 कृपेच्या सागरा न पाहें निर्वाण । जालों तुजवीण कासावीस ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कोठें गुंतलेति हरी । येई झडकरी पांडुरंगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why did You accustom me to You in the first place? Now I cannot bear to be without You. Why did You not reject me at the very start? Now that I am neglected, I will not let go.

O ocean of compassion, do not wait for my final ruin. I am desperate without You.

Says Tuka, where are You entangled, O Hari? Come quickly, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why did you get me used to you in the first place? Now I cannot stay without you. Why did you not turn me away at the very start? Now that you have left me, I will not let go. Ocean of mercy, do not wait for my final ruin. Without you I am in agony. Tuka says: where have you gotten caught, Hari? Come quickly, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the longing back on God as a complaint: you are the one who created this dependence, so the abandonment is your doing. He refuses the easy exit; having been made to need God, he will not now release his grip. Calling Vitthal an ocean of mercy, he warns that mercy delayed until he is destroyed is no mercy at all. The half-teasing final line, where have you gotten entangled, treats God as a friend who is late, and demands he hurry.

GATHA 4392

Longing and Separation

Longing, when will you come

मराठी मूळ

बा रे पांडुरंगा केव्हां येशी भेटी । जाहालों हिंपुटी तुजवीण ॥१॥
 तुजवीण सखें न वटे मज कोणी । वाटतें चरणीं घालूं मिठीं ॥२॥
 ओवाळावी काया चरणांवरोनि । केव्हां चक्रपाणी भेटशील ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझी पुरवीं आवडी । वेगीं घालीं उडी नारायणा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O dear Panduranga, when will You come to meet me? I have grown weary and forlorn without You. Without You, no one feels like a true friend.

I long to throw my arms around Your feet. I would offer my body over and over at Your feet.

When will You meet me, O Chakrapani? Says Tuka, fulfill my chitta's desire. Leap to me swiftly, O Narayana.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Dear Panduranga, when will you come to meet me? I have grown weary and forlorn without you. Without you, no one feels like a friend to me. I want to throw my arms around your feet. I would wave my body over your feet again and again. When will you meet me, Chakrapani? Tuka says: fulfill my desire. Leap to me quickly, Narayana.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the lover's question asked of an absent God: when, and how long. Tukaram measures everything by Vitthal's absence; without him even other people stop feeling like company. The body itself becomes an offering, waved over the feet the way a lamp is waved in worship, spent gladly for the sake of contact. The plea ends in motion, asking God not merely to arrive but to leap, as if the longing has run out of patience for a slow approach.

GATHA 4393

Longing and Separation

Longing, naming the price of meeting

मराठी मूळ

पंचाग्नसाधन करूं धूम्रपान । काय तीर्थाटण करूं सांग ॥१॥
 सांग कोणे देशीं आहे तुझें गांव । घेऊनियां धांव येऊं तेथें ॥२॥
 सांग कांहीं वृत्त कोण करूं व्रत । जेणें कृपावंत होशील तूं ॥३॥
 वाटतें सेवटीं जालासि निष्ठ । न देसी उत्तर तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Shall I perform the five-fire penance, or inhale smoke in austerity? Shall I go on pilgrimages? Tell me. Tell me in which land Your abode lies, and I will run there at once.

Tell me what vow or observance I should undertake to make You gracious. Says Tuka, it seems that in the end You have become indifferent. You give me no answer.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Should I do the five-fire penance, or breathe in smoke as austerity? Should I go on pilgrimages? Tell me. Tell me in what land your village is, and I will run there at once. Tell me what observance, what vow I should keep, so that you will become merciful. Tuka says: it seems that in the end you have become hard. You give me no answer.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out the whole catalogue of effort, the harshest penances and the longest pilgrimages, and offers to do any of it, if only God will name the price of meeting. The questions are real offers, not boasts; he is ready to run to whatever land holds God's village. But the offers meet silence, and that silence is the real subject. The ending names the wound plainly: I have asked you everything and you have turned hard and given no answer, leaving the seeker holding a willingness God will not receive.

GATHA 4394

Longing and Separation

Longing, the God who is everywhere but here

मराठी मूळ

तुजवीण तीळभरी रिता ठाव । नाहीं ऐसें विश्व बोलतसे ॥1॥
 बोलिलेले योगी मुनी साधु संत । आहेसि या आंत सर्वांठायीं ॥घु॥
 मी तया विश्वासें आलों शरणागत । पूवाअचें अपत्य आहे तुझें ॥2॥
 अनंत ब्रह्मांडें भरोनि उरलासि । मजला जालासि कोठें नाहीं ॥3॥
 अंतपार नाहीं माझिया रूपासि । काय सेवकासि भेट देऊं ॥4॥
 ऐसें विचारिलें ह्यणोनि न येशी । सांग हृषीकेशी मायबापा ॥5॥
 तुका ह्यणे काय करावा उपाय । जेणें तुझे पाय आतुडति ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

They say there is not a sesame seed's space anywhere without You. Yogis, munis, saints, and sages have all declared that You are present within everything.

Trusting their word, I have come as a surrendered one. I am Your child from ages past.

You fill infinite universes and remain beyond them, yet for me alone You seem to have vanished. You have no end or limit to Your being.

How can You offer a meeting to this servant? Thinking thus, You do not come to me. Tell me then, O Lord, O my Father and Mother.

Says Tuka, what remedy can I find by which Your feet may be reached?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is not a sesame seed of space anywhere without you; the whole world says so. Yogis, sages, holy ones and saints have all said you are inside everything, in every place. Trusting that, I have come to you for refuge; I am your child from long ago. You fill endless universes and remain beyond them, yet to me you have become a nowhere. There is no end or limit to your form. So how can you give a meeting to your servant? Thinking like that, you do not come. Tell me, Hrishiksha, my mother and father. Tuka says: what means should I use, so that your feet come within my reach?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the teaching of God's all-pervadingness until it turns into an accusation. Everyone, the yogis and the saints, swears God fills every speck of space, and he came to refuge trusting exactly that word. Yet the God who is everywhere has become, for him, a nowhere; the limitless form seems to use its very limitlessness as an excuse not to show up for one small servant. He does not abandon the claim, he holds God to it, calling him mother and father, and asks the practical question that closes the poem: by what means can I actually reach the feet of a God who is supposed to be already here?

GATHA 4395

Longing and Separation

Longing, mountains of passion in the way

मराठी मूळ

काम क्रोध आड पडले पर्वत । राहिला अनंत पलीकडे ॥१॥
 नुलंघवे मज न सांपडे वाट । दुस्तर हा घाट वैरियांचा ॥२॥
 आतां कैचा मज सखा नारायण । गेला अंतरोन पांडुरंगा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने व्यर्थ मोलाचें शरीर । गेलें हा विचार कळों आला ॥४॥
 नव्हे निष्ठावंत तुज काय बोल । सेवेविण मोल मागतसें ॥५॥
 न घडे भजन शुद्ध भावनिष्ठा । आपुल्या अदृष्टावरी बोल ॥६॥
 पूवाअ जाले भक्त असंख्य विरक्त । काम क्रोध अहंते निदानिळलें ॥७॥
 ऐसी अंगवण नाहीं मज देवा । करीतसें हेवा भेटावयाचा ॥८॥
 कृपा करोनियां पुरवीं असोसी । आपुल्या िब्रदासी राखावया ॥९॥
 तुका ह्याने एक बाळक अज्ञातें । त्यासि हे पोसित मायबापें ॥१०॥
 अगा ये मधुसूदना माधवा । अगा ये कमळापती यादवा ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mountains of lust and anger stand in the way. The Infinite One remains on the other side.

I cannot cross over; I cannot find the path. This is a treacherous pass guarded by enemies.

How can Narayana now be my friend? He has gone beyond my reach, O Panduranga. Says Tuka, this precious body has gone to waste; this truth has become clear. I am not a person of steady faith.

What claim can I make on You? I have not served You, yet I ask for reward. Devotion and pure conviction do not come to me.

I can only blame my own fate. Previous devotees, countless and detached, conquered lust, anger, and ego.

I do not have such strength, O God, yet I long to meet You. Show mercy and fulfill my longing, for the sake of Your own pledges.

Says Tuka, I am an ignorant infant; my parents must nourish me. O come, Madhusudana, Madhava.

O come, Lord of Lakshmi, Yadava.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Lust and anger stand in the way like mountains. The Infinite One has stayed on the far side. I cannot cross over; I cannot find the path. This is a treacherous pass held by enemies. How can Narayana be my friend now? Panduranga has gone out of my reach. Tuka says: this precious body has gone to waste; this much has become clear. I am not a person of steady faith; what claim can I make on you? I ask for reward without having served. Pure devotion and firm feeling do not happen in me. I can only blame my own fate. In the past, countless devotees, free of attachment, put down lust, anger and pride. I do not have that strength, God, yet I am jealous for the meeting. Show mercy and fill up my craving, for the sake of your own pledges. Tuka says: there is one helpless infant; the mother and father feed it. Come, Madhusudana, Madhava. Come, Lord of Lakshmi, Yadava.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures his own passions as a mountain range that walls God off on the far side, with no path through and enemies holding the pass. Then he turns the blame inward and confesses he has no standing: no service done, no steady faith, no renunciation, only the demand for reward. He measures himself against the old detached devotees who conquered lust, anger and pride, and admits flatly that he lacks their strength. So he drops the claim of merit entirely and asks God to act for the sake of God's own promises, taking the place of a helpless infant whose parents must feed it precisely because it can do nothing for itself.

GATHA 4396

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, a litany of holy names

मराठी मूळ

अगा श्रीधरा केशवा । अगा बांधवा द्रौपदीच्या ॥1॥
 अगा विश्वव्यापका जनादनना । गोकुळवासी गोपिकारमणा ।
 अगा गुणनिधि गुणनिधाना । अगा मदनना कंसाचिया ॥ध्रु॥
 अगा सवौत्तमा सर्वेश्वरा । गुणातीता विश्वंभरा ।
 अगा निर्गुणा निराकारा । अगा आधारा दीनाचिया ॥2॥
 अगा उपमन्यसहाकारा । अगा शयना फणिवरा ।
 अगा काळकृतांत असुरा । अगा अपारा अलक्षा ॥3॥
 अगा वैकुंठनिवासा । अगा अयोध्यापति राजहंसा ।
 अगा ये पंढरिनिवासा । अगा सर्वेशा सहजरूपा ॥4॥
 अगा परमात्मा परमपुरुषा । अगा अव्यया जगदीशा ।
 अगा कृपाळुवा आपुल्या दासा । तोडीं भवपाशा तुका ह्याणे ॥5॥
 कैसी करुं तुझी सेवा । ऐसें सांगावें जी देवा ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Shridhara, Keshava. O brother of Draupadi.

O all-pervading Janardana, dweller in Gokul, beloved of the gopis. O treasure of virtues, O Destroyer of Kamsa.

O Supreme One, Lord of all, transcender of qualities, sustainer of the universe. O formless, shapeless One, O support of the helpless.

O protector of Upamanyu, O One who reclines on the great serpent. O Death to the demons, O boundless, imperceptible One.

O dweller of Vaikuntha, O sovereign of Ayodhya, O royal swan. O resident of Pandhari, O Lord of all, whose nature is effortless.

O supreme Self, O imperishable Lord of the world. O merciful One to Your servants, cut the bonds of worldly existence.

Says Tuka. Tell me, how shall I serve You? Instruct me, O God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Shridhara, Keshava. O brother of Draupadi. O all-pervading Janardana, dweller in Gokul, beloved of the gopis. O treasure of virtues, O destroyer of Kamsa. O highest of all, Lord of all, beyond the qualities, holder of the universe. O without quality, without form, O support of the helpless. O helper of Upamanyu, O one who lies on the great serpent. O death to the demons, O boundless, unseeable one. O dweller in Vaikuntha, O king of Ayodhya, royal swan. O dweller in Pandhari, O Lord of all, of natural form. O supreme Self, supreme Person. O changeless Lord of the world. O merciful one to your servant, cut the bonds of worldly life. Tuka says: how should I serve you? Tell me that, God.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga is one long calling, heaping Vitthal's names from every story and every level of the tradition into a single breath of address. The names move across opposites on purpose: the cowherd of Gokul and the Lord beyond all qualities, the slayer of demons and the support of the helpless, the form that lies on the serpent and the formless Self. By gathering Krishna, Rama and Vitthal into one stream of names, Tukaram insists they are one God answering to all of them. The piling of titles ends in two plain requests, and that is the point of the litany: cut my worldly bonds, and tell me how I am to serve you.

GATHA 4397

Confession and Sin

Confession, no qualification but mercy

मराठी मूळ

कैसा आणूं अनुभवा । होशी ठावा कैशापरी ॥१॥
 कर्मभ्रष्ट माझें मन । नेणें जप तप अनुष्ठान ।
 नाही इंद्रियांसि दमन । नव्हे मन एकविध॥२॥
 नेणे यातीचा आचार । नेणें भक्तीचा विचार ।
 मज नाही संतांचा आधार । नाहीं स्थिर बुद्धि माझी ॥३॥
 न सुटे मायाजाळ । नाहीं वैराग्याचें बळ ।
 न जिंकवती सबळ । काम क्रोध शरीरीं ॥४॥
 आतां राख कैसें तरि । मज नुपेक्षावें हरी ।
 तुझीं बिभेदें चराचरीं । तैसीं साच करीं तुका ह्मणे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How shall I bring You into experience? How shall I know You? My mind is fallen from right conduct; it knows no chanting, austerity, or discipline. My senses are not controlled; my mind is not one-pointed.

I do not know the customs of my caste. I do not know the path of devotion.

I have no support from the saints; my intellect is not steady. The net of illusion will not release me.

I have no strength of renunciation. The mighty forces of lust and anger in my body will not be conquered.

Even so, protect me somehow, O Hari. Do not forsake me.

Your pledges are proclaimed throughout creation; make them true. Says Tuka.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How shall I bring you into my experience? In what way will you become known to me? My mind has fallen from right action; it knows no chanting, no austerity, no discipline. My senses are not controlled; my mind is not one-pointed. I do not know the conduct of my caste. I do not know the way of devotion. I have no support of the saints; my intellect is not steady. The net of illusion will not let me go. I have no strength of renunciation. The strong forces of lust and anger in my body cannot be conquered. Even so, save me somehow; do not pass me over, Hari. Your pledges are proclaimed through all that moves and is still. Tuka says: make them true.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram empties out every credential a seeker might offer and finds he has none of them: no austerity, no controlled senses, no caste observance, no steady mind, no renunciation, not even the support of the saints. The honest inventory leaves him with a single line of appeal. Having nothing of his own to bargain with, he points to God's reputation instead, the pledges to rescue that are proclaimed across all of creation. The closing demand is sharp: those promises are spoken everywhere, so now make them true on me.

GATHA 4398

Devotion to Vitthal

Praise of Pandharpur, Kashi is here

मराठी मूळ

भीमातीरवासी । तेथें निश्चयेंसी काशी ॥१॥
 मुख्यमुक्तीचें माहेर । ऐसें जाणा पंढरपुर ॥२॥
 घडे भींवरेशीं स्नान । त्यासि पुन्हा नाहीं जन्म ॥३॥
 भाव धरोनि नेटका । मोक्ष जवळी ह्याणे तुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Dwelling on the banks of the Bhima, Kashi is assuredly present there. Know Pandharpur as the very birthplace of the highest liberation.

One who bathes in the Bhimra river shall never take birth again. Says Tuka, hold a firm and pure devotion, and liberation is close at hand.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He lives on the bank of the Bhima; Kashi is surely present there. Know Pandharpur as the very home of the highest liberation. Whoever bathes in the Bhima river takes no birth again. Tuka says: hold a clean, firm devotion, and liberation is near.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram folds the great pilgrim city of Kashi into Pandharpur, where Vitthal stands by the Bhima river, claiming the whole power of pilgrimage is already present at his own home shrine. Pandharpur is named the birthplace of the highest liberation, so that the devotee need not travel elsewhere to find release. A bath in the Bhima is said to end rebirth itself. The condition is set quietly at the end: the prize stays near only for one who keeps a clean and steady devotion.

GATHA 4399

Worldly Metaphors

Social criticism, nature does not change

मराठी मूळ

जाली गाढवी दुधाळ । महिमा गाईची पावेल ॥१॥
 श्वान जालेंसे चांगलें । तरी कां सांगातें जेवील ॥२॥
 जाली सिंदळा चांगली । तरि कां पतिव्रता जाली ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐशा जाति । काय उंचपण पावती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If a she-donkey gives milk, will it attain the status of a cow's? If a dog is groomed nicely, will it be invited to dine at the table? If a fallen woman becomes refined, does that make her a chaste wife? Says Tuka, can such natures ever attain true nobility?

IN PLAIN WORDS

If a she-donkey gives milk, will she reach the dignity of a cow? If a dog is groomed well, will it be invited to eat at the table with you? If a loose woman is made refined, does that make her a faithful wife? Tuka says: can such natures ever reach true high standing?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lines up three blunt images to argue that an inner nature is not changed by surface improvement. The point is not contempt for the donkey, the dog or the woman; it is a warning about the gap between appearance and reality, polish on the outside while the disposition stays what it was. Read against himself and the reader, the question turns into self-examination: am I trusting in grooming and pretense rather than a real change of heart. The poem leaves the question open and pointed, asking whether any merely cosmetic fix can buy genuine worth.

GATHA 4400

Devotion to Vitthal

Praise of Pandharpur, darshan alone frees

मराठी मूळ

काशीयात्रा पांच द्वारकेच्या तीन । पंढरीची जाण एक यात्रा ॥१॥
 काशी देह विटंबणें द्वारकें जाळणें । पंढरीशीं होणें ब्रह्मरूप ॥२॥
 अठरापगडयाती सकळ हि वैष्णव । दुजा नाहीं भाव पंढरीसि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे असो अथवा नसो भाव । दर्शनें पंढरिराव मोक्ष देतो ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Five pilgrimages to Kashi equal three to Dwarka, but one pilgrimage to Pandhari surpasses them all. At Kashi there is mortification of the body; at Dwarka, burning of the self; but at Pandhari, one becomes Brahman.

All eighteen castes and sub-castes become Vaishnavas there; no other distinction exists in Pandhari. Says Tuka, whether devotion is present or absent, the Lord of Pandhari grants liberation through His mere darshan.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Five pilgrimages to Kashi, three to Dwarka, but Pandhari is one single pilgrimage. At Kashi the body is tormented, at Dwarka the self is burned, but at Pandhari one becomes the form of Brahman. All eighteen castes and sub-castes become Vaishnavas there; no other distinction holds in Pandhari. Tuka says: whether you have devotion or not, the Lord of Pandhari gives liberation just by his darshan.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram ranks the famous holy places and sets Pandharpur above them all, because the others ask for hard mortification while Pandhari simply makes one Brahman. The second claim is social as much as spiritual: at Pandhari the eighteen castes dissolve into one community of Vaishnavas, with no rank left standing before Vitthal. The last line pushes furthest of all, saying the Lord of Pandhari grants liberation by sight alone, with or without the worshipper's devotion. It places the whole weight of release on God's freely given grace rather than on anything the pilgrim brings.

GATHA 4401

Prayers

Prayer for inward gifts

मराठी मूळ

हें चि मागणें विठाबाई । पायीं ठेवूनियां डोई ॥१॥
 शांति दया अंतःकरणीं । रंगो रामनामीं वाणी ॥२॥
 मूळ द्वंद्वाचें विघडो । निजानंदीं वृत्त जडो ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हरी । आतां आपुलेंसें करीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This alone is my prayer, O Vitthabai, placing my head at Your feet. May peace and compassion fill my chitta.

May my speech be dyed in Rama's Name. May the root of duality be severed.

May my attention be firmly fixed in the bliss of the Self. Says Tuka, O Hari, now make me Your own.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This alone is my asking, Vithabai, as I lay my head at your feet. Let peace and compassion be in my heart. Let my speech be steeped in Rama's Name. Let the root of duality break apart. Let my attention settle in the bliss of the Self. Tuka says: Hari, now make me your own.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks for nothing outward, no relief, no fortune, only a changed inner state. The gifts he names build on one another: peace and compassion in the heart, the tongue dyed through with Rama's Name, the very root of dividedness cut, and the mind coming to rest in the bliss of the Self. The closing line gathers all of it into a single surrender, asking Hari to take possession of him. The whole prayer treats union, not benefit, as the only thing worth begging for.

GATHA 4402

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, all acts for the One

मराठी मूळ

करोनि स्नानविधि आणि देवधर्म । क्रिया नित्यनेम तुजसाठीं ॥१॥
 तुजलागीं दानें तुजलागीं तीर्थो । सकळ ही व्रतें तुजलागीं ॥२॥
 सकळ चित्तवृत्त दिवस आणि राती । आवडशी प्रीती नारायणा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे याहो पवित्राच्या राया । प्राणविसावया पांडुरंगा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All my bathing rituals, worship, and religious observances are for You alone. For You are my charities, for You my pilgrimages, for You all my vows.

All the movements of my chitta, by day and by night, are drawn toward You in love, O Narayana. Says Tuka, O King of the Pure, O Panduranga, You are the resting place of my very life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My baths and rites, my worship and observances, my daily duties: they are all for You. My gifts are for You. My pilgrimages are for You. All my vows are for You. Every movement of my mind, by day and by night, is drawn to You in love, Narayana. Tuka says: You are the King of the Pure, Panduranga. You are the resting place of my very life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gathers up the whole apparatus of religion, bathing, worship, charity, pilgrimage, vows, and hands all of it to one address. None of it is an end in itself; each act is only a way of reaching Vitthal. He goes further than outward acts: even the constant motion of his mind, waking and sleeping, leans toward God in love. The benediction names the stakes plainly. Panduranga is not one item among his practices but the rest in which his life finally lies down.

GATHA 4403

Longing and Separation

Longing, the hidden God

मराठी मूळ

पहावा नयनीं विठ्ठल चि एक । कांहीं तरी सार्थक संसाराचें ॥१॥
 कोठें पाहों तुज कां गा लपालासि । कांहीं बोल मशीं नारायणा ॥२॥
 वाटते उदास मज दाही दिशा । तुजविण हृषीकेशा वांचोनियां ॥३॥
 नको ठेवूं मज आपणा वेगळें । बहुत कळवळें तुजलागीं ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे भेटी देई नारायणा । घडी कंठवेना तुजविण ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let my eyes see Vitthal and Vitthal alone; let there be some meaning to this worldly life. Where shall I look for You? Why do You hide? Speak something to me, O Narayana.

All ten directions feel desolate to me, living without You, O Hrishikesha. Do not keep me separate from Yourself; I long for You with great intensity.

Says Tuka, grant me Your presence, O Narayana. Without You, I cannot endure even a moment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let my eyes see Vitthal, only Vitthal. Then this worldly life has some meaning. Where shall I look for You? Why do You hide? Say something to me, Narayana. All ten directions feel empty to me, living without You, Hrishikesha. Do not keep me apart from Yourself. I long for You with all my heart. Tuka says: give me Your presence, Narayana. Without You I cannot bear even a moment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes seeing God the one thing that would justify being alive at all; without it, the round of worldly life is empty. He speaks to a God who is present but withheld, and he protests that silence directly: why do You hide, say something. The complaint is not doubt but ache. The whole of space feels deserted because the one face he wants is missing. The closing line sets the measure of his need: not years or days, but a single moment is too long to spend apart from Narayana.

GATHA 4404

Longing and Separation

Complaint, You saved others

मराठी मूळ

पूवाअ बहुतांचे केले प्रतिपाळ । तें मज सकळ श्रुत आहे ॥1॥
 अज अविनाश निर्गुण निरामय । विचारिलें काय त्यांचे वेळे ॥ध्रु॥
 तयांचियें वेळे होशी कृपावंत । माझा चि कां अंत पहातोसि ॥2॥
 नारद प्रह्लाद उपमन्य धुरु । त्यांचा अंगीकारु कैसा केला ॥3॥
 अंबरुषीसाटीं गर्भवास जाले । कां गा मोकलिलें कृपासिंधु ॥4॥
 धर्माचें उच्छष्ट अर्जुनाचीं घोडीं । आणीक सांकडीं कितीएक ॥5॥
 जालासि लुगडीं तया द्रौपदीचीं । न ये कां आमुची कृपा कांहीं ॥6॥
 तुका ह्मणे कां गा जालासि कठीण । माझा भाग सीण कोण जाणे ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the past You protected so many devotees. I am well aware of all that.

Unborn, imperishable, formless, and beyond sickness, did You consider any of this at their time of need? At their hour You became compassionate. Why then do You test only me to the end? Narada, Prahlad, Upamanyu, Dhruva: how did You embrace them? For Ambarisha's sake, You entered the womb.

Why then have You abandoned me, O ocean of mercy? You ate the leftovers of Dharma and groomed Arjuna's horses, and bore countless other hardships. You became Draupadi's saris.

Why does no mercy come for me? Says Tuka, why have You become so hard? Who knows the weight of my suffering?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the past You protected many. I know all of it well. You are unborn, imperishable, formless, free of all sickness. Did You weigh any of that when their hour came? At their hour You grew kind. Why then do You test only me to the end? Narada, Prahlad, Upamanyu, Dhruva: how You took them up. For Ambarisha You entered the womb. Why then have You abandoned me, ocean of mercy? You ate the leftovers of Dharma and groomed Arjuna's horses, and bore countless hardships. You became Draupadi's saris. Why does no mercy come for me? Tuka says: why have You turned so hard? Who knows the weight of my suffering?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram argues with God by reciting God's own record. He knows the stories: Narada, Prahlad, Dhruva lifted up, the Lord taking births and even menial service for the sake of devotees, becoming the cloth that covered Draupadi. The list is not praise but evidence in a case. If You acted then, why not now; why is my hour the one where You stand back and watch. The harshness is aimed at the apparent silence, and it rests on faith, not its loss. Only someone certain of God's mercy would dare to charge Him with withholding it, and the last line insists that the depth of his own suffering is being overlooked.

GATHA 4405

Longing and Separation

Longing, life without the meeting

मराठी मूळ

कासयासि व्यर्थ घातलें संसारीं । होतें तैसें जरी तुझे चित्तीं ॥१॥
 तुझिये भेटीची थोर असे आस । दिसोनी निरास आली मज ॥२॥
 आतां काय जिणें जालें निरर्थक । वैकुंठनायक भेटे चि ना ॥३॥
 आडलासि काय कृपेच्या सागरा । रकुमादेवीवरा सोडरिया ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे देई चरणाची सेवा । नुपेक्षीं केशवा मायबापा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why did You cast me into this world for nothing, if this was Your intention all along? I had such great longing for Your meeting, but now it seems hopeless. What is the use of living now? Life has become meaningless if the Lord of Vaikuntha will not meet me.

Are You obstructed somehow, O ocean of grace, O husband of Rukmadevi, O my dear One? Says Tuka, grant me the service of Your feet. Do not forsake me, O Keshava, my parent.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why did You cast me into this world for nothing, if this was Your plan all along? I had such great hope of meeting You, and now it looks hopeless. What use is living now? Life is meaningless if the Lord of Vaikuntha will not meet me. Are You blocked somehow, ocean of grace, husband of Rukmadevi, my own dear One? Tuka says: give me the service of Your feet. Do not forsake me, Keshava, my father and mother.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures his whole birth against one outcome: the meeting with God. If that was never to come, then being thrown into the world was pointless, and the protest carries an edge of accusation. He confesses that his great hope now looks like despair, and he says outright that a life without this meeting is empty. Half teasing, half pleading, he asks whether something is obstructing the ocean of grace itself. The prayer narrows to its smallest form: not a vision, just the service of those feet, and the cry of a child to a parent not to be left behind.

GATHA 4406

Faith and Trust

Faith, God feeds the helpless

मराठी मूळ

पक्षीयाचे घरीं नाहीं सामुगरी । त्यांची चिंता करी नारायण ॥१॥
 अजगर जनावर वारुळांत राहे । त्याजकडे पाहे पांडुरंग ॥२॥
 चातक हा पक्षी नेघे भूमिजळ । त्यासाठीं घननीळ नित्य वर्षे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी पिप्पलिकांची जात । पुरवीं मनोरथ पांडुरंगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The bird has no provisions in its home, yet Narayana takes care of its needs. The python and other creatures dwell in anthills, yet Panduranga watches over them.

The chataka bird refuses to drink earthly water; for its sake the dark-hued Lord rains from the clouds. Says Tuka, we are of the race of ants. Fulfill our heart's desire, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The bird keeps no store in its nest, yet Narayana cares for its needs. The python and other creatures live in anthills, and Panduranga watches over them. The chataka bird will not drink water from the earth; for its sake the dark Lord rains from the clouds. Tuka says: we are of the race of ants. Fulfill our heart's desire, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes his case for trust from the plainest evidence in nature. The bird with no granary, the creatures hidden in anthills, are all provided for by a care they neither earn nor arrange. The chataka, which by legend drinks only rain and refuses standing water, is the sharpest image: for one creature's stubborn need, the very clouds are moved to pour. He then places himself lowest of all, among ants, and lets the argument finish itself. If God tends the smallest and most helpless, then his own heart's desire is safe to ask for.

GATHA 4407

The Power of the Name

The Name, a free shop

मराठी मूळ

रामनाम हा चि मांडिला दुकान । आहे वानोवाण घ्यारे कोणी ॥१॥
 नका कोणी करुं घेता रे आळस । वांटितों तुह्यांस फुकाचें हें ॥२॥
 संचितासारिखे पडे त्याच्या हाता । फारसें मागतां तरी न ये ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने आह्मीं सांठविलें सार । उरलिया थार विचारितां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have set up a shop of Rama's Name. There are goods in plenty; come, take what you will.

Let no one be lazy about taking them; I am distributing this free of charge. Each receives according to their merit; if you ask for too much, it cannot be given.

Says Tuka, we have stored the essence. What remains, upon examination, is of the highest quality.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have set up a shop, and the only goods are the Name of Rama. There is plenty; come, anyone, take it. Do not be lazy about taking. I am giving it away for free. Each one receives according to what they have stored up; ask for too much and it will not come. Tuka says: I have laid in the essence. Look it over: what is left is the best.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram casts himself as a shopkeeper whose single stock is the Name of Rama, and he is not selling it but giving it away. The only barrier is the customer's own sloth in coming to take. There is one honest condition: what each person can receive matches the merit they bring, so greed that demands more than it is ready for goes unfilled. The point is that the supply itself is endless and unpriced; the limit lies in us, not in him. And the essence he has stored, the Name, is offered as the finest thing on the shelf.

GATHA 4408

Ecstasy and Joy

Reunion, after many births

मराठी मूळ

बहुजन्मां शेवटीं स्वामी तुझी भेटी । बहु मोह पोटीं थोर जाला ॥१॥
 बहु पुरें पाहिलीं बहु दिशा शोधिली । बहु चिंता वाहिली दुर्भराची ॥२॥
 बहु काळ गेले अनुचित केलें । बहु नाहीं गाडलें नाम तुझें ॥३॥
 ऐसा मी अपराधी अगा कृपानिधि । बहु संतां संनिधि ठेवीं तुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

After so many births, at last, O Lord, Your meeting has come. Much delusion had grown great within my chitta.

I wandered through many cities and searched in every direction, carrying the heavy burden of unbearable anxiety. Much time passed in wrongdoing; Your Name was not sung enough.

Such a sinner am I, O treasure of mercy. Says Tuka, keep me always in the company of the saints.

IN PLAIN WORDS

After many births, at last, Lord, the meeting with You has come. Great delusion had grown large inside me. I wandered through many cities, searched in every direction, carried a heavy weight of unbearable worry. Much time passed in wrong deeds; I did not sing Your Name enough. Such a sinner I am, treasure of mercy. Tuka says: keep me always near the saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks back from the moment of meeting across the long road that led to it. Birth after birth was spent in delusion, in restless searching from city to city, and under a load of anxiety he calls unbearable. He owns the waste plainly: time misspent, the Name left unsung, and names himself a sinner without softening it. Yet the confession opens into a single request that protects the gain. Keep me with the saints, because their company is what holds a wandering heart in place.

GATHA 4409

Longing and Separation

Longing, urgent for the sight

मराठी मूळ

कोण उपाव करुं भेटावया । जाळावी हे काया ऐसें वाटे ॥१॥
 सोडोनियां गांव जाऊं वनांतरा । रुकुमादेवीवरा पहावया॥२॥
 करुं उपवास शोधूं हें शरीर । न धरवे धीर नारायणा॥३॥
 जाती आयुष्याचे दिवस हे चारी । मग केव्हां हरी भेटशील ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं सांगा विचारोनि । विठो तुझे मनीं असेल तें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What remedy shall I try to meet You? I feel like burning this body. Leaving the village, I would go to the wilderness to see the husband of Rukmadevi.

I will fast and discipline this body. I cannot hold my patience, O Narayana.

These few days of life are passing; when then will You meet me, O Hari? Says Tuka, tell me something after due thought, O Vittho. Whatever is in Your mind, let it be.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What remedy can I try to meet You? I feel like burning this body. I would leave the village and go into the forest to see the husband of Rukmadevi. I will fast and discipline this body. I cannot hold my patience, Narayana. These few days of life are passing. When then will You meet me, Hari? Tuka says: think and tell me something, Vittho. Whatever is in Your mind, let it be.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is past calm waiting; he casts about for any means and reaches for extremes, even the wish to burn the body that keeps him from God. He would abandon home for the forest, fast, drive the body hard, anything to force the meeting. Under the impatience lies a real fear: life is short, the days are running out, and the encounter still has not come. So he presses for an answer, asking God to speak a verdict. The last line bends the urgency back into surrender. After all the demands, he hands the outcome over: whatever is in Your mind, let that be.

GATHA 4410

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the only kin

मराठी मूळ

माय बाप बंधु सोयरा सांगाती । तूं चि माझी प्रीति गण गोत ॥१॥
 शरण आलीं त्यांचीं वारिलीं दुरितें । तारिले पतित असंख्यात ॥२॥
 इतर कोण जाणे पावलें विश्रांति । न येतां तुजप्रति शरणागत ॥३॥
 तयामध्ये मज ठेवीं नारायणा । लक्ष्मीरमणा सोडरिया ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे देई दर्शनाचा लाभ । जे पाय दुर्लभ ब्रह्मादिकां ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Mother, father, brother, kinsman, companion: You alone are my beloved, my clan, my family. Those who came to You for refuge had their sins removed.

Countless wrongdoers have been saved. Who else can give true rest unless one comes to You as a surrendered soul? Place me among them, O Narayana, O husband of Lakshmi, O dear One.

Says Tuka, grant me the gift of Your darshan, those feet that are rare even for Brahma and the gods.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Mother, father, brother, kinsman, companion: You alone are my love, my clan, my family. Those who came to You for refuge had their sins taken away. Countless fallen ones have been saved. Who else gives true rest, unless one comes to You as a surrendered soul? Place me among them, Narayana, husband of Lakshmi, my dear One. Tuka says: grant me the gift of Your sight, those feet that are rare even for Brahma and the gods.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram dissolves every ordinary tie into one. Mother, father, brother, friend, the whole web of kinship is replaced by God alone. The ground for this is God's record with those who surrender: their sins lifted, countless fallen ones rescued, a rest that nothing else can give. So the prayer is simply to be counted among the surrendered, not singled out. The closing line marks how great the gift is. The sight of these feet is rare even for Brahma and the gods, yet it is offered to one who comes empty-handed and admits he has no other family.

GATHA 4411

Prayers

Prayer, drive out the enemies

मराठी मूळ

पाप ताप माझे गुणदोष निवारीं । कृष्णा विष्णु हरी नारायणा ॥1॥
 काम क्रोध वैरी घालोनि बाहेरी । तूं राहें अंतरीं पांडुरंगा ॥ध्रु॥
 करिशील तरी नव्हे कांइ एक । निमिनलें त्रैलोक्य हेळामात्रें ॥2॥
 समर्थासि काय आह्मीं शिकवावें । तुका ह्मणे यावें पांडुरंगा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Remove my sins, afflictions, virtues, and faults, O Krishna, Vishnu, Hari, Narayana. Drive out the enemies of lust and anger, and dwell within me, O Panduranga.

If You will it, nothing is impossible. You created the three worlds with a mere glance.

What need is there for the Capable One to be instructed by us? Says Tuka, simply come, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Take away my sins, my afflictions, my virtues and my faults, Krishna, Vishnu, Hari, Narayana. Throw out the enemies, lust and anger, and come live within me, Panduranga. If You will it, nothing is impossible. You made the three worlds with a single glance. What can we teach the One who is able to do all? Tuka says: only come, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks God to clear out not only his sins and faults but his virtues too, since clinging to one's own goodness is itself a tie; he wants the inner room emptied so God can live there. The enemies he names by name, lust and anger, are to be thrown out so the heart can become a dwelling. His confidence rests on God's power: One who made three worlds with a glance can surely do this small thing. He refuses to dictate the method, since instructing the all-able would be absurd. The whole prayer shrinks to one word of trust. Just come.

GATHA 4412

Longing and Separation

Longing, home of the homeless

मराठी मूळ

ये गा महाविष्णु अनंतभुजाच्या । आह्मां अनाथांच्या माहेरा ये ॥1॥
 भेटावया तुज ओढे माझा जीव । एकवेळा पाय दावीं डोळां ॥ध्रु॥
 आणीक हे आर्त नाहीं नारायणा । ओढे हे वासना भेटावया ॥2॥
 वाटे चितीं काय करावा विचार । चरण सुंदर पहावया ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझे पुरवीं मनोरथ । येई गा न संवरीत पांडुरंगा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Come, O great Vishnu of infinite arms, come to us, the home of the homeless. My jiva strains to meet You.

Show me Your feet just once before my eyes. I have no other longing, O Narayana.

This desire, this yearning, is only to meet You. I keep wondering in my chitta what to do, how to behold those beautiful feet.

Says Tuka, fulfill my chitta's desire. Come without restraint, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Come, great Vishnu of countless arms, come to us, the home of the homeless. My life strains toward meeting You. Show me Your feet just once before my eyes. I have no other longing, Narayana. This desire, this yearning, is only to meet You. I keep wondering in my mind what I should do to see those beautiful feet. Tuka says: fulfill my heart's desire. Come without holding back, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls on the vast cosmic Vishnu and asks Him to become something small and intimate: a home for those who have none. His whole life pulls toward one encounter, and he keeps the request modest, just one sight of the feet. He is careful to say there is no second wish hidden behind it; this single yearning has no rival. The restless turning of his mind, wondering what act could earn the vision, is part of the ache. The final plea asks God to drop all reserve and come fully, without measuring what He gives.

GATHA 4413

Prayers

The Name, the glory of Rama

मराठी मूळ

काय पाहतोसि कृपेच्या सागरा । नराच्या नरेंद्रा पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 नामाचा प्रताप िब्रदाचा बडिवार । करावा साचार नारायणा ॥२॥
 कलीमाजी देव बौद्धरूप जाला । जगाचिया बोला लागूं नका ॥३॥
 माय पुत्रा काय मारूं पाहे कळी । जगाची ढवाळी काय काज ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे या हो कृपेच्या सागरा । रुकुमादेवीवरा मायबापा ॥५॥
 धन्य तो एक संसारी । रामनाम जो उच्चारी ॥६॥
 तुका ह्मणे रामनामी । कृतकृत्य जालों आह्मी ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What are You waiting for, O ocean of grace, O King of kings, O Panduranga? Make the glory of the Name and the honor of Your pledges come true, O Narayana. In this age of Kali, God has taken the form of Buddha.

Do not heed the words of the world. Can Kali, the dark age, truly destroy a mother's son? What business is the world's gossip? Says Tuka, come, O ocean of mercy, O husband of Rukmadevi, O my parent. Blessed is that one in this world who utters the Name of Rama.

Says Tuka, through Rama's Name, we have become perfectly fulfilled.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What are You waiting for, ocean of grace, King of kings, Panduranga? Make the glory of the Name and the honor of Your pledges come true, Narayana. In this age of Kali, God took the form of Buddha. Do not listen to the talk of the world. Can the dark age really kill a mother's son? What is the world's gossip to us? Tuka says: come, ocean of mercy, husband of Rukmadevi, my father and mother. Blessed is the one in this world who speaks the Name of Rama. Tuka says: through Rama's Name, we have become wholly fulfilled.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses God to act on God's own reputation. The Name has a glory and the Lord has standing pledges; let them be proved true rather than left as words. He treats the dark age of Kali as a threat that cannot finally harm one who belongs to God, a mother's son, and tells God to ignore the chatter of the world that says otherwise. The same dismissal is his own freedom: the world's gossip is no business of the devotee. The poem then resolves into pure assurance. To speak Rama's Name is blessedness, and through it Tukaram declares himself already complete, with nothing left to win.

GATHA 4414

Faith and Trust

Faith, God comes to your door

मराठी मूळ

येइल घरा देव न धरीं संदेहा । फकिराचा यावा व्हावा जेव्हा ॥1॥
 होइल फकीर योगी महानुभाव । घडीघडी देव सांभाळील ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसें बोलती बहुत । येणे गुणें संत जाले राम ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God will come to your home; do not hold any doubt about it. When one becomes a true fakir, a yogi, a great soul, then God will watch over you at every moment.

Says Tuka, many speak thus, and by this truth the saints have become one with Rama.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God will come to your home. Do not hold any doubt about it. When a man becomes a true fakir, a yogi, a great soul, then God will watch over him at every moment. Tuka says: many speak this way; and by this very thing the saints have become one with Rama.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is making a flat promise and naming what it costs. God comes to your house; do not waste energy doubting it. But the coming is tied to a condition: you must become inwardly poor and surrendered, a fakir, a yogi, a great soul, someone with nothing left to guard. To such a one God gives constant, moment by moment care. Tukaram adds that this is not his private idea: many have said it, and it is by exactly this that the saints crossed over into Rama.

GATHA 4415

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the wasted human birth

मराठी मूळ

भक्तीवीण जिणें जळो लाजिरवाणें । संसार भोगणें दुःखमूळ ॥१॥
 वीसलक्ष योनि वृक्षामाजी घ्याव्या । जलचरीं भोगाव्या नवलक्ष ॥२॥
 अकरालक्ष योनि किडणांमाजी घ्याव्या । दशलक्ष भोगाव्या पक्ष्यांमध्ये ॥३॥
 तीसलक्ष योनि पशूंचीये घरीं । मानवाभीतरीं चारलक्ष ॥४॥
 एकएक योनि कोटिकोटि फेरा । मनुष्यदेहाचा वारा मग लागे ॥५॥
 तुका ह्याने तेव्हां नरदेह नरा । तयाचा मातेरा केला मूढें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Life without devotion is shameful and fit to be burned. Enduring worldly existence is the root of all suffering.

Twenty lakh forms of life must be endured among trees; nine lakh among water creatures. Eleven lakh forms among insects and worms; ten lakh among birds.

Thirty lakh forms among animals, and four lakh in the human species. Each form must be passed through crores and crores of times before the breeze of a human birth reaches one.

Says Tuka, when at last the human body is obtained, the fool squanders it to ruin.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A life without devotion is shameful; let it be burned. To go on enduring the world is the root of suffering. Twenty lakh wombs must be passed among the trees. Nine lakh among the creatures of the water. Eleven lakh among insects and worms. Ten lakh among the birds. Thirty lakh in the houses of the animals. Four lakh among human kinds. Each form is taken crores upon crores of times, and only then does the breeze of a human birth touch you. Tuka says: and when at last the human body is reached, the fool grinds it to dust.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is counting the price of a human birth so you will not throw it away. He stacks up the old reckoning of the wombs: lakhs upon lakhs of forms among trees, water creatures, worms, birds, animals, each entered crores of times, before a soul is finally born as a human being. The number is meant to land as weight, not arithmetic: a human life is the rarest opening in an almost endless circuit. To live that life without devotion is to burn the one chance, and the suffering of going round again is the result. The sharp word is for the pattern in any of us that treats this birth as cheap, not for any particular person.

GATHA 4416

Prayers

Prayer, the only refuge

मराठी मूळ

तुजवांचून कोणा शरण । जाऊं आतां कर जोडून ॥१॥
 कोण करील माझें साहे । चितीं विचारुनि पाहें ॥२॥
 तूं तंव कृपेचा सागर । दीनबंधु जगदोद्वार ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने निका । भवसिंधु तारक नौका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without You, to whom shall I go for refuge, with folded hands? Who will come to my aid? Consider this carefully in Your chitta. You are the ocean of compassion, the Friend of the lowly, the Redeemer of the world.

Says Tuka, You are the pure and trustworthy boat for crossing the ocean of worldly existence.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Without You, to whom shall I go for refuge, with folded hands? Who will be my help? Consider it carefully in Your heart and see. You are the ocean of compassion, the friend of the lowly, the lifter of the whole world.
 Tuka says: You are the good and trusty boat that carries me across the sea of this worldly life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is closing every other door so that only one remains. He asks where else he could go: with folded hands he can find no second refuge, no one else to come to his aid. Then he turns the question on God, telling Him to look in His own heart and see that there is no one else either. He names what God is, ocean of mercy, friend of the lowly, redeemer of the world, and so makes the plea unrefusable. The poem ends in a single image: God is the one seaworthy boat across the ocean of birth and death.

GATHA 4417

Prayers

Prayer, the honor of the one held

मराठी मूळ

हातीं धरिलियाची लाज । देवा असोंदे गा तुज ॥१॥
 आहें अमंगळ दुर्बळ । होई दीन तूं दयाळ ॥२॥
 बाळ सेंबडें मातेसि । काय नावडे तियेसि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने जाणें । करोनि देहाचें सांडणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Honor the one You have taken by the hand, O God; let that dignity remain with You. I am inauspicious and weak; I am lowly, and You are merciful.

Does a mother not love her child even when it is dirty and covered with snot? Says Tuka, I know I must let go of this body in the end.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The honor of the one You have taken by the hand is Yours, O God; let it rest with You. I am unholy and weak; I am lowly, and You are merciful. Does a mother turn away from her own child because it is dirty and runny-nosed? Tuka says: I know this, that in the end I must lay down this body and go.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is handing God the responsibility for his own worth. Once God has taken him by the hand, his reputation is no longer his to defend; it has become God's honor to keep. He freely admits he is unclean and weak, and sets that against God's mercy. The mother and the snot-nosed child is the whole argument: love does not wait for the child to be clean, so his filth is no reason for God to let go. And he knows the stakes are final, since the body itself will soon be set down; the hand that holds him must be the one that does not.

GATHA 4418

Social Criticism

Social criticism, guru and disciple for hire

मराठी मूळ

जळोजळो तें गुरुपण । जळोजळो तें चेलपण ॥१॥
गुरु आला वेशीद्वारीं । शिष्य पळतों खिंडोरीं ॥२॥
काशासाठीं जालें येणें । त्याचें आलें वर्षासन ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे चेला । गुरु दोघे हि नरकाला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Cursed be such guruhood, cursed be such discipleship. When the guru arrives at the village gate, the disciple runs away by the back lane.

Why did this guru come? Only because his annual stipend was due. Says Tuka, both disciple and guru are headed for hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Burn such guruhood; burn such discipleship. The guru comes to the village gate, and the disciple runs off down the back lane. What did this coming amount to? His yearly stipend had fallen due. Tuka says: disciple and guru, both of them, are bound for hell.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is attacking a teaching that runs on money instead of truth. The guru arrives, and the disciple, who should be running toward him, slips away by the back alley; the warmth is gone. The visit was never for the soul: the guru showed up because his annual payment was owed, so the bond is a transaction wearing holy clothes. Tukaram sends both to hell to mark how empty it is when the teacher comes for his fee and the student dodges the debt. The verse points at the hollow pattern of a relationship without devotion, asking us to test our own teaching and following, not to despise any one teacher.

GATHA 4419

Prayers

Prayer, come quickly Lord of Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

अगा पंढरीच्या राया । वेगीं येई तूं सावया ॥१॥
 दीनबंधु तुझें नाम । देई आपुलें आह्मां प्रेम ॥२॥
 जीवनकळा तूं विश्वाची । तूं चि माउली अनाथाची ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे पुंडलिका । ठेवीं मस्तकीं पादुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*O Lord of Pandhari, come quickly to my aid. 'Friend of the lowly' is Your Name; give me Your divine love.
 You are the life-giving art of the whole world, the Mother of the orphaned. Says Tuka, O Pundalik, place the
 Lord's sandals upon my head.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

O King of Pandhari, come quickly to my aid. Friend of the lowly is Your Name; give us Your own love. You are the living power of the universe; You alone are the mother of the orphan. Tuka says: O Pundalik, place the Lord's sandals upon my head.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is calling the Lord of Pandhari to come at once and is reminding Him of His own Name. If Vitthal is called the friend of the lowly, then the lowly may demand the love that the Name promises. He widens the appeal: this is the one who is the life of all the world and the mother of every orphan, so the orphaned have a claim on Him. At the close he turns to Pundalik, the devotee who first drew Vitthal to Pandhari, and asks for the simplest blessing: the Lord's sandals set on his head, surrender made visible.

GATHA 4420

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the Name holds all

मराठी मूळ

विटेवरी समचरण । तो हा रूक्मिणीरमण ॥१॥
 वेदशास्त्रा माहेर । केले दासा उपकार ॥२॥
 नामापाशीं चारी मुक्ति । पहा हृदयीं प्रतीति ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे कळा । अंगीं जयाच्या सकळा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*He stands with even feet upon the brick, Rukmini's Beloved. The Vedas and scriptures find their home in Him.
 He has blessed His servants with great grace. The four kinds of liberation reside near the Name; experience this
 truth within your heart.*

Says Tuka, all sacred arts reside in His being.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He stands with even feet upon the brick, the Beloved of Rukmini. In Him the Vedas and the scriptures find their home. He has done His servants this great kindness. The four kinds of liberation wait close beside the Name; look, and feel the proof of it in your own heart. Tuka says: every sacred power lives in His body.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is gathering everything into the figure on the brick at Pandhari. The Lord stands with feet set level, the Beloved of Rukmini, and the Vedas and scriptures are not above Him but find their source, their home, in Him. His kindness to his servants is to put the whole of that within reach of the Name. The four kinds of liberation that seekers strain after are not far off; they stand beside the Name, and the proof is not in argument but in the heart of anyone who tests it. So all sacred power is present in this one form, and the Name is the door to it.

GATHA 4421

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the snares of maya

मराठी मूळ

सकळ हे माया नागवे कवणा । भांबाविलें जना दाही दिशा ॥१॥
 आशा तृष्णा दंभ लागलीं हीं पाठी । नेदी बैसों हाटीं मोह ठायीं ॥२॥
 काम क्रोध घरा लावितील आगी । निंदा हिंसा दोघी पळतां खाती ॥३॥
 लाज पुढें उभी राहिली आडवी । ते करी गाढवी थोर घात ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे चिंता घाली गर्भवासीं । ओढोनियां पाशीं चहूंकडे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This maya deceives everyone, bewildering people in all ten directions. Desire, greed, and pretense follow close behind; delusion does not let one rest anywhere.

Lust and anger set the house on fire; slander and malice devour you even as you flee. Shame stands before you, blocking the way, and it causes the greatest ruin.

Says Tuka, worry drags you into the womb again, pulling you from every side.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All this is maya; whom does it not strip bare? It throws people into confusion in all ten directions. Hope, craving, and pretense cling close at your back; delusion will not let you sit still anywhere. Lust and anger set fire to the house; slander and malice devour you even as you run. Shame plants itself across your path and works the greatest ruin. Tuka says: worry casts you back into the womb, dragging you by the noose from every side.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the trap so plainly that you can feel it close. Maya leaves no one untouched; it spins people about in every direction. Then he lists the agents one by one: hope and craving and show that follow at your heels, lust and anger that burn the home down, slander and malice that eat you while you flee, and shame that blocks the

road and ruins you. The point of the catalogue is that there is no exit while these run you. The end names the cost: worry itself drags you back into another birth, a noose pulling from all sides, which is why the soul must turn to God rather than fight the trap on its own terms.

GATHA 4422

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, Pandhari the crowning jewel

मराठी मूळ

सकळतीर्थाहुनि । पंढरी हें मुगुटमणि ॥१॥
 काय सांगों तेथिल शोभा । रमावल्लभ जेथें उभा ॥२॥
 न लभे व्रततीर्थदानीं । तें या विठ्ठलदर्शनीं ॥३॥
 साधु संत गाती नाम । सकळ भूतांचा विश्राम ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे स्तुती । करुं काय सांगों किती ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Among all sacred places, Pandhari is the crowning jewel. How can I describe the beauty of the place where the beloved of Lakshmi stands? What cannot be obtained through vows, pilgrimages, and charity is gained by the mere sight of Vitthal.

Saints sing the Name there, bringing peace to all beings. Says Tuka, how much praise can I offer? How much can I say?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Of all holy places, Pandhari is the crown jewel. How can I tell its beauty, where the Beloved of Lakshmi stands? What no vow, no pilgrimage, no gift can win is gained here in the sight of Vitthal. Holy men and saints sing the Name here, and all beings find their rest. Tuka says: how much praise can I make? How much can I tell?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is setting Pandhari above every other sacred place and saying why. It is the crowning jewel of all tirthas, because there the Beloved of Lakshmi himself stands waiting. The claim is sharp: what years of vows, pilgrimages, and charity cannot earn is given freely just by laying eyes on Vitthal. There the saints sing the Name, and that singing brings rest to every creature. He ends overwhelmed, admitting his praise can never reach the size of the thing he is praising.

GATHA 4423

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, be what you are

मराठी मूळ

गव्हांच्या घुगऱ्या । नाचण्यांच्या पुऱ्या । बऱ्या त्या चि बऱ्या । पाधाणी त्या पाधाणी ॥१॥
 काय थोरपण । वांयां जाळावा तो शीण । कारणपें भिन्न । निवडे तें निराळें ॥२॥
 रुचि वोजेपाशी । गरज ते जैशीतैशी । करूं नका नाशी । खावें खाणें जालें तें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मोठा । काय करावा तो ताटा । नाहीं वीण निटा । पाविजेत मारग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wheat makes wheat cakes, and millet makes millet bread. The staples remain staples and the side dishes remain side dishes.

What is the use of pretending to a greatness that only wastes effort? What differs from the ordinary stands apart on its own. The real taste lies with the substance; the need is what it is.

Do not destroy what is; eat the food that has been prepared. Says Tuka, what use is a big platter if one cannot find the straightforward path?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wheat makes wheat dumplings; millet makes millet bread. A staple stays a staple; a side dish stays a side dish. What good is pretending to greatness? It only burns up effort for nothing. What truly differs stands apart on its own. The taste lies with the real substance; the need is whatever it is. Do not throw it away; eat the food that has been cooked. Tuka says: what use is a great platter if you cannot find the plain, straight road?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is using kitchen plainness to puncture pretense. Wheat yields wheat cakes and millet yields millet bread; each thing is what it is, staple or side dish, and putting on airs of being more only wastes your effort. Real worth shows itself without being claimed. So he says: stop straining after a borrowed greatness, take the food actually cooked in front of you, do not waste it. The closing line is the lesson: a grand platter is worthless if you have lost the simple, direct path, and the straight road matters more than any show.

GATHA 4424

Renunciation

Renunciation, company shapes you

मराठी मूळ

आपुलिया ऐसें करी । संग धरी ज्याचा हो ॥१॥
 ह्मणउनि परपरते । वरवरते पळतसें ॥२॥
 लोभिक तें लोभा लावी । बांधल्या गोवी वांचूनि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नामगोठी । पुरे भेटी तुझी देवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whoever you keep company with makes you like himself. That is why I flee from the worldly and the superficial. The greedy one infects others with greed. He traps all who are caught in his net. Says Tuka, let our conversation be of the Name alone. Your meeting, O God, is enough for me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whoever you keep company with makes you into himself. That is why I flee from the worldly and the shallow, keeping well away. The greedy man fastens his greed onto others; he ties up everyone caught in his net. Tuka says: let our talk be of the Name alone. Your meeting, O God, is enough for me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is explaining why he keeps his distance from certain company. Whoever you sit with remakes you in his own likeness, so company is not a small matter; it is a kind of fate. That is why he runs from the worldly and the superficial, staying at the edges. He gives the clearest case: a greedy man passes his greed to those around him, binding them in his own net. So he sets the one company he wants, talk of the Name, and the one meeting that satisfies him completely, the meeting with God.

GATHA 4425

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the two-faced world

मराठी मूळ

बरें जालीयाचे अवघें सांगाती । वाइटाचे अंतीं कोणी नाहीं ॥१॥
 नोहे मातापिता नोहे कांतासुत । इतरांची मात काय सांगों ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे जन दुतोंडी सावज । सांपडे सहज तिकडे धरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When times are good, everyone is your companion. When things go wrong, no one remains.

Neither mother nor father, neither spouse nor child stands by you. What can be said of others? Says Tuka, the world is a two-faced beast; it seizes whatever prey falls easiest to hand.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When things go well, everyone is your companion. When things go wrong, at the end no one is there. Not mother, not father, not wife, not son. What is there to say of the rest? Tuka says: the world is a two-faced beast; it seizes whatever prey falls easiest to hand.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is stripping the comfort out of human company so you will look elsewhere for refuge. In good times the companions crowd around; the moment trouble comes, they are gone. He names the closest ties to make the point sting: even mother, father, wife, and child do not finally stand by you, so the rest matter even less. The closing image is hard: the world is a two-faced animal that simply takes whatever victim is nearest and easiest. The unspoken turn is that only God is the companion who does not desert, which is why such company cannot be trusted with your soul.

GATHA 4426

Prayers

Helplessness, surrender at the feet

मराठी मूळ

मिथ्या आहे सर्व अवघें हें मायिक । न कळे विवेक मज कांहीं ॥1॥
 सर्व बाजागिरी वाटती ही खरी । पहातां येथें उरी कांहीं नाहीं ॥ध्रु॥
 आतां मज दुःख वाटतें अंतरीं । उपाय झडकरी सांग कांहीं ॥2॥
 पुढें कोण गति न कळे सर्वथा । तुझे पायीं माथा ठेवियेला ॥3॥
 करणें तें करीं सुखें आतां हरी । तुज म्यां निर्घारीं धरियेलें ॥4॥
 स्वहित तें काय न कळे सर्वथा । तारीं तूं अनंता तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*All of this is false, all of it illusory. I do not understand any discrimination.**All the tricks of the world seem real, yet upon examination, nothing remains. Now my chitta is heavy with sorrow.**Tell me some swift remedy. I cannot foresee what lies ahead.**I have placed my head at Your feet. Do with me as You will, O Hari.**I have firmly chosen You. Says Tuka, I do not know what is truly good for me. Save me, O Ananta.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

All of this is false. All of it is illusion. I do not understand any discernment. The tricks of the world all seem real to me, yet when I look closely, nothing remains here. Now sorrow weighs in my heart. Tell me some swift remedy. I cannot see at all what lies ahead. I have laid my head at Your feet. Do whatever You must do, gladly now, O Hari. I have firmly taken hold of You. Tuka says: I do not know at all what is good for me. You save me, O Ananta.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram admits he has lost the ability to tell the real from the false. The world's tricks look solid, yet they dissolve under any honest look, and that leaves him heavy with sorrow and blind to what comes next. So he stops trying to manage his own rescue: he puts his head at God's feet and tells Hari to do whatever needs doing. The confession is the point. He does not even know what is good for him, so he hands that knowing over too, and asks Ananta simply to save him.

GATHA 4427

Autobiography

Defiance, lion to the wicked

मराठी मूळ

अवघ्या कोल्हणांचें वर्म अंडीं । धरितां तोंडीं खीळ पडे ॥१॥
 भुंकुं नका भुंकुं नका । आला तुका विष्णुदास ॥२॥
 कवणे ठायीं सादर व्हावें । नाहीं ठावें गाढवा ॥३॥
 दुर्जनासि पंचानन । तुका रजरेणु संतांचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The secret weakness of all jackals lies in their litters. Seize that, and they are silenced.**Stop barking, stop barking. Tuka, the servant of Vishnu, has arrived.**A donkey does not know when to show respect. Says Tuka, I am a lion to the wicked, and a grain of dust at the feet of the saints.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The weak spot of all the jackals is in their litter. Take hold of that, and a peg drops into their mouths and silences them. Stop barking, stop barking. Tuka, the servant of Vishnu, has come. Where should you bow with respect? A donkey does not know. Tuka says: to the wicked I am a lion; to the saints I am the dust at their feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers his attackers with a barnyard image: jackals can be silenced if you seize what they are most attached to. He calls his critics barking dogs and tells them to stop, because the servant of Vishnu has arrived and will not be cowed. The donkey that does not know when to show respect is the pattern he names: a heart so coarse it cannot recognize what is holy. He sets his own two faces against each other. Toward arrogant wickedness he is a lion; toward the saints he is willing to be nothing, mere dust at their feet.

GATHA 4428

Longing and Separation

Longing, no lack at God's feet

मराठी मूळ

तुझे ह्याणों आह्मां । मग उणें पुरुषोत्तमा ॥१॥
 ऐसा धर्म काय । अमृतानें मृत्यु होय ॥२॥
 कल्पवृक्षा तळीं । गांठी बांधलिया झोळी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे परीस । सांपडल्या उपवास ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If we call ourselves Yours, O Supreme Being, should there then be any lack? What kind of justice is it that ambrosia should bring death? Sitting beneath the wish-fulfilling tree, one ties a knot in an empty bag. Says Tuka, having found the philosopher's stone, one should not go hungry.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If we call ourselves Yours, O Purushottama, should there still be any lack? What kind of law is this, that nectar should bring death? Sitting under the wish-granting tree, a man ties up his empty bag with a knot. Tuka says: having found the philosopher's stone, he goes on fasting.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses God with a complaint shaped as a question. If they truly belong to the Supreme Being, then any want they still feel is a kind of contradiction, like the nectar of immortality somehow dealing out death. He sharpens it with two images of self-defeat: a man sits beneath the tree that grants every wish, yet ties his bag shut as if afraid to receive; a man holds the stone that turns iron to gold, yet stays hungry. The fault he names is not God's stinginess but the devotee's failure to draw on a nearness that is already given.

GATHA 4429

Longing and Separation

Longing, the form not the void

मराठी मूळ

कोरडिया गोष्टी नावडती मना । नाहीं ब्रह्मज्ञानाविण चाड ॥१॥
 दाखवीं आपुलें सगुण रूपडें । वंदीन मी कोडें पाय तुझे ॥२॥
 न लगे तो मोक्ष मज सायुज्यता । नावडे हे वार्ता शून्याकारी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे चाड धरीन श्रीमुखें । येशिल कवतुकें जवळीक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Dry, empty talk does not please the mind. Without the direct knowledge of Brahman, I have no interest.

Show me Your form in its fullness; I will bow at Your feet with delight. I do not want mere liberation or formless union.

The talk of the void does not appeal to me. Says Tuka, I will be satisfied only when You come near me with playful affection, and I behold Your face.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Dry talk does not please my mind. Without the knowledge of Brahman I have no desire. Show me Your form with all its qualities; I will gladly bow at Your feet. I do not want that liberation, that merging into You. I do not like this talk of the void. Tuka says: I will keep my longing for Your blessed face. You will come near me in play.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses dry doctrine and the bare abstractions that promise union by erasing the lover. He asks instead for the saguna form, the Lord with shape and qualities, so that he can bow and behold a face. The radical turn is that he sets aside even moksha and sayujya, absorption into God, which most seekers treat as the highest prize. Talk of the void leaves him cold because it dissolves the very relationship he wants. He holds out for the personal: the blessed face, the God who comes near in playful affection rather than swallowing the devotee into formlessness.

GATHA 4430

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, beyond the gods' reach

मराठी मूळ

गणेश सारजा करिती गायना । आणि देवांगना रंभे ऐशा ॥१॥
 तेथें आह्मीं मानवांहीं विनवावें तें काय । सुरवर पाय वंदिति जेथें ॥२॥
 ज्याच्या गायनासी तटस्थ शंकर । त्या हि परि पार न कळे तुझा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी किंकर ते किती । इंद्राची हि मति नागविशी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Ganesha and Saraswati sing before Him, along with divine maidens like Rambha. What can we mere mortals offer there, where the gods themselves bow at His feet? Even Shankara, who stands entranced by such singing, cannot fathom Your depths.

Says Tuka, we are the humblest of servants. You bewilder even the intellect of Indra.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Ganesha and Saraswati sing before Him, and divine women like Rambha as well. There, where the gods themselves bow at His feet, what is there for us mortals to offer? Even Shankara stands still, lost in that singing, and still he cannot find Your far shore. Tuka says: how small are we, His servants. You confound even the mind of Indra.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures God's greatness by who fails to reach it. The high gods sing in His presence and bow at His feet; Shiva himself is frozen in wonder by that music and still cannot fathom the depth. If the foremost beings cannot find God's limit, the poet asks what a mere mortal servant could possibly add. The closing line lands it: even Indra, king of the gods, has his intellect baffled. The smallness Tukaram claims is not despair but the proper posture before a One that overflows every measure the cosmos can bring.

GATHA 4431

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, becoming what he beholds

मराठी मूळ

डोळ्यांचें दैव आजि उभें ठेलें । निधान देखिलें पंढरीये ॥१॥
 काय ते वानावें वाचेचे पालवें । वेदा न बोलवे रूप ज्याचें ॥२॥
 आनंदाच्या रसें ओंतीव चांगलें । देखतां रंगलें चित्त माझें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे मी तों सगळाच विरालों । विठ्ठल चि जालों दर्शनानें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The fortune of my eyes has today stood before me. I have beheld the treasure of Pandhari.

How can the tongue describe it, when even the Vedas cannot speak of that form? Cast in the mold of bliss, that beautiful form captured my chitta the moment I saw it. Says Tuka, I have been utterly dissolved. Through that darshan, I myself have become Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Today the fortune of my eyes has stood before me. I have seen the treasure at Pandhari. How can the tongue praise it, when even the Vedas cannot speak of that form? It is poured out of the very juice of bliss, so beautiful; seeing it, my mind was steeped in its color. Tuka says: I have wholly melted away. By that darshan I have myself become Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the moment of sight at Pandharpur as good fortune made visible, the treasure his eyes were always meant to see. The form is past speech, beyond even the Vedas, because it is cast from bliss itself, and his mind is soaked through with it like cloth in dye. Then comes the boldest claim: he does not merely admire Vitthal, he dissolves. In true darshan the seer is consumed into the seen, so that he can say he has himself become Vitthal. It is the language of nondual union spoken from inside love, not theory.

GATHA 4432

Krishna Leela

Krishna's deeds, wonder past the Vedas

मराठी मूळ

भोगियेल्या नारी । परि तो बाळब्रह्मचारी ॥1॥
 ऐसी ज्याचें अंगीं कळा । पार न कळे वेदाला ॥ध्रु॥
 वळीवळी थोरथोर। मोडोनियां केले चूर ॥2॥
 वांकडी कुबज्या । सरसी आणियेली वोजा ॥3॥
 मल्ल रगडिला पायीं । गज झुगारिला बाहीं ॥4॥
 जिवें मारियेला मामा । धांवें भक्ताचिया कामा ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे पूर्ण । दावी भक्तीचीं विंदानें ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He consorted with women, yet He remained an eternal celibate. Such is the art within Him; even the Vedas cannot fathom its extent.

He defeated mighty wrestlers one after another, crushing them to pieces. He straightened the hunchbacked Kubja and made her beautiful.

He trampled the great wrestler beneath His feet and flung the elephant aside with His arms. He killed His own uncle Kamsa, always rushing to fulfill His devotees' needs.

Says Tuka, the One who is complete reveals the wonders of devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He took His pleasure with women, yet He stayed an unbroken celibate. Such is the power in Him that even the Vedas cannot find its limit. One after another He broke the mighty ones and ground them to dust. He took the crooked, hunchbacked Kubja and made her straight and lovely. He crushed the wrestler under His feet and flung the elephant aside with His arm. He killed His own uncle, and He runs to do His devotees' work. Tuka says: the One who is full reveals the wonders of devotion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up Krishna's deeds to show a power that holds opposites together. He moves among women yet remains the eternal celibate, a paradox the Vedas cannot resolve. He overpowers wrestlers and elephants, straightens the bent Kubja, and slays the tyrant uncle Kamsa, and in the same breath He comes running to do small things for His devotees. The point is not a list of feats but the kind of being who performs them: complete in Himself, owing nothing, He still bends to serve those who love Him. That stooping is the real wonder the deeds are meant to reveal.

GATHA 4433

Appeals and Exhortations

Old age, remember Hari now

मराठी मूळ

वृद्धपणीं आली जरा । शरीर कांपे थरथरा ॥1॥
 आयुष्य गेलें हें कळेना । स्मरा वेगीं पंढरिराणा ॥ध्रु॥
 दांत दाढा पडिल्या ओस । हनुवटि भेटे नाकास ॥2॥
 हात पाय राहिलें कान । नेत्रा पाझर हाले मान ॥3॥
 अंगकांति परतली । चिरगुटा ऐसी जाली ॥4॥
 आड पडे जिह्वा लोटे । शब्द नये मुखा वाटे ॥5॥
 लांब लोंबताती अंड । भरभरा वाजे गांड ॥6॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां तरी । स्मरा वेगीं हरी हरी ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In old age, the body trembles and shakes. You do not realize that your lifespan has gone.

Remember the Lord of Pandhari quickly. Teeth and molars have fallen out; the chin now meets the nose.

Hands and feet have weakened, ears have failed; the eyes water and the head shakes. The complexion has faded, the skin hangs in folds like old cloth.

The tongue gets stuck and lolls about; words will not come from the mouth as they should. Says Tuka, at least now, at least now, remember Hari quickly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Old age has come, and the body shakes and trembles. You do not see that your life is gone. Remember the Lord of Pandhari quickly. The teeth and molars have fallen and left the gums bare; the chin meets the nose. The hands, the feet, the ears have stopped; the eyes run, the head wobbles. The skin's glow has turned; it has become like an old rag. The tongue gets caught and lolls; the words will not come out of the mouth. The testicles hang long and loose; the backside breaks wind in bursts. Tuka says: at least now, remember Hari, Hari, quickly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses to let old age be dignified or hidden. He lists the body's collapse without flinching, the lost teeth, the running eyes, the slack skin, the failing control of the body's lowest functions, precisely so the reader cannot look away. The unsparing catalogue is not mockery of the old; it is a mirror held up to every body, since this is where each one is headed. The shaking hand is also the hand that did nothing while life slipped past. So the refrain hammers in: while the mouth can still form a word, remember Hari, because the time to begin is shrinking with each named decay.

GATHA 4434

Appeals and Exhortations

Old age, remember now and be freed

मराठी मूळ

वृद्धपणी न पुसे कोणी । विटंबणी देहाची ॥१॥
 नव द्वारें जाली मोकळीक । गांड सरली वाजती ॥२॥
 दंत दाढा गळे थुंका । लागे नाका हनुवटी ॥३॥
 शब्द नये मुखावाटा । करिती चेष्टा पोरें ती ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे अजून तरी । स्मरें श्रीहरी सोडवील ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*In old age, no one inquires about you. The body is humiliated.**The nine doors of the body have become loose and uncontrolled. Teeth and gums drip saliva; the chin touches the nose.**Words will not come from the mouth; children mock and tease you. Says Tuka, at least now remember Shri Hari; He will set you free.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

In old age no one asks after you. The body is put to shame. The nine doors have gone loose; the backside has lost its hold and sounds. The teeth and molars are gone, the spit drips, the chin meets the nose. The words will not come out of the mouth; the children make sport of you. Tuka says: even now, remember Shri Hari, and He will set you free.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram returns to the indignities of age, the body that no one tends, the nine openings that no longer obey, the dribbling mouth, the children who jeer. He names these things plainly so the comfortable will feel how thin their dignity is. The harshness is aimed at complacency, not at the elderly, who are simply showing what awaits all. Against this slow humiliation he sets one door still open: remembrance of Shri Hari, available even now, late as it is. That remembrance is the one thing that loosens the deeper bondage the failing body only makes visible.

GATHA 4435

The Moral Ideal

Moral warning, hospitality and rage

मराठी मूळ

अतित्याई देतां जीव । नये कींव देवासि ॥१॥
 थोडसाटीं राग आला । जीव दिला गंगेंत ॥२॥
 त्यासि परलोकीं नाहीं मुक्ति । अधोगति चुकेना ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कृष्णराम । स्मरतां श्रम वारती ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When a guest arrives and you give grudgingly, God takes no pity on you. For a small matter you flew into a rage and threw your life away in the river.

For such a person there is no liberation in the next world; the downward path cannot be avoided. Says Tuka, by remembering Krishna and Rama, all sorrows are removed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When a guest comes and you give grudgingly, no pity for you stirs in God. Over a small thing anger rose, and he threw his life away in the river. For such a one there is no release in the world beyond; the downward path is not escaped. Tuka says: by remembering Krishna and Rama, the toil is taken away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets two failures side by side. To feed a guest with a closed hand forfeits God's compassion, because grudging giving is no giving at all. To throw one's life away in a fit of rage over some small matter is worse, and it does not buy release; the soul that ends so falls, not rises. He is naming the patterns of stinginess and unchecked anger, not condemning a particular person, and the warning turns each reader back on his own heart. Then he offers the way out he always offers: the steady remembrance of Krishna and Rama, which lifts the very weariness these faults create.

GATHA 4436

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, joy at the sight

मराठी मूळ

तुझें रूप पाहतां देवा । सुख जालें माझ्या जीवा ॥ १ ॥
 हें तों वाचे बोलवेना । काय सांगों नारायणा ॥ २ ॥
 जन्मोजन्मींचे सुकृत । तुझे पायीं रमे चित्त ॥ ३ ॥
 जरी योगाचा अभ्यास । तेव्हां तुझा निजध्यास ॥ ४ ॥
 तुका ह्याने भक्त । गोड गाऊं हरिचें गीत ॥ ५ ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Seeing Your form, O God, joy has filled my jiva. This cannot be expressed in words.

What can I tell You, O Narayana? Through the merit of many births, my mind delights at Your feet. When the practice of yoga was undertaken, it became the constant contemplation of You.

Says Tuka, let us devotees sweetly sing the song of Hari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Seeing Your form, O God, joy has come to my life. This cannot be spoken by the tongue. What can I tell, O Narayana? By the good deeds of birth after birth, my mind delights at Your feet. If there was any practice of yoga, it was this: the constant inward thought of You. Tuka says: we devotees will sweetly sing the song of Hari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram traces a clear line from sight to surrender. Beholding God's form fills his very life with a joy too large for speech. He reads his arrival at this moment as the ripening of merit gathered across many lifetimes, so that his mind now rests gladly at God's feet. Then he quietly redefines yoga: not a technique he mastered, but the single unbroken remembrance of God that became his whole practice. The poem ends not in solitary rapture but in company, devotees together turning the joy into song, which is for Tukaram the natural form that such gladness takes.

GATHA 4437

Prayers

Surrender, guard my honor

मराठी मूळ

तुजवीण मज कोण आहे देवा । मुकुंदा केशवा नारायणा ॥१॥
 जोडोनियां कर कृपेच्या सागरा । गोपीमनोहरा पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 साच करीं हरी आपुली िब्रदावळी । कृपेनें सांभाळीं मायबापा ॥३॥
 साहए होसी जरी जाती सहा वैरी । मग ध्यान करीं आवडीनें ॥४॥
 सर्व अपराध क्षमा करीं माझा । लडिवाळ तुझा पांडुरंगा ॥५॥
 कृपा करोनियां द्यावी क्षमा शांति । तेणें तुझी भक्ति घडेल देवा ॥६॥
 ऐसें तों सामर्थ्य नाहीं नारायणा । जरी तुज करुणा येइल कांहीं ॥७॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां आपंगावें मज । राखें माझी लाज पांडुरंगा ॥८॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who do I have besides You, O God? O Mukunda, Keshava, Narayana. With folded hands I pray to You, O ocean of grace, O enchanter of the gopis, O Panduranga.

Make Your pledges come true, O Hari. Protect me with Your grace, O my parent.

If You come to my aid, the six inner enemies will depart. Then I will meditate on You with love.

Forgive all my offenses, O Panduranga. I am Your spoiled child.

Grant me mercy, forbearance, and peace, so that devotion to You may truly blossom, O God. Such strength is not in me, O Narayana.

Only if some compassion stirs in You can it come to be. Says Tuka, embrace me now. Guard my honor, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whom do I have but You, O God? O Mukunda, Keshava, Narayana. With folded hands I pray to You, ocean of grace, charmer of the gopis, O Panduranga. Make Your promise true, O Hari; protect me with Your grace, O mother and father. If You become my help, the six enemies will leave; then I will meditate on You with love. Forgive all my faults, O Panduranga. I am Your spoiled child. Give me, in mercy, forgiveness and peace, so that devotion to You may take shape, O God. I have no such strength, O Narayana, unless some compassion stirs in You. Tuka says: now take me up. Guard my honor, O Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays from a place of having no one else to turn to, calling on God by name after name as ocean of grace and as both mother and father. He asks God to keep His own pledge to protect those who are His, since that promise, not the devotee's worth, is what he leans on. He is honest about the order of things: only when God helps do the six inner enemies, the passions, lose their grip, and only then can he meditate in peace. He calls himself a spoiled child to be forgiven, and admits he has no strength of his own; everything waits on God's compassion stirring first. The last plea, guard my honor, places his whole standing in God's hands.

GATHA 4438

The Power of the Name

The Name at death, only blessing

मराठी मूळ

नको विद्या वयसा आयुष्य फारसें । नाहीं मज पिसें मुक्तीचें ही ॥1॥
 रामकृष्ण ह्मणतां जावो माझा प्राण । हें चि कृपादान मागतसें ॥ध्रु॥
 नको धन मान न वाढे संतान । मुखीं नारायण प्राण जावा ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे दीन काकुलती येतों । तुज निरवितों पांडुरंगा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I do not want learning, youth, or a long life. I have no craving even for liberation.

Let my life depart while uttering the names Rama and Krishna. This is the only blessing I seek.

I do not want wealth or prestige or a growing family. Let Narayana be on my lips when my breath leaves.

Says Tuka, I am helpless and I plead with You. I entrust myself to You, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I do not want learning. I do not want youth. I do not want a long life. I have no craving even for liberation. Let my breath leave while I am saying the names Rama and Krishna. This alone is the blessing I beg for. I do not want wealth. I do not want honor. I do not want a growing family. Let Narayana be on my lips when my breath goes. Tuka says: I am helpless and I come pleading. I hand myself over to You, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips away every prize a person could ask for, low and high alike: learning, youth, long life, wealth, honor, children, and even liberation itself. He sets one wish above all of them, that the names Rama and Krishna, Narayana, be in his mouth at the moment his breath leaves. That is the single blessing he asks for. The poem ends in surrender, not in bargaining: he calls himself helpless and entrusts his whole self to Panduranga, leaving the dying breath in God's hands.

GATHA 4439

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false guru

मराठी मूळ

शिष्या सांगे उपदेश । गुरुपूजा हे विशेष ॥१॥
 दावी आचार सोवळे । दंड कमंडलु माळे ॥२॥
 छाटी भगवी मानसीं । व्यर्थ ह्मणवी संन्यासी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे लोभ । न सुटे नाहीं लाभ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He gives his disciples teachings and demands elaborate worship of the guru. He displays his ritual purity, his staff, water-pot, and prayer beads.

He wears the saffron robes and pretends to be a renunciant, but it is all empty show. Says Tuka, as long as greed does not leave, there is no true gain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He gives teachings to his disciples. He demands special worship of the guru. He shows off his ritual purity, his staff, his water-pot, his beads. He wears the saffron robe and calls himself a renunciant. It is all empty. Tuka says: while greed has not left, there is no gain.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a man who has all the marks of a holy teacher and none of the substance. He teaches, demands honor as a guru, and displays the staff, water-pot, beads, and saffron robe that signal renunciation. The poem names the rot at the center: he still has not let go of greed, so the renunciation is only costume. The test is not the outward gear but whether grasping has actually loosened; where it has not, there is no real gain, however convincing the show. The warning is worth turning on oneself, since the same props can dress up the same hidden greed in anyone.

GATHA 4440

The Necessity of Experience

God seen everywhere

मराठी मूळ

जिकडे पाहें तिकडे उभा । अवघ्या गगनाचा गाभा ॥ १ ॥
 डोळां बैसलें बैसलें । रूप राहोनि संचलें ॥२॥
 न वजिंतां दाही दिशा । जिकडे पाहें तिकडे सरिसा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे समपदीं । उभा दिठीचिये आधीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wherever I look, He stands. He is the very essence of the entire sky.

He has settled into my eyes and remains there, pervading all. Without excluding any of the ten directions, He is equally present wherever I gaze.

Says Tuka, He stands at the level of perfect equality, right before my sight.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wherever I look, He is standing. He is the very core of the whole sky. He has settled into my eyes and stays there, filling everything. He leaves out none of the ten directions; wherever I look, He is right there with me. Tuka says: He stands in perfect evenness, there before my sight even begins.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is reporting what he sees once vision has changed. He does not find God in one place but standing everywhere he turns, the inner essence of the entire sky, leaving out none of the ten directions. He says God has lodged in his very eyes, so the seeing and the seen are no longer separate. The last line presses this further: God stands in perfect evenness, present before the act of looking even starts, which means He is not an object the gaze finds but is already there ahead of it.

GATHA 4441

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, worth borrowed from another

मराठी मूळ

आपटा संवदड रानचारा । दसःयाचा होय तुरा॥१॥
 तैसा देवामुळें मान । नाही तरी पुसें कोण ॥२॥
 मितकेची ते घागरी । पाण्यासाठीं बैसे शिरी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माप जाण । दाण्यासवें घेणें देणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The apta tree is just a wild shrub, but on Dussehra day it becomes a crown of honor. Just so, one gains respect through God's grace; without Him, who would care? An earthen pot is just clay, yet for the sake of water it is placed upon one's head.

Says Tuka, a measuring vessel is valued only because of the grain it holds.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The apta is only a wild shrub of the forest. On Dussehra it becomes a crown of honor. So it is with honor that comes from God: without Him, who would ask after you? The pot is only baked clay. For the sake of the water it carries, it is set upon the head. Tuka says: know this, the measuring vessel matters only for the grain it holds.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gives three plain images to make one point: a thing's honor is borrowed, not its own. The apta is just a roadside shrub, prized only because the festival of Dussehra makes its leaves a crown for a day. A clay pot is carried on the head only because of the water inside it, and a measuring vessel is valued only for the grain that

passes through it. In each case the worth belongs to what is held or given, not to the container. So with a person: any respect we enjoy is on loan from God, and without Him no one would bother to ask after us, which is a quiet rebuke to pride in standing we did not author.

GATHA 4442

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, time well spent in the Name

मराठी मूळ

काळ सार्थक केला त्यांणी । धरिला मनीं विठ्ठल॥१॥
 नाम वाचे श्रवण कीर्त । पाउलें चितीं समान ॥२॥
 कीर्तनाचा समारंभ । निदपभ सर्वदा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने स्वरूपासिद्ध । नित्य समाधि हरिनामीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

They have made good use of their time who have held Vitthal in their chitta. The Name is on their lips, glory fills their ears, and His feet rest steadily in their minds.

They conduct kirtan ceaselessly and without blemish, at all times. Says Tuka, the realization of the true Self, the unbroken samadhi, is found in Hari's Name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They have made their time worth something who have held Vitthal in the heart. The Name is on their lips, His glory in their ears, His feet steady in their minds. They keep up kirtan always, without blemish, at every hour. Tuka says: the realization of the true Self, the unbroken samadhi, is in the Name of Hari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers what it means to have lived a life well: not by any worldly measure, but by having kept Vitthal fixed in the heart. He sketches a life saturated with the Name, on the lips, His glory in the ears, His feet steady in the mind, with kirtan going on without break or blemish. Then he makes the large claim plain: the goal that others seek by hard discipline, realization of the true Self and unbroken samadhi, is found right here, inside Hari's Name. The Name is not a beginner's step toward the depth; it is the depth.

GATHA 4443

Autobiography

Farewell, Tuka departs for Vaikuntha

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी जातों आपुल्या गांवा । आमुचा रामराम घ्यावा ॥१॥
 तुमची आमची हे चि भेटी । येथुनियां जन्मतुटी ॥२॥
 आतां असों द्यावी दया । तुमच्या लागतसें पायां ॥३॥
 येतां निजधामीं कोणी । विठ्ठलविठ्ठल बोला वाणी ॥४॥
 रामकृष्ण मुखीं बोला । तुका जातो वैकुंठाला ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am going to my own village. Accept my farewell greetings.

This meeting of ours is the last; from here, the cycle of birth is broken. Now please bestow your kindness.

I touch your feet. When I arrive at my true home, let the words 'Vitthal, Vitthal' be on every tongue.

Speak Rama Krishna with your mouths. Tuka is going to Vaikuntha.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am going to my own village. Take my farewell greeting. This meeting of ours is the last; from here the round of births is cut. Now show me your kindness. I touch your feet. When I reach my true home, let the words Vitthal, Vitthal be on every tongue. Say Rama Krishna with your mouths. Tuka is going to Vaikuntha.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as one leaving, calling death a journey back to his own village and his true home. He tells those around him that this is their last meeting, because for him the cycle of birth and death is now broken; he is not coming back. He asks one thing of them in parting: keep the Name going, Vitthal, Vitthal and Rama Krishna on their tongues, after he is gone. The poem turns the terror of dying into a homecoming and hands the survivors not grief to nurse but the Name to carry on.

GATHA 4444

Longing and Separation

Longing, the calf that cannot feed

मराठी मूळ

कामधेनूचें वासरुं । खाया न मिळे काय करुं ॥१॥
 ऐसें आह्मां मांडियेलें । विठो त्वां कां सांडियेलें ॥२॥
 बैसोनि कल्पद्रुमातळीं । पोटासाठीं तळमळीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नारायणा । बरें लोकीं हें दीसेना ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am the calf of the wish-fulfilling cow, yet I cannot find anything to eat. O Vittho, why have You set things up this way and then abandoned me? Sitting beneath the wish-fulfilling tree, I agonize over my hunger.

Says Tuka, O Narayana, this does not look good to the world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am the calf of the wish-granting cow, and still I find nothing to eat. What am I to do? This is what has been set up for me. Vittho, why have You thrown me aside? I sit at the foot of the wish-granting tree and writhe over an empty stomach. Tuka says: Narayana, this does not look good in front of people.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes his complaint sharp by setting hunger right next to abundance. He is the calf of the cow that grants every wish, sitting under the tree that gives whatever is asked, and yet he starves; the very source of plenty is at hand and he is left out. He puts the contradiction to God as a blunt question: why set things up this way and then abandon me? The closing line is half plea, half dare, that God's own reputation is at stake, since it looks bad before the world for the wish-granting Lord to let His own devotee go hungry. It is the bold, intimate scolding of one who trusts enough to argue.

GATHA 4445

The Power of the Name

The Name, refuge of the fallen

मराठी मूळ

तुझें नाम माझे मुखी असो देवा । विनवितों राघवा दास तुझा ॥1॥

तुझ्या नामबळें तरले पतित । ह्मणोनि माझें चित्त तुझे पायीं ॥2॥

तुका ह्मणे तुझें नाम हें सादर । गातां निरंतर सुख वाटे ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

May Your Name ever be on my lips, O God. I beseech You, O Raghava; I am Your servant.

By the power of Your Name, wrongdoers have been delivered. Therefore my chitta rests at Your feet.

Says Tuka, singing Your Name continuously brings me such joy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let Your Name be always on my lips, God. I beg You, Raghava; I am Your servant. By the power of Your Name the fallen have been carried across. So my heart rests at Your feet. Tuka says: when I sing Your Name without stopping, joy keeps rising in me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks for one steady gift: that God's Name never leave his mouth. He grounds the request in what the Name has already done, that even the fallen and the wrongdoing have been ferried across by its power, and that is exactly why he trusts it and lays his heart at God's feet. The Name is offered here as the refuge that does not check your record first. The poem closes on the felt result: singing it without break brings a joy that does not run dry, so the practice is its own reward, not only a means to rescue.

GATHA 4446

Worldly Life

Worldly life, ties without warmth

मराठी मूळ

उभय भाग्यवंत तरी च समान । स्थळीं समाधान तरी च राहे ॥१॥
 युक्तीचें गौरव नसतां जिद्दाळा । सांचवणी जळा परी नाश ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे अवघे विनोदाचे ठाव । एकात्मक भाव नाहीं तेथें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Both parties must be fortunate for true harmony to prevail; contentment endures only when there is genuine affection. Without real warmth behind the formal courtesies, the bond is like stored water that eventually spoils. Says Tuka, all such places are for amusement only. True unity of spirit is absent there.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Both sides must be fortunate for things to be equal. Only then does contentment stay in a place. Without the warmth behind the polite respect, it is like stored-up water: it spoils in the end. Tuka says: all such places are only for amusement. There is no real oneness of heart there.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at the bonds that hold worldly relationships together and weighs what makes them last. Outward courtesy is not enough; without real affection behind the polite respect, a tie is like water kept too long, it goes stagnant and turns bad. True harmony needs both sides to bring genuine warmth, not just manners. His verdict is cool and clear: gatherings built only on form are for passing pleasure, and the unity of spirit that would make them real is simply not present. The point is not to scorn company but to see honestly how thin a bond without love actually is.

GATHA 4447

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the two-day guest

मराठी मूळ

दो दिवसांचा पाहुणा चालतो उताणा । कां रे नारायणा न भजसी ॥१॥
 तूं अखंड दिश्र्चता तुज नेती अवचिता । मग पंढरीनाथा भजसी केव्हां ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसे आहेत उदंड । तया केशव प्रचंड केवीं भेटे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You are a guest of but two days, lying about carelessly. Why do you not worship Narayana? Your mind is forever restless, and death may seize you at any moment.

When then will you worship the Lord of Pandhari? Says Tuka, there are plenty of such people, but how will the mighty Keshava ever meet them?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are a guest of just two days, lying about as if it were nothing. Why, then, do you not worship Narayana? Your mind never settles, and death may carry you off without warning. So when will you ever worship the Lord of Pandhari? Tuka says: there are crowds of such people. How is the mighty Keshava ever to meet them?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram wakes the listener with a hard fact: this life is a two-day stay, a guest's visit, not a permanent home, and you are spending it sprawled in idle ease. He presses the urgency by joining a restless mind to a sudden death that can come at any moment, which leaves no safe later for the devotion you keep postponing. The closing line widens the rebuke to a whole crowd who live this way and then wonders aloud how the great Keshava could ever come near such distracted, unready hearts. The sting is meant to turn the hearer toward worship now, while there is still time, rather than to write anyone off.

GATHA 4448

Prayers

Prayer, Pandhari and nothing else

मराठी मूळ

तुझे पाय माझें भाळ । एकत्रता सर्वकाळ ॥१॥
 हें चिं देई विठाबाई । पांडुरंगे माझे आई ॥२॥
 नाहीं मोक्ष मुक्ति चाड । तुझी सेवा लागे गोड ॥३॥
 सदा संग सज्जनांचा । नको वियोग पंढरीचा ॥४॥
 नित्य चंद्रभागे स्नान । करीं क्षेत्रप्रदक्षणा ॥५॥
 पुंडलीक पाहोन दृष्टी । हर्षो नाचों वाळवंटीं ॥६॥
 तुका ह्याने पांडुरंगा । तुझें स्वरूप चंद्रभागा ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let Your feet rest upon my forehead at all times. Grant me this, O Vitthabai, O Panduranga, my Mother.

I have no desire for liberation or heavenly rewards. Your service alone is sweet to me.

May I always have the company of the saints. Let there be no separation from Pandhari.

Let me bathe daily in the Chandrabhaga and circumambulate the sacred precincts. Let me behold Pundalik with my eyes and dance with joy in the sand-bed of Pandhari.

Says Tuka, O Panduranga, the Chandrabhaga itself is Your very form.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let Your feet rest on my forehead at all times. Give me only this, Vithabai, Panduranga, my Mother. I have no longing for liberation or release. Your service alone tastes sweet to me. Let me always have the company of the good. Let there be no separation from Pandhari. Let me bathe each day in the Chandrabhaga and walk around the holy ground. Let me see Pundalik with my own eyes and dance with joy in the sand by the river. Tuka says: Panduranga, the Chandrabhaga itself is Your own form.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out a whole life of devotion as a single prayer, addressing Panduranga tenderly as Vithabai and Mother. He refuses the usual goal, liberation, saying God's service alone is sweet to him, and asks instead for the things of Pandhاري: the saints' company, the daily bathe in the Chandrabhaga, the walk around the holy precinct, the sight of Pundalik, the dance in the riverside sand. Every wish keeps him at the shrine rather than carrying him beyond it. The last line shows why these are not lesser things: the river Chandrabhaga is God's own form, so to want Pandhاري is already to want God, and union is sought in the place itself, not somewhere past it.

GATHA 4449

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the cart that overturns

मराठी मूळ

बाईल चालिली माहेरा । संगें दिधला ह्यातारा ॥1॥
 सिधा सामग्री पोटाची । सर्वे स्वारी बडलाची ॥धु.॥
 जाता पाडिली ढोरानें । सिव्या देती अन्योविन्ये ॥2॥
 न सावरी आपणातें । नग्न सावलें वरतें ॥3॥
 फजित केलें जनलोकीं । मेला ह्यणे पडे नरकीं ॥4॥
 गोहाची हे गेली लाज । गांजितां कां तुह्मी मज ॥5॥
 तुका ह्यणे जनीं । छी थू केली विटंबणी ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The wife set off for her mother's home, taking the old husband along. Provisions for the journey and a bullock cart were arranged.

On the way, the bullocks threw them off, and curses flew between them. The old man could not control himself; his clothes fell off, leaving him naked and exposed.

He was humiliated before all the people. He cursed himself, saying he would fall into hell.

All modesty and dignity were lost. 'Why do you torment me so?' he cried.

Says Tuka, shame was heaped upon them before the whole world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The wife set out for her mother's home and took the old man along. Food for the road was packed, and a bullock to ride. On the way the beast threw them down, and they hurled curses at each other. The old man could not steady himself; his clothes came off and he was left bare. He was shamed in front of everyone. He cursed himself and said he would fall into hell. All his modesty was gone. Why do you torment me so, he cried. Tuka says: before the whole world, people spat and jeered at the disgrace.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells a small, brutal story: a journey set out with care, with food packed and a bullock to ride, that ends in the cart overturning, the old man thrown down, stripped bare, and jeered at in public. Like his other tales it works as a parable of worldly ventures, undertakings begun with confidence and provisions that collapse and leave a person exposed and humiliated. The cursing back and forth, the lost dignity, and the cry of why are you

tormenting me show how quickly a comfortable plan turns to shame when the supports give way. The point is the fragility of any journey through the world that leans on its own arrangements, and the verse leaves the reader to feel the exposure rather than to mock the man.

GATHA 4450

Social Criticism

Social criticism, birth without devotion

मराठी मूळ

तुळसीवृंदावनीं उपजला कांदा । नावडे गोविंदा कांहीं केल्या ॥१॥
 तैसे वंशामध्ये जाले जे मानव । जाणावे दानव अभक्त ते ॥२॥
 केवडणामधील निगपध कणसें । तैशीं तीं माणसें भक्तिहीन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने जेवीं वंदनांतिल आळी । न चढे निढळीं देवाचिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If an onion sprouts in a tulsi garden, Govinda will never accept it, no matter what you do. Just so, those who are born into a good lineage but lack devotion should be known as demons.

Like worthless husks growing amid fine grain, such are the people devoid of devotion. Says Tuka, just as a worm from a sandalwood tree cannot be placed upon the brow of the deity.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If an onion sprouts in a tulsi garden, Govinda will not accept it, no matter what you do. So too: those born into a good lineage who have no devotion, know them as demons, the unworthy. Like worthless husks growing among fine grain, such are the people without devotion. Tuka says: it is like a worm from the sandalwood tree; it cannot be set upon the deity's brow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is striking at the idea that good birth alone makes a person holy. He uses things that grow in a holy place yet remain useless: an onion in the tulsi garden, husks among the grain, a worm bred in sandalwood. Each one shares the location and even the soil of something sacred, but cannot be offered to God. The point turns on devotion, not lineage: without bhakti, a high birth is just an onion in the wrong bed. The harshness is aimed at the assumption that pedigree substitutes for love of God, and it asks the listener to check which one he is trusting in.

GATHA 4451

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, surrender to Govinda alone

मराठी मूळ

शिव शक्ति आणि सूर्य गणपति । एक चि ह्यणती विष्णू ही ॥1॥
 हिरा गार दोनी मानिती समान । राजस भजनं वांयां जाती ॥ध्रु॥
 अन्य देवतांसि देव ह्यणऊन । तामस जीवन तमोयोग्या ॥2॥
 वांयां जायासाठीं केलासे हव्यास । अन्य देवतांस देवपण ॥3॥
 आपुलिया मुखें सांगतसे धणी । नव्हे माझी वाणी पदरींची ॥4॥
 धन्य ते वैष्णव भजती केशव । सात्वक हे जीव मोक्षा योग्य ॥5॥
 तुका ह्यणे मोक्ष नाहीं कोणापासीं । एका गोविंदासी शरण व्हा रे ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who say Shiva, Shakti, Surya, Ganapati, and Vishnu are all the same treat a diamond and a pebble as equal. Their rajasic worship goes to waste.

Those who call other deities equal to God follow the tamasic path, fit only for darkness. All effort spent on elevating other deities to the status of the supreme God is wasted.

The Lord Himself declares this through His own mouth; these are not my own words. Blessed are those Vaishnavas who worship Keshava.

They are sattvic souls, worthy of liberation. Says Tuka, liberation does not reside with any other. Surrender to Govinda alone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who say Shiva, Shakti, Surya, Ganapati, and Vishnu are all the same treat a diamond and a pebble as equal. Their rajasic worship goes to waste. To call other deities equal to God is the tamasic way, fit only for darkness. All effort spent raising other deities to the highest place is wasted. The Lord says this through his own mouth; these are not my own words. Blessed are the Vaishnavas who worship Keshava. They are sattvic souls, fit for liberation. Tuka says: liberation rests with no other; surrender to Govinda alone.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga makes an exclusive claim and does not soften it. Tukaram says that flattening all deities into one sameness is not large-heartedness but a failure to tell a diamond from a pebble, and such worship bears no fruit. He grades the paths by the three gunas: such leveling is rajasic or tamasic, while devotion to Keshava alone is sattvic and leads to release. To guard against pride, he insists the claim is not his own invention but the Lord's own word. The stakes are liberation itself, which he says is found in surrender to Govinda and nowhere else.

GATHA 4452

The Saints

Saints, the unworthy supplicant

मराठी मूळ

तुह्मी साधु संत कैवल्यसागर । मोक्षाचे आगर तुह्मां घरीं ॥1॥
 तेथें मतिमंद काय बोलों वाणी । अमृताचे धणी पाणी कां घ्या ॥२॥
 कोटी भानु तेजीं खद्योत बापुडें । तैसा तुह्मांपुडें काय बोलों ॥३॥
 तुह्मी अवघे चिंतामणि कल्पतरूचीं वनें । त्यापुडें धांवणें मषकांनीं ॥४॥
 वाराणशीक्षेत्र गंगा वाहे कोड । का तेथें पाड कोकणाचे ॥५॥
 समुद्राची तृषा हरी ऐसा कोण । जगाची जी तान्ह निववितो ॥६॥
 मेरुचा पाठार अवघी ते िक्षति । मषकाचे हातीं मिष्ट फावे ॥७॥
 सिंहापुडें काय जंबूक आरोळी । मोतियांचे वोळी कांच काय ॥८॥
 कापुरासि काय लावूनि उटावें । काय ओवाळावें दीपकासि ॥९॥
 तैशी तुह्मी निरे ज्ञानाचे भरीव । तेथें म्यां बोलावें पाड काय ॥१०॥
 कृपानिधि तुह्मीं बोलविलें बोला । सुखें न्याय केला तुमचा मीं ॥११॥
 अज्ञान मी वेडें ह्मणवितों बाळ । माझा प्रतिपाळ करणें तुह्मां ॥१२॥
 बोबडें बोलणें न धरावा कोप । क्षमा करा बाप कृपासिंधु ॥१३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुह्मी संत बापमाय । भयें धरिले पाय कृपानिधि ॥१४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You saints are the ocean of spiritual freedom, the storehouse of liberation. Before you, what can a dull mind offer in words? Why should the masters of nectar drink mere water? Before the blaze of a billion suns, the firefly is nothing.

What can I say before you? You are all wish-fulfilling gems, forests of wish-fulfilling trees. Before you, what can a fly accomplish by running? You are like the holy field of Varanasi where the Ganga flows in delight.

What significance has the Konkan coast beside that? Who can quench the ocean's own thirst, that which slakes the thirst of the whole world? The plateau of Mount Meru covers the whole earth, yet a gnat can grasp only a fistful. Before a lion, what is the jackal's roar? Beside a string of pearls, what is glass? Should one apply sandalwood paste to camphor? Should one wave a lamp before the sun? You are solid blocks of wisdom; what right have I to speak before you? O treasure of compassion, you have made me speak.

I have gladly served your cause. I am an ignorant child who calls himself small.

It is yours to nourish me. Forgive my babbling; do not be angry.

You saints are my mother and father. Says Tuka, in fear I have grasped your feet, O ocean of mercy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You saints are the ocean of freedom, the storehouse of liberation. Before you, what can a dull mind say in words? Why should the masters of nectar drink mere water? Before a billion suns, the firefly is nothing; so what can I say before you? You are wish-fulfilling gems, forests of wish-granting trees; what can a fly do by running before you? You are Varanasi where the Ganga flows in joy; what is the Konkan coast beside that? Who can quench the ocean's own thirst, the ocean that slakes the world? Meru covers the whole earth, yet a gnat grasps only a fistful. Before a lion, what is a jackal's howl? Beside a string of pearls, what is glass? Should one rub sandal paste on camphor? Should one wave a lamp before the sun? You are solid blocks of wisdom; what right have I to speak before you? Treasure of mercy, you yourselves have made me speak. I have gladly served your cause. I am an ignorant child who calls himself small. It is yours to nourish me. Forgive my babbling; do not be angry. You saints are my mother and father. Tuka says: in fear I have grasped your feet, ocean of mercy.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a poem of self-abasement before the saints, piling up image after image to measure his own smallness against their greatness. Each comparison sets a tiny thing against a vast one: firefly and suns, gnat and Meru, glass and pearls, a lamp waved at the sun. The point of the cascade is not despair but the right posture of a seeker: he has nothing to offer such people and no standing to instruct them. He even disowns his own speaking, saying the saints themselves have drawn the words out of him. He ends as a frightened child clinging to the feet of those he calls his mother and father, asking only to be forgiven and kept.

GATHA 4453

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, God within the body

मराठी मूळ

देहीं असोनियां देव । वृथा फिरतो निदाव ॥१॥
 देव आहे अंतर्दामी । व्यर्थ हिंडे तीर्थग्रामी ॥२॥
 नाभी मृगाचे कस्तुरी । व्यर्थ हिंडे वनांतरीं ॥३॥
 साखरेचें मूळ ऊंस । तैसा देहीं देव दिसे ॥४॥
 दुधीं असतां नवनीत । नेणे तयाचें मथित ॥५॥
 तुका सांगे मूढजना । देहीं देव कां पाहाना ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God dwells within the body, yet one wanders about aimlessly and mercilessly. God is present within; yet one roams uselessly among pilgrimage places.

The musk deer carries kasturi in its own navel, yet wanders the forests in vain. Sugar's root lies in the sugarcane; just so, God is visible within the body.

Butter already exists within milk, yet one does not know how to churn it out. Says Tuka, I tell the foolish: why do you not see God within your own body?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God dwells within the body, yet you wander about for nothing. God is in the inmost self, yet you roam uselessly from shrine to shrine. The musk deer carries the musk in its own navel, yet wanders the forest in vain. Sugar's root is the cane; just so, God is to be seen within the body. Butter is already in the milk, but you do not know how to churn it out. Tuka says to the foolish: why do you not see God within your own body?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is correcting the search that runs outward when the thing sought is already inside. He says God lives in the inmost self, so all the wandering to pilgrimage places is misplaced effort. His three images each carry the treasure within and miss it: the musk deer chasing the scent that comes from its own navel, sugar that is already in the cane, butter already hidden in the milk. The fault is not absence but ignorance of how to find what is present, like not knowing how to churn the milk. He ends bluntly, calling the listener foolish and asking why he will not simply look within.

GATHA 4454

The Power of the Name

The Name, the effortless mantra

मराठी मूळ

जयजय ह्यणा राम । हातें टाळी वाचे नाम ॥१॥
 आटाआटी नाही ज्यास । न वेचे मोल न पडे खांस ॥२॥
 आपण ह्यणे आणिकां हातीं । यज्ञादिकीं नये ते गति ॥३॥
 आसन भोजन करितां काम । ध्यानसमाधि ह्यणतां राम ॥४॥
 मंत्र जपा हा चि सार । वर्णा याती जयजयकार ॥५॥
 ह्यणतां राम ह्यणे तुका । वेळोवेळां चुकों नका ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Say 'Victory, victory' to Rama. Clap your hands and speak the Name aloud.

There is no strain in this, no cost, no hardship. Say it yourself and help others say it too.

The state attained by this cannot be reached through rituals and sacrifices. Whether sitting, eating, or going about your work, let saying Rama be your meditation and samadhi.

This is the essence of all mantras and chanting, the victorious cry for all castes and communities. Says Tuka, keep saying Rama; do not miss a single opportunity.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Say 'Victory, victory' to Rama. Clap your hands and speak the Name aloud. There is no strain in this, no cost, no hardship. Say it yourself, and put it into the hands of others too. The state this gives cannot be reached by sacrifices and rites. Sitting, eating, working: let saying Rama be your meditation and your samadhi. This is the very essence of all mantras and chanting, the victory cry for every caste and community. Tuka says: keep saying Rama; do not miss it, time after time.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga presses the Name as the easiest and highest practice at once. Tukaram emphasizes that it asks nothing hard: no expense, no strain, only the voice and the clapping hands, so anyone can do it anywhere. He sets it above ritual and sacrifice, saying it reaches a state those cannot, and that repeating Rama through ordinary activity is itself meditation and samadhi. He calls it the essence of all mantras and, pointedly, the cry open to every caste and community, which removes the gatekeeping of ritual. The closing urging is simply not to let any moment slip past unfilled by the Name.

GATHA 4455

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the reckoning of Death

मराठी मूळ

शिकवणेसाठीं वाटते तळमळ । पुढें येईल काळा फोडों डोई ॥१॥
 तेव्हां त्यासि काय देशील उत्तर । मेळउनि अंतर ठेवितोसि ॥२॥
 येथींचिया सोंगें भोरपियाचे परि । होईल तें दुरि शृंगारिलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कां रे राखिलें खरकटें । रागेल्याचे तंट रागेलें का ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I feel anguish trying to instruct you, for when Death comes and knocks upon your head, what answer will you give? You accumulate dirt within while keeping up appearances like a scarecrow. The adornment of worldly show will be stripped away at that hour.

Says Tuka, why have you clung to these scraps? When the angry one is enraged, it is the angry one who suffers.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I burn with anguish trying to teach you, for Death will come and split your head open. What answer will you give him then? You gather filth inside while keeping up the show. This costume of yours, like a mummer's, will be stripped away when that hour comes, and all your finery falls far off. Tuka says: why have you held on to these scraps? When the angry man rages, it is the angry man himself who suffers.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as a teacher in genuine pain over a listener who will not learn. He names the stake directly: Death is coming, and at that hour the man will have no answer, because inwardly he has stored up filth while outwardly keeping up appearances. The image of the mummer or scarecrow says the whole performance is a costume that will be torn off, leaving nothing. The scraps he clings to are the small worldly attachments not worth the loss. The closing line turns the warning inward: rage at the rebuke harms only the one who rages, so the listener's resistance is itself the trap.

GATHA 4456

*Surrender and Acceptance**Surrender, handing over good and bad*

मराठी मूळ

होई आतां माझ्या भोगाचा भोगिता । सकळ अनंता शुभाशुभ ॥१॥
 आठवुनी पाय राहिलों हृदयीं । निवारली तई सकळ चिंता ॥२॥
 अचळ न चळे देहाचें चळण । आहे हें वळण प्रारब्धें चि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जालें एक चि वचन । केलिया कीर्तन आराणुक ॥३॥
 लेखी दुखण्यासमान । वेचला नारायणीं क्षण ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now, O Ananta, become the one who experiences all my fortunes, good and bad. Remembering Your feet, I have anchored them in my heart.

All worry has thereby been removed. The body's movements are unsteady, but this is the course of destiny.

Says Tuka, having spoken one word at kirtan, all weariness is dispelled.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now, Ananta, become the one who undergoes all my fortunes, the good and the bad alike. Remembering your feet, I have set them in my heart, and so all my worry is gone. The body's movements stay unsteady; this swaying is only the course of destiny. Tuka says: it has come down to one word. Once kirtan is done, all weariness is dispelled.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is an act of handing the whole of one's life over to God. Tukaram asks Ananta to become the very experiencer of his fortunes, both pleasant and painful, so that the weight no longer rests on him. With the Lord's feet held in the heart, his anxiety simply drops away. He distinguishes the self from the body, whose unsteady movements he assigns to prarabdha, the course already set by past action, not to himself. What remains is a single thing: the Name spoken in kirtan, which dissolves all weariness.

GATHA 4457

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, weigh the profit before death

मराठी मूळ

उद्यांचें आजि च मरण । आणोनि ह्मणे हरि भोक्ता ॥१॥
 नाहीं कांहीं पडों येत तुटी । जाणें तो आहे सेवटीं ।
 लाभ विचारोनि पोटीं । होई सेवटीं जागृत ॥२॥
 आहे ते उरे कटा । लावुनि चळ आपुला फाटा ।
 पुरे हें न पुरे सेवटा । तरण्या बळकटा सदा वास ॥३॥
 ह्मणोनि मोडावा कांटाळा । अविद्यात्मक कोंवळा ।
 होतील प्रबळा । आशा तृष्णा माया ॥४॥
 क्षण या देहाच्या अंतीं । जड होउनि राहेल माती ।
 परदेश ते परवर होती । चिळसविती नाकडोळे ॥५॥
 जंव या नाहीं पातल्या विपित्त । आयुष्य भविष्य आहे हातीं ।
 लाभ विचारोनि गुंती । तुका ह्मणे अंतीं सर्व पिसुनें ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Bring the thought of tomorrow's death into today and say that Hari is the one who sustains. There is no loss in this.

Since the end is certain, consider the profit wisely and stay alert at the last hour. What you have, keep it; cut off the trailing tendrils of attachment.

It will not suffice in the end, so hold firmly to the strong vessel of faith. Therefore, cast off the weariness of the ignorant, tender self.

Desire, craving, and illusion will grow powerful if allowed. At the moment of the body's end, it will lie as inert clay.

Those who were near will become strangers, covering nose and eyes in revulsion. While calamity has not yet struck, while the breath of life is still in your hands, weigh the gain and invest wisely.

Says Tuka, in the end, everything is madness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Bring tomorrow's death into today, and say that Hari is the one who provides. Then nothing is lost. Since the end is certain, weigh the profit in your heart and stay awake at the last. Keep what you truly have; cut away the trailing tendrils of attachment. It will not be enough at the end, so hold fast to the strong vessel of faith that always carries one across. So break the laziness of the ignorant, tender self; or else desire, craving, and illusion will grow strong. At the body's last moment it lies as inert clay. Those who were near become strangers, covering nose and eyes in disgust. While calamity has not yet struck, while breath and future are still in your hands, weigh the gain and invest wisely. Tuka says: in the end, all of it is madness.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram urges a sober accounting done now, while there is still time. He tells the listener to picture death as if it were today, which clarifies what is worth keeping and what is mere attachment to be cut away. The profit to seek is faith in Hari, the strong vessel that carries one across; everything else proves insufficient at the end. He paints the moment of death plainly: the body becomes inert clay and even those who loved you turn away in revulsion, so nothing worldly survives the crossing. The warning is that delay lets desire, craving, and illusion grow strong, and that without this reckoning the whole of a life spent otherwise is madness.

GATHA 4458

Prayers

Prayer, the touchstone and the iron

मराठी मूळ

आसावलें मन जीवनाचें ओढी । नामरूपीं गोडी लावियेली ॥१॥
 काय तुझे पायीं नाहीं भांडवल । माझे मिथ्या बोल जाती ऐसे ॥२॥
 काय लोखंडाचे पाहे गुणदोष । सिवोन परीस सोनें करी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझें अवघें असों द्यावें । आपुलें करावें ब्रीद साच ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My mind thirsts and is drawn to the water of life. You have made me taste the sweetness of the Name and the divine form.

Are Your feet lacking in some treasure, that my words should prove false? The touchstone does not examine the faults of iron; it simply touches and turns it to gold. Says Tuka, let all my failings remain as they are. Make Your own pledge come true.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My mind thirsts and is drawn to the water of life. You have made me taste the sweetness of the Name and the form. Are your feet short of treasure, that my false words should win out? Does the touchstone weigh the faults of iron? It only touches it and turns it to gold. Tuka says: let all that is mine stay as it is; only make your own pledge come true.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a prayer that rests the whole weight on God's nature rather than the devotee's worth. Tukaram admits his own thirst and his false words, then asks whether God's feet are so poor that such failings could defeat them. His central image is the touchstone, which does not inspect the rusty iron's flaws but simply transforms it into gold by contact. So he asks God not to wait for him to become worthy. He even leaves his own faults untouched, throwing the responsibility back on God: keep your own pledge to save, and let that, not my merit, be what decides.

GATHA 4459

The Saints

Saints, longing for the dust of their feet

मराठी मूळ

पंढरीची वारी जयांचिये घरीं । पायधुळी शिरीं वंदिन त्यांची ॥१॥
 दासाचा मी दास पोसणा डोंगर । आतां बहु फार काय बोलों ॥२॥
 जातीचें मी हीन न कळे भजन । ह्मणोनि संतचरण इच्छीतसें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज ह्मणावें आपुलें । बहुता तारिलें संतजनीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the homes of those who make the pilgrimage to Pandhari, I will bow my head to the dust of their feet. I am a servant of servants, sheltered by the mountain of their grace.

What more can I say? I am lowly by birth and know nothing of devotion. Therefore I long for the feet of the saints.

Says Tuka, call me Your own. Many have been saved by the holy ones.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the homes of those who make the Pandhari pilgrimage, I will bow my head to the dust of their feet. I am the servant of servants, sheltered by the mountain of their grace. What more can I say now? I am low by birth and know nothing of devotion, so I long for the feet of the saints. Tuka says: call me your own. The holy ones have saved a great many.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lowers himself entirely before the company of the saints, the people who make the yearly pilgrimage to Pandhari. He wants nothing but to honor the dust of their feet and calls himself the servant of their servants. He names his own disqualifications openly, his low birth and his lack of any skill in devotion, and turns these very lacks into the reason he clings to the saints rather than to his own merit. His one request is to be claimed as their own. The hope behind it is plain: the saints have rescued many already, so their grace, not his worth, is what he counts on.

GATHA 4460

*The Power of the Name**The Name, the one true friend*

मराठी मूळ

नाम पावन पावन । त्याहून पवित्र आहे कोण ॥१॥
 शिव हालाहालें तापला । तो ही नामें शीतळ जाला ॥२॥
 शिवास नामाचा आधार । केला किळकाळ किंकर ॥३॥
 मरण जालें काशीपुरी । तेथें नाम चि उद्धरी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे अवघीं चोरें । एक हरिनाम सोडरें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Name is sacred, supremely sacred. Who is holier than the Name? Shiva was scorched by the deadly poison, yet the Name made Him cool.

The Name gave Shiva His power and made Death itself His servant. Even when death occurs at Kashi, it is the Name alone that liberates.

Says Tuka, when all else proves false and treacherous, the Name of Hari is the one true friend.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Name is sacred, supremely sacred. Who is holier than the Name? Shiva was scorched by the deadly poison, yet the Name made him cool. The Name gave Shiva his strength and made Death itself his servant. Even when one dies at Kashi, it is the Name alone that liberates. Tuka says: when all else is a thief, the one Name of Hari is your true kin.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga places the Name above everything, even above the great deities and the great holy places. Tukaram points to Shiva, scorched by the world-poison and cooled only by the Name, to show that the Name is what gives even Shiva his power and his mastery over death. He then names Kashi, the famous place to die for release, and says it is still the Name, not the location, that actually liberates. The closing line sharpens the stakes: everything else, even what we trust to save us, is finally a thief that takes and gives nothing back. The Name of Hari alone stands as true kin.

GATHA 4461

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the proud slanderer of saints

मराठी मूळ

अल्प विद्या परि गर्वशिरोमणि । मजहुनि ज्ञानी कोणी आहे ॥१॥
 अंगीं भरे ताठा कोणासी मानीना । साधूची हेळणा स्वयें करी ॥२॥
 सज्जनाच्या देहीं मानी जो विटाळ । त्रैलोकीं चांडाळ तो चि एक ॥३॥
 संतांची जो निंदा करी मुखीं जप । खतेले तें पाप वज्रलेप ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसे मावेचे मइंद । त्यांपाशीं गोविंद नाहीं नाहीं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He has but little learning, yet he is the crest-jewel of pride, fancying that no one is wiser than he. His body is stiff with arrogance; he respects no one and himself insults the saints.

He who considers a saint's body impure is the vilest wretch in all three worlds. He who slanders the saints while performing rituals with his lips is smeared with sin as hard as diamond.

Says Tuka, such pretenders and imposters are far, far from Govinda.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He has little learning, yet he is the crest-jewel of pride, sure that no one is wiser than he. His body is stiff with arrogance; he honors no one and himself mocks the saints. He who holds a good person's body to be impure is the one true outcaste in all three worlds. He who slanders the saints while muttering prayers with his lips piles up sin set hard as diamond. Tuka says: such frauds and imposters, with them there is no Govinda, none at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing a pattern: a little knowledge swollen into towering pride. The man knows almost nothing yet is certain he is the wisest, so stiff with arrogance that he respects no one and turns to mocking the saints. The poem names the worst form of this as treating a holy person's body as polluted, which inverts true purity and makes the proud man himself the real outcaste. Worse still is the hypocrite who slanders the saints with the same mouth that chants prayers, layering on a sin that sets hard as diamond. The warning is that wherever such pretense and contempt for the saints live, God is simply absent; the danger Tukaram is pointing at is the proud, scornful pattern itself, which any of us can fall into.

GATHA 4462

Social Criticism

Social criticism, devotion without mercy

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं संतांशीं शरण । काय वाचोनि पुराण ॥1॥
 ह्मणे विठ्ठलाचा दास । देखोनी परनारीस हांसे ॥धु.॥
 करिती विठोबाची भक्ति । दयाधर्म नाहीं चितीं ॥2॥
 तेथें नाहीं माझा देव । व्यर्थ श्रमवी हा जीव ॥3॥
 अंगीं नाहीं क्षमा दया । ह्मणती भेट पंढरीराया ॥4॥
 नाहीं धर्माची वासना । काय करोनि प्रदिक्षणा ॥5॥
 ऐसें नव्हे भक्तिवर्म । तेथें नाहीं माझा राम ॥6॥
 नये कृपा कांहीं केल्या । नये घाम जीव गेल्या ॥7॥
 जैसी खड्गाची धार । विठ्ठलचरणीं तुका शूर ॥8॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without surrendering to the saints, what use is reading the Puranas? He calls himself Vitthal's devotee but leers at other men's wives. They worship Vitthoba outwardly but have no compassion or righteousness in their chitta.

My God does not dwell there; such a one exhausts his jiva for nothing. He has no patience or mercy in him, yet claims to have met the Lord of Pandhari.

Without the desire for dharma, what use are circumambulations? This is not the essence of true devotion; my Rama is not there. Grace will not come to such a one no matter what he does, even if he sweats his life away.

Says Tuka, like the edge of a sword, the path to Vitthal's feet demands a warrior's courage.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you do not surrender to the saints, what use is reading the Puranas? He calls himself Vitthal's servant, and he leers at other men's wives. They worship Vithoba on the outside, but there is no compassion, no right conduct, in the heart. My God is not there. Such a one wears out his life for nothing. There is no patience in him, no mercy, yet he says he has met the Lord of Pandhari. There is no longing for dharma in him. What use is his walking around the shrine? This is not the truth of devotion; my Rama is not there. No matter what he does, grace will not come; it will not come even if he sweats his life away. Tuka says: like the edge of a sword, the path to Vitthal's feet asks for a warrior's courage.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is testing devotion by its fruit, not its display. He names a man who carries the labels, servant of Vitthal, worshipper of Vithoba, who walks the circuit of the shrine, yet keeps no mercy, no patience, no longing for right living in his heart. To such conduct Tukaram says God simply is not present, and no amount of outward effort or sweat will buy the grace that is missing. The point is turned at the pattern, not at any one person: ritual without compassion is empty. He closes with the cost: this path is a sword's edge, and only courage, the willingness to be inwardly true, can walk it.

GATHA 4463

The Nature of God

Reassurance, the heart's intent is enough

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं रिकामीक परी वाहे मनीं । तया चक्रपाणि साहए होय ॥1॥
 उद्वेग जीवासि पंढरीचें ध्यान । तया नारायण साहए करी ॥ध्रु॥
 शरीरासि बळ नाहीं स्वता भाव । तया पंढरिराव साहए करी ॥2॥
 असो नसो बळ राहे पराधीन । तरी अनुमान करुं नका ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे येणें करोनि चिंतनीं । तया नारायण जवळीक ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even one who has no leisure but carries devotion in the heart is aided by the Lord. One whose soul is restless with longing for Pandhari is helped by Narayana.

One whose body lacks strength but whose spirit remains surrendered is helped by the Lord of Pandhari. Whether strength is present or not, if one remains dependent on God, do not hesitate.

Says Tuka, through such constant remembrance, Narayana stays always near.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who has no free time, but carries God in the mind, is helped by Chakrapani. One whose soul is restless with the thought of Pandhari is helped by Narayana. One whose body has no strength but whose heart is true is helped by the Lord of Pandhari. Strength or no strength, stay surrendered; do not doubt this. Tuka says: by this much remembrance, Narayana stays near.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is answering the person who fears they have neither time nor strength enough for devotion. His reply is that God measures the heart's intent, not the hours or the body's power. The one with no leisure who still carries God, the weak one whose spirit stays surrendered, the soul restless with longing for Pandhari, each is helped by Narayana. So the instruction is to stop calculating whether you qualify and simply remain dependent; remembrance, however small, keeps God close.

GATHA 4464

Sacred Stories

Story, the child who cried to God

मराठी मूळ

दारिद्रानें विप्र पीडिला अपार । तया पोटीं पोर एक असे ॥१॥
 बाहेरी मिष्टान्न मिळे एके दिशीं । घेऊनी छंदासि त्या चि बैसे ॥२॥
 क्षुधाकाळीं रडे देखिलें तें मागे । कांहीं केल्या नेघे दुजें कांहीं ॥३॥
 सहज कौतुकें बोले बापमाये । देवापाशीं आहे मागशी तें ॥४॥
 तेव्हां तुजलागीं स्मरे नारायणा । जीवींच्या जीवना पांडुरंगा ॥५॥
 लागली हे क्षुधा जात असे प्राण । काय हें निर्वाण पाहातोसि ॥६॥
 प्राण हा उत्कर्ष जाहला विव्दळ । तेव्हां तो कृपाळ धांव घाली ॥७॥
 सांडूनि वैकुंठ धांव घाली तई । आळंगिला बाहीं कृपावंतें ॥८॥
 तुका ह्मणे दिला क्षीराचा सागर । राहे निरंतर तयापासीं ॥९॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A brahmin was tormented by dire poverty. He had one child.

The child would occasionally find sweets somewhere and become fixated on them. When hungry, the child would cry and demand those very sweets, refusing everything else.

In playful innocence, the parents said, 'Ask God for what you want.' From that moment the child remembered You, O Narayana, O life of my life, O Panduranga. 'I am starving; my life is ebbing away.

What final end are You waiting for?' When the child's distress became unbearable and overwhelming, the compassionate Lord rushed to help. Leaving Vaikuntha behind, He came running and embraced the child with His gracious arms.

Says Tuka, He gave the child an ocean of milk and stayed with that family forever.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A brahmin was crushed by deep poverty. He had one small child. One day the child found sweets somewhere outside and grew fixed on them. When hunger came, the child cried and begged for those sweets, and would take nothing else. In simple play, the mother and father said: God has them; ask God for what you want. From then the child remembered You, O Narayana, life of my life, O Panduranga. The child cried: this hunger is on me, my life is leaving; what final end are you waiting to see? When the child's distress rose and overwhelmed him, the merciful One ran. He left Vaikuntha and ran at once; the compassionate One gathered the child in his arms. Tuka says: he gave an ocean of milk, and he stays near that family forever.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells a small story to show what God answers. A starving child, told in passing to ask God for the sweets he craves, takes the words at face value and calls on Narayana with his whole life on the line. That literal, total trust is the point: the child does not perform devotion, he simply cries from need, and the cry empties him out.

Tukaram says the Lord leaves Vaikuntha and runs, embraces the child, and pours out an ocean of milk. The teaching held inside the story is that helpless, single-hearted calling, the kind a child makes, is what brings God running.

GATHA 4465

Prayers

Prayer, asking for the strength to love

मराठी मूळ

अनाथाचा सखा ऐकिला प्रताप । होसि कृपावंत मजवरि ॥1॥
 माझिया गा चित्ता करिं शिकवण । जेणें तुझे चरण जोडतील ॥ध्रु॥
 जोडोनियां कर येतों काकुलती । रकुमाईच्या पति कृपावंता ॥2॥
 हरुषें निर्भर करीं माझें मन । दाखवीं चरण पांडुरंगा॥3॥
 तुझे भेटीविण जन्म गेलां वायां । भजन कराया शक्ति नाहीं ॥4॥
 न घडे तुझी सेवा न घडे पूजन । जन्मोनि निष्कारण जाऊं पाहे ॥5॥
 तुका ह्याने हरि करावें या काय । भजनासि साहए होई बापा ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have heard of the glory of the Friend of the helpless. Be gracious to me as well.

Teach my mind the way by which Your feet may be reached. With folded hands I come pleading, O husband of Rukmini, O compassionate One.

Fill my mind with overflowing joy. Show me Your feet, O Panduranga.

Without meeting You, my births have gone to waste. I have no strength for devotion.

I cannot perform Your worship or Your service. This birth seems destined to pass in vain.

Says Tuka, O Hari, what is to be done? Come to my aid in devotion, O Father.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have heard your glory, Friend of the helpless. Be gracious to me too. Teach my mind the lesson by which I may reach your feet. With folded hands I come pleading, husband of Rukmini, merciful One. Fill my mind to overflowing with joy. Show me your feet, O Panduranga. Without meeting you, my births have gone to waste. I have no strength to do devotion. I cannot do your service; I cannot do your worship. This birth seems set to pass for nothing. Tuka says: Hari, what is to be done about this? Come to my aid in devotion, O Father.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a prayer that confesses its own emptiness. Tukaram does not boast of his devotion; he says plainly that he has no strength to worship or serve, and that birth after birth has gone to waste without meeting God. So instead of offering devotion, he asks God to give it: teach my mind the way to your feet, come to my aid in devotion. The radical move is to make even the capacity for love a gift he must beg for, leaning entirely on the One known as Friend of the helpless rather than on his own effort.

GATHA 4466

Worldly Metaphors

Married-life metaphor, the mismatched soul

मराठी मूळ

हीनवर बीजवर दोघी त्या गडणी । अखंड कहाणी संसाराची ॥1॥
 माझे पति बहु लहान चि आहे । खेळावया जाय पोरांसवें ॥धु.॥
 माझें दुःख जरी ऐकशील सई । ह्यातारा तो बाई खोकतसे ॥2॥
 खेळे सांजवरी बाहेरी तो राहे । वाट मी पाहें सेजेवरी ॥3॥
 पूर्व पुण्य माझें नाहीं वा नीट । बहु होती कष्ट सांगो कांही ॥4॥
 जवळ मी जातें अंगा अंग लावूं । नेदी जवळ येऊं कांटाळतो ॥5॥
 पूर्व सुकृताचा हा चि बाई ठेवा । तुका ह्मणे देवा काय बोल ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A young wife and an old wife, both companions, share the unending tale of married life. The young wife says, 'My husband is still so little; he goes off to play with the other children.' The old wife says, 'If you will hear my sorrow, sister, my old husband just coughs and wheezes.' The young wife says, 'He plays outside till evening and stays out late.

I wait for him on the bed.' 'My past merits are not in order; what great troubles I must endure.' When the young wife goes near and tries to embrace him, he will not let her close and turns away in annoyance. Says Tuka, this is the inheritance of past karma, dear sister. What can be said to God about it?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A young wife and an old wife, two companions, tell the endless tale of married life. The young one says: my husband is still so little; he goes off to play with the other children. The old one says: if you will hear my sorrow, sister, my old husband only coughs and wheezes. The young one says: he plays outside till evening and stays out late, and I wait for him on the bed. My past merit is not set right; so much trouble has come, what can I say of it. When I go near to press my body to his, he will not let me close; he turns away in disgust. Tuka says: this is the store of past deeds, sister. What can be said to God about it?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram dresses a spiritual complaint in a homely scene of two ill-matched wives. The young wife's husband is a child who would rather play, the old wife's husband only coughs and shrinks from her touch; in both, the longing for union meets a partner who cannot meet it. Read as the soul and God, it voices the ache of one who reaches for union and feels held off, and Tukaram traces that frustration to the account of past deeds rather than to any cruelty in God. The closing line shrugs the whole thing back to heaven: this is karma's inheritance, so what is there to argue with God about? It names the soul's restless longing and its sense of being kept at a distance, without pretending to resolve it.

GATHA 4467

Faith and Trust

Faith, God's strength behind you

मराठी मूळ

स्वामीच्या सामर्थ्या । चाले बोलिला पुरुषार्थ ॥१॥
 पाठी देवाचें हें बळ । मग लाभे हातीं काळ ॥२॥
 देव ज्यासी साहए । तेणें केलें सर्व होय ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे स्वामीसत्ता । मग नाहीं भय चित्ता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By the master's power, one's stated purpose prevails. With God's strength behind you, even Death comes into your hands.

Whatever one attempts with God's support will succeed. Says Tuka, when the Lord is your sovereign, there is no fear in the chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By the master's power, the purpose you speak of moves forward. With God's strength at your back, even Death falls into your hands. The one God helps, that one has everything done for him. Tuka says: when the Lord is your sovereign, then there is no fear in the heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is locating all real power outside the self and in God. Whatever you set out to do succeeds not by your own force but because the master's strength stands behind it, and with that backing even Death, the last terror, becomes something you can master. The claim he lands is about fear: once you take God as your sovereign, the ground of all fear is gone, because the outcome no longer rests on your weakness. The instruction is to lean on that strength rather than your own.

GATHA 4468

The Power of the Name

The Name, its power to deliver

मराठी मूळ

नामांचा डांगोरा फिरवीं घरोघरीं । ह्मणा हरीहरी सर्वभावें ॥१॥
 नामें हरती कर्म वैकुंठीची पै विस्त । संनिध श्रीपति सदोदित ॥२॥
 नामाचा महिमा बहुतां कळला । नामें उद्धरिला अजामेळ ॥३॥
 गजेंद्राची स्थिति पुराणीं बोलती । नामें चि श्रीपति पावलासे ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे घेतां मुक्ति आहे । नामें सर्व पाहें आकिळलें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Proclaim the Name from door to door. Say 'Hari, Hari' with your whole being.

The Name removes all karma and opens the way to Vaikuntha. Shripati is always near.

The greatness of the Name has been known to many. The Name delivered even the wrongdoer Ajamila.

The Puranas tell the story of Gajendra: through the Name alone, Shripati came to his rescue. Says Tuka, by taking the Name, liberation is assured. The Name holds everything within its power.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Carry the Name from door to door like a town crier. Say Hari, Hari with your whole heart. The Name burns away karma and spreads the wealth of Vaikuntha; Shripati is always near. Many have come to know the greatness of the Name. The Name lifted up even Ajamila. The Puranas tell of Gajendra's plight: by the Name alone Shripati came to him. Tuka says: take the Name and liberation is yours. The Name holds everything within its grasp.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is preaching the Name as the one accessible, all-sufficient practice. Said with the whole heart, repeated like a crier going door to door, it burns off karma and keeps God close at hand. He grounds the claim in two well-known rescues: Ajamila, a sinner saved when he called a holy name at death, and Gajendra the elephant, lifted from the crocodile when he cried out. The stakes he names are total: by simply taking the Name, liberation is assured, because the Name holds everything within its grasp.

GATHA 4469

The Saints

The saints, freedom from Yama's noose

मराठी मूळ

यमाचे हे पाश नाटोपती कोणातें । आह्वां दिनानाथें रिक्षयेलें ॥१॥
यम नेतां तुह्यां रक्षील हें कोण । तुह्यां धन्यधन्य कोण ह्मणती ॥२॥
संतसज्जनमेळा पवित्र संतकीतिन । त्यांनीं उत्तम िस्थति सांगितली ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The noose of Yama cannot be resisted by anyone, yet the Lord of the lowly has freed us from it. When Yama comes to take you, who will protect you? Who will call you blessed then? The company of saints and the glory of their virtue have shown the noblest path.

Holding this truth in my chitta, Tuka works for the good of all and now kicks Yama's messengers aside.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Yama's noose cannot be thrown off by anyone, yet the Lord of the lowly has freed us from it. When Yama comes to take you, who will protect you? Who will call you blessed then? The gathering of saints and good people, the pure glory of the saints, have shown the highest state. Holding that very thing in the heart, Tuka works for the good of all, and now he kicks Yama's messengers aside.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contrasts a fear no one escapes with a rescue he has already received. Yama's noose, death and its reckoning, binds everyone, and he presses the reader with the question: when it comes, who will save you, who will call you blessed? His answer is the company of saints, whose pure example pointed him to the highest state, and the Lord of the lowly who acts through them. Holding that in his heart, he says he can now kick aside the messengers of death, not as a boast over a person but as the confidence the saints' path gives against the one fear that masters all.

GATHA 4470

Longing and Separation

Longing, holy defiance toward God

मराठी मूळ

देवासी पैं भांडों एकचित करुनि । आह्मांसि सज्जनीं सांगितलें ॥1॥
 आह्मां काय आतां देवें आडो परी । भेटी नेदी तरी सुखें नेदो ॥ध्रु॥
 तो चि नांदो सदा हरि पैं वैकुंठी । आह्मां देशवटी देवो सुखें ॥2॥
 देवें अभिमान चित्तांत धरिला । तरी तो एकला राहो आतां ॥3॥
 चित्तीं धरोनि नाम असों सुखें येथें । हर्षो गाऊं गीत गोविंदाचें ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे सर्व देवाची नष्टाई । आह्मी सुखें डुलतसों ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The saints have told us to argue with God, to be single-minded in our appeal to Him. What can God do to obstruct us now? If He will not grant us a meeting, let Him keep His happiness to Himself.

Let Him remain forever in Vaikuntha. Let Him gladly banish us if He wishes.

If God has chosen to be stubborn, then let Him stay alone. We will hold the Name in our chitta and dwell here in contentment, singing the songs of Govinda with joy.

Says Tuka, all this is God's own mischief. We continue to sway blissfully in His Name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let us quarrel with God, single-minded in it; this is what the good people told us. What can God do to block us now? If he will not give us a meeting, then let him keep his happiness. Let Hari live forever in Vaikuntha; let him gladly send us into exile. If God has set his pride against us, then let him stay alone now. Holding the Name in the heart, we will stay here content, and with joy we will sing the song of Govinda. Tuka says: all this is God's own mischief, and we keep swaying happily in his Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the bold, lover's quarrel of bhakti, which Tukaram says the saints themselves taught. Stung that God withholds his presence, he answers pride with mock pride: keep your Vaikuntha, keep your happiness, send us into exile, stay alone. But the defiance turns out to be a deeper trust, not a rejection. Even refused a meeting, he finds he already holds the Name in his heart and can sing of Govinda with joy, so the whole standoff is God's playful mischief, and the devotee keeps swaying in delight regardless. The radical claim is that the Name in the heart is itself the presence, so even God's withdrawal cannot rob the lover.

GATHA 4471

The Power of the Name

The Name, the open market for all

मराठी मूळ

भरणी आली मुक्त पेठा । करा लाटा व्यापार ॥1॥
 उधार घ्या रे उधार घ्या रे । अवघे या रे जातीचे ॥ध्रु॥
 येथें पंक्तिभेद नाही । मोठें कांहीं लहान ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे लाभ घ्यावा । मुद्दल भावा जतन ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The fair is open and the market is free. Trade now and reap the profit.

Take on credit, take on credit. Come, all of you, all castes together.

Here there is no distinction of status, no high or low. Says Tuka, take this profit. Guard the capital of pure devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The shipment has come, the market is open. Strike your trade now. Take it on credit, take it on credit. Come, all of you, every caste. Here there is no ranking by rank, nothing greater, nothing smaller. Tuka says: take the profit. Guard the capital, which is devotion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures the Name as a market thrown open to everyone. The goods have arrived, the trade is free, and he calls all castes in together, declaring that here there is no high and low, no ranking by status. That leveling is the radical point: the wealth of God is sold to anyone on credit, regardless of birth or standing. The profit is liberation, freely available; and the one thing to protect is the capital that makes the trade, which he names as pure devotion.

GATHA 4472

True Worship

True worship, God at the daily meal

मराठी मूळ

ग्रासोग्रासीं भाव । तरी देहिं च जेवी देव ॥1॥
 धरीं स्मरण तें सार । नाहीं दुरी तें अंतर ॥ध्रु॥
 भोगितां तूं भावें । देव जेऊं बैसे सवें ॥2॥
 तुज पावो देवा । भावें अंतरीची सेवा ॥3॥
 गुंतला साधनीं । देव नाहीं त्रिभुवनीं ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे हातीं । न धरितां गमाविती ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If with every morsel you hold devotion, then God Himself dines with you in the body. Hold to that remembrance which is the essence; the distance is not great.

When you eat with that feeling, God sits beside you at the meal. Through inner devotion, God reaches you.

But one who is tangled in rituals alone will not find God in all three worlds. Says Tuka, those who do not hold Him in their hands will lose Him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If devotion is in every mouthful, then God eats with you in the body itself. Hold that remembrance; it is the essence. The distance is not far. When you eat with that feeling, God sits and eats beside you. Through the heart's inner service, you reach God. One tangled only in techniques will not find God in the three worlds. Tuka says: those who do not hold him in their hands lose him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is moving worship out of the ritual hall and into the ordinary meal. If you eat with devotion in every mouthful, he says, God is not far off but sits beside you, dining in your own body; the inner service of the heart is what reaches him. Against this he sets mere technique: one caught up in the machinery of practice will not find God anywhere in the three worlds. The point he lands is that God is held by living remembrance, present in daily acts, and is lost the moment you let go of him in favor of method.

GATHA 4473

Longing and Separation

Longing, desire turned toward God

मराठी मूळ

कामिनीसी जैसा आवडे भ्रतार । इच्छीत चकोर चंद्र जैसा ॥१॥
 तैसी हे आवडी विठ्ठलाचे पायीं । लागलिया नाहीं गर्भवास ॥२॥
 दुष्काळें पीडिल्या आवडे भोजन । आणिक जीवन तृषाक्रांता ॥३॥
 कामातुर जैसा भय लज्जा सांडोनि । आवडे कामिनी सर्वभावे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

As a wife loves her husband, as the chakor bird longs for the moon, let such longing attach itself to Vitthal's feet, and there shall be no more birth in the womb. As the famished crave food, as the parched crave water, as the lustful abandon all shame and fear, desiring the beloved with every fiber of being, so let longing persist.

Says Tuka, Panduranga will carry such a one to the shore.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As a wife loves her husband, as the chakor bird longs for the moon, let this longing fasten on Vitthal's feet; once it does, there is no more birth in the womb. As the famine-struck crave food, as the thirst-struck crave water, as the lustful one throws off fear and shame and desires the beloved with his whole being, so let the longing stay. Tuka says: when such longing stays, Panduranga will bring you to the far shore.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the most consuming human desires and tells you to turn them, whole and undiluted, toward God. The wife's love, the chakor's pining for the moon, the starving man's craving, the thirsty man's thirst, the lover who flings off shame, each is a picture of total, single-minded wanting. He does not soften that intensity; he asks you to fasten exactly that much hunger onto Vitthal's feet. The promise is that longing of this order ends rebirth and that Panduranga himself carries such a one across to the far shore.

GATHA 4474

Devotion to Vitthal

The sacred formula, Panduranga as its root

मराठी मूळ

ॐ तत्सदिति सूत्राचें सार । कृपेचा सागर पांडुरंग ॥१॥
 हरिः ॐ सहित उदत अनुदत । प्रचुरीश्वरासहित पांडुरंग ॥२॥
 गोब्राह्मणहिता होऊनि निराळे । वेदाचें तें मूळ तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Om Tat Sat: this is the essence of the sacred formula. Panduranga is the ocean of grace.

Hari Om, with the rising and falling tones of the Vedic chant, Panduranga is one with the Supreme Lord. Says Tuka, the root of the Vedas stands apart, devoted to the welfare of cows and brahmins.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Om Tat Sat: this is the heart of the sacred word. Panduranga is the ocean of grace. Hari Om, with the rising and falling tones of the chant, Panduranga is one with the Supreme Lord. Tuka says: he stands apart, the root of the Vedas, set on the good of cows and brahmins.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the highest Vedic formula, Om Tat Sat, and says its whole meaning is one person: Panduranga, the form of Vitthal at Pandhari. He is the ocean of grace, and he is one with the Supreme that the chant rises and falls toward. The closing line gives him a double place: he is the very root the Vedas grow from, and yet he stands apart, turned outward toward the welfare of cows and brahmins. The point is that the abstract sacred sound and the living, caring Lord are not two things.

GATHA 4475

Sacred Stories

A mother's abandonment, the turn of fate

मराठी मूळ

सांडियेला गर्भ उबगोनि माउली । नाहीं सांभिळली भूमि शुद्ध ॥१॥
 उष्ण तान भूक एवढिये आकांतीं । ओसंगा लाविती काय ह्युण ॥२॥
 खांद्यावरि शूळ मरणाचिये वाटे । अन्याय ही मोठे केले साच ॥३॥
 हातींचा हिरोनि घातला पोटासी। तुका ह्मणे ऐसी परी जाली ॥३॥
 ओव्या प्रारंभ 231 अभंग 3

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mother, weary and in distress, abandoned the child at birth, not caring whether the ground was clean. In such a crisis of heat, thirst, and hunger, who can be expected to hold the infant to her bosom? With death's trident upon her shoulders, on the road to execution, grave wrongs had truly been committed.

What was snatched from her hands was thrust into the belly of another. Says Tuka, such was the turn of fate.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The mother, worn out and in distress, left the child at birth. She did not see whether the ground was clean. In such heat and thirst and hunger, who can hold the infant to her breast? With death's trident on her shoulders, on the road to execution, great wrongs had truly been done. What was torn from her hands was thrust into another's belly. Tuka says: such was the turn of fate.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at an act that horrifies, a mother abandoning her newborn, and refuses to flatten it into simple blame. He sets it inside her crisis: she is half dead herself, driven by heat, thirst, hunger, and a sentence of death already on her shoulders. The wrong is real and named as wrong, yet the verse asks what such a crushed person can be expected to do. The last image is bleak, what was hers torn away and given to another's hunger, and Tukaram leaves it as fate's turning, pointing the eye at the whole machinery of suffering rather than at one ruined woman.

GATHA 4476

Autobiography

The Name alone, God runs to the singer

मराठी मूळ

पांडुरंगा करुं प्रथम नमन । दुसरें चरणा संतांचिया ॥1॥
 याच्या कृपादानें कथेचा विस्तार । बाबाजीसद्गुदास तुका ॥2॥
 काय माझी वाणी मानेल संतांसी । रंजवूं चित्तासी आपुलिया ॥3॥
 या मनासी लागो हरिनामाचा छंद । आवडी गोविंद गावयासी ॥4॥
 सीण जाला मज संवसारसंभ्रमें । सीतळ या नामें जाली काया ॥5॥
 या सुखा उपमा नाहीं द्यावयासी । आलें आकारासी निविनकार ॥6॥
 नित्य धांवें तेथें नामाचा गजर । घोष जयजयकार आइकतां ॥7॥
 तांतडी ते काय हरिगुण गाय । आणीक उपाय दुःखमूळ ॥8॥
 मूळ नरकाचें राज्यमदेंमाते । अंतरे बहुत देव दुरी ॥9॥
 दुरी अंतरला नामनिंदकासी । जैसैं गोंचिडासी क्षीर राहे ॥10॥
 हे वाट गोमटी वैकुंठासी जातां । रामकृष्णकथा दिंडी ध्वजा ॥11॥
 जाणतयांनीं सांगितलें करा । अंतरासी वारा आडूनियां ॥12॥
 यांसी आहे ठावें परि अंध होती । विषयाची खंती वाटे जना ॥13॥
 नाहीं त्या सुटलीं द्रव्य लोभ माया । भस्म दंड छाया तरुवराची ॥14॥
 चित्त ज्याचें पुत्रपत्नीबंधूवरी । सुटल हा परि कैसैं जाणा ॥15॥
 जाणत नेणत करा हरिकथा । तराल सर्वथा भाक माझी ॥16॥
 माझी मज असे घडली प्रचित । नसेल पतित ऐसा कोणी ॥17॥
 कोणीं तरी कांहीं केलें आचरण । मज या कीर्तनेविण नाहीं ॥18॥
 नाहीं भय भक्ता तराया पोटाचें । देवासी तयाचें करणें लागे ॥19॥
 लागे पाठोवाटी पाहे पायांकडे । पीतांबर खडे वाट सांडी ॥20॥
 डिकोनियां कां रे राहिले हे लोक । हें चि कवतुक वाटे मज ॥21॥
 ज्यानें तारिले पाषाण सागरीं । तो ध्या रे अंतरीं स्वामी माझा ॥22॥
 माझिया जीवाची केली सोडवण । ऐसा नारायण कृपाळु हा ॥23॥
 हा चि माझा नेम हा चि माझा धर्म । नित्य वाचे नाम विठोबाचें ॥24॥
 चेतवला अग्नि तापत्रयज्वाळ । तो करी शितळ रामनाम ॥25॥
 मना धीर करीं दृढ चित्तां धरीं । तारील श्रीहरि मायबाप ॥26॥
 बाप हा कृपाळु भक्ता भाविकांसी । घरीं होय दासी कामारी त्या ॥27॥
 त्याचा भार माथां चालवी आपुला । जिहीं त्या दिधला सर्व भाव ॥28॥
 भावेंविण त्याची प्राप्ति । पुराणें बोलती ऐसी मात ॥29॥
 मात त्याची जया आवडे जीवासी । तया गर्भवासीं नाहीं येणें ॥30॥
 यावें गर्भवासीं तरी च विष्णुदासीं । उद्धार लोकांसी पूज्य होती ॥31॥
 होती आवडत जीवाचे ताइत । त्यां घडी अच्युत न विसंभे ॥32॥
 भेदाभेद नाहीं चिंता दुःख कांहीं । वैकुंठ त्या ठायीं सदा वसे ॥33॥
 वसे तेथें देव सदा सर्वकाळ । करिती निर्मळ नामघोष ॥34॥

संपदा तयांची न सरे कल्पांतीं । मेळविला भक्ती देवलाभ ॥35॥
 लाभ तयां जाला संसारा येऊनी । भगवंत ऋणी भक्ती केला ॥36॥
 लागलेसे पिसें काय मूढजनां । काय नारायणा विसरलीं ॥37॥
 विसरलीं तयां थोर जाली हाणी । पचविल्या खाणी चौःयासी ॥38॥
 शिकविलें तरी नाहीं कोणा लाज । लागलीसे भाज धन गोड ॥39॥
 गोड एक आहे अविट गोविंद । आणीक तो छंद नासिवंत ॥40॥
 तळमळ त्याची कांहीं तरी करा । कां रे निदसुरा बुडावया ॥41॥
 या जनासी भय यमाचें नाहीं । सांडियेलीं तिहीं एकराज्यें ॥42॥
 जेणें अग्निमाजी घातलासे पाव । नेणता तो राव जनक होता ॥43॥
 तान भूक जिहीं साहिले आघात । तया पाय हात काय नाहीं ॥44॥
 नाहीं ऐसा तिहीं केला संवसार । दुःखाचे डोंगर तोडावया ॥45॥
 याच जन्में घडे देवाचें भजन । आणीक हें ज्ञान नाहीं कोठें ॥46॥
 कोठें पुढें नाहीं घ्यावया विसांवा । फिरोनि या गांवा आल्याविण ॥47॥
 विनवितां दिवस बहुत लागती । ह्मणउनि चित्तीं देव धरा ॥48॥
 धरा पाय तुह्मी संतांचे जीवासी । वियोग तयांसी देवा नाहीं ॥49॥
 नाहीं चाड देवा आणीक सुखाची । आवडी नामाची त्याच्या तया ॥50॥
 त्याची च उच्छिष्ट बोलतो उत्तरें । सांगितलें खरें व्यासादिकीं ॥51॥
 व्यासें सांगितलें भक्ति हे विचार । भवसिंधु पार तरावया ॥52॥
 तरावया जना केलें भागवत । गोवळ गोपी भक्त माता पिता ॥53॥
 तारुनियां खरे नेली एक्यासरें । निमित्तें उत्तरें रुसिया ॥54॥
 यासी वर्म ठावें भक्तां तरावया । जननी बाळ माया राख तान्हें ॥55॥
 तान्हेलें भुकेलें ह्मणे वेळोवेळां । न मगतां लळा जाणोनियां ॥56॥
 जाणोनियां वर्म देठ लावियेला । द्रौपदीच्या बोलासवें धांवे ॥57॥
 धांवे सर्वता धेनु जैसी वत्सा । भक्तालागीं तैसा नारायण ॥58॥
 नारायण व्होवा हांव ज्याच्या जीवा । धन्य त्याच्या दैवा पार नाहीं ॥59॥
 पार नाहीं सुखा तें दिलें तयासी । अखंड वाचेसी रामनाम ॥60॥
 रामनाम दोनी उत्तम अक्षरें । भवानीशंकरें उपदेशिलीं ॥61॥
 उपदेश करी विश्वनाथ कानीं । वाराणसी प्राणी मध्यें मरे ॥62॥
 मरणाचे अंतीं राम ह्मणे जरी । न लगे यमपुरी जावें तया ॥63॥
 तयासी उत्तम ठाव वैकुंठीं । वसे नाम चित्तीं सर्वकाळ ॥64॥
 सर्वकाळ वसे वैष्णवांच्या घरीं । नसे क्षणभरी थिर कोठें ॥65॥
 कोठें नका पाहों करा हरिकथा । तेथें अवचिता सांपडेल ॥66॥
 सांपडे हा देव भाविकांचे हातीं । शाहाणे मरती तरी नाहीं ॥67॥
 नाहीं भलें भक्ती केलियावांचूनि । अहंता पापिणी नागवण ॥68॥
 नागवलों ह्मणे देव मी आपणा । लाभ दिला जना ठकलों तो ॥69॥

तो चि देव येर नव्हे ऐसैं कांहीं। जनादनन ठायीं चहूं खाणी ॥70॥
 खाणी भरुनियां राहिलासे आंत । बोलावया मात ठाव नाहीं ॥71॥
 ठाव नाहीं रिता कोणी देवाविण । ऐसी ते सज्जन संतवाणी ॥72॥
 वाणी बोलूनियां गेलीं एक पुढें । तयासी वांकुडें जातां ठक ॥73॥
 ठका नाहीं अर्थ ठाउका वेदांचा । होऊनि भेदाचा दास ठेला ॥74॥
 दास ठेला पोट अर्थ दंभासाठीं । ह्मणउनि तुटी देवासवें ॥75॥
 सवें देव द्विजातीही दुराविला । आणिकांचा आला कोण पाड ॥76॥
 पाड करुनियां नागविलीं फार । पंडित वेव्हार खळवादी ॥77॥
 वादका निंदका देवाचें दुरुशन । नव्हे जाला पूर्ण षडकमाअ ॥78॥
 षडकमाअ हीन रामनाम कंठीं । तयासवें भेटी सवें देवा ॥79॥
 देवासी आवड भाविक जो भोळा । शुद्ध त्या चांडाळा करुनि मानी ॥80॥
 मानियेल्या नाहीं विश्वास या बोला । नाम घेतां मला युक्ति थोडी ॥81॥
 बोलतां पांगल्या श्रुति नेति नेति । खुंटलिया युक्ति पुढें त्यांच्या ॥83॥
 पुढें पार त्याचा न कळे चि जातां । पाउलें देखतां ब्रह्मादिकां ॥84॥
 काय भक्तीपिसें लागलें देवासी । इच्छा ज्याची जैसी तैसा होय ॥85॥
 होय हा सगुण निर्गुण आवडी । भक्तिप्रय गोडी फेडावया ॥86॥
 या बापासी बाळ बोले लाडें कोडें । करुनि वांकुडें मुख तैसैं ॥87॥
 तैसैं याचकाचें समाधान दाता । होय हा राखता सत्त्वकाळीं ॥88॥
 सत्त्वकाळीं कामा न येती आयुधें । बळ हा संबंध सैन्यलोक ॥89॥
 सैन्यलोक तया दाखवी प्रताप । लोटला हा कोप कोपावरी ॥90॥
 कोपा मरण नाहीं शांत होय त्यासी । प्रमाण भल्यासी सत्त्वगुणीं ॥91॥
 सत्त्वरजतमा आपण नासती । करितां हे भक्ति विठोबाची ॥92॥
 चित्त रंगलिया चैतन्य चि होय । तेथें उणें काय निजसुखा ॥93॥
 सुखाचा सागरु आहे विटेवरी । कृपादान करी तो चि एक ॥94॥
 एक चित्त धरुं विठोबाचे पायीं । तेथें उणें कांहीं एक आह्मां ॥95॥
 करुं हरिकथा सुखाची समाधि । आणिकाची बुद्धी दुष्ट नास ॥97॥
 नासे संवसार लोकमोहो माया । शरण जा रे तया विठोबासी ॥98॥
 सिकविलें मज मूढा संतजनीं । दृढ या वचनीं राहिलोंसे ॥99॥
 राहिलोंसे दृढ विठोबाचे पायीं । तुका ह्मणे कांहीं न लगे आंता ॥100॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

First I bow to Panduranga, then to the feet of the saints. By their gift of grace, this narrative expands.

Tuka is the servant of the Sadguru Babaji. Will my words find favor with the saints? Let me at least please my own chitta.

May this mind be seized by the passion of Hari's Name, the love of singing of Govinda. I am weary from the toil of worldly life; this body has been cooled by the Name.

No comparison exists for this happiness. The formless has taken form.

Wherever the chanting of the Name resounds, wherever the cry of 'Victory!' is heard, God runs to that place. What urgency can there be other than singing the glories of Hari? All other efforts are the root of sorrow.

The pride of power and kingdom is the root of hell; it makes God distant. One who slanders the Name is as far from God as a tick is from milk.

This is the beautiful road to Vaikuntha: the procession of Rama Krishna's story, with banners and flags. The wise have taught us: bar the door against the wandering mind.

People know this, yet they become blind. The sorrow of sense-pleasures grips them.

They have not freed themselves from wealth, greed, and illusion; they carry the staff and ashes, resting in the shade of a tree. One whose mind is fixed on wife, children, and relatives, know that such a one is not liberated.

Whether knowing or unknowing, sing the story of Hari; you will surely be saved. This is my solemn word.

I have experienced it myself. There has been no greater wrongdoer than I.

Others at least performed some spiritual practice; I had nothing but kirtan. The devotee need not worry about filling his belly; God Himself takes care of it.

God follows behind His devotee, watching his steps, dropping His yellow garment and stumbling in His haste. Why do these people remain frozen, stuck in place? This wonder amazes me.

He who made stones float across the ocean, contemplate Him within your chitta, my Lord. He liberated my very soul.

Such is Narayana, the compassionate One. This is my vow, this is my dharma: the Name of Vitthoba always on my lips.

The fire of the three afflictions has been kindled, but the Name of Rama makes it cool. Take courage, O mind; hold firm.

Shri Hari, our parent, will save us. This Father is gracious to His faithful devotees; He becomes a servant in their homes.

He carries their burden on His own head, for those who have given Him their whole being. Without devotion, He cannot be attained; so the Puranas declare.

Whoever loves to hear His story will never enter the womb again. If one must enter the womb, let it be as a servant of Vishnu, to uplift the world and be honored.

Such souls become the darlings of God's own chitta, His cherished talismans; the Lord never parts from them for a moment. There is no duality, no sorrow or anxiety; Vaikuntha dwells wherever they are.

God resides there at all times, where they chant His Name in purity. Their wealth never diminishes, even at the end of time; through devotion they have won God Himself.

Blessed are they who, having come into this world, have made God their debtor through devotion. What madness has seized these foolish folk? Have they forgotten Narayana? Those who have forgotten Him have suffered a great blow, ground through the eighty-four lakh species.

Though taught, none of them feels any shame; the allure of wealth tastes too sweet. There is one sweetness that never palls: Govinda.

All other passions are perishable. Feel some urgency for Him.

Why do you sleep, headed for drowning? These people have no fear of Yama; they have thrown away their single greatest treasure. King Janaka, not knowing, once thrust his foot into fire.

Those who endured hunger, thirst, and hardship, did they lack hands and feet? Yet they did not make their worldly life a comfortable settlement; they strove to cut through mountains of sorrow. Devotion to God is possible only in this human birth; there is no other wisdom anywhere.

There is no resting place ahead without returning to this village once more. To speak of all this would take many days; therefore hold God within your chitta.

Grasp the feet of the saints with all your life; they never suffer separation from God. God has no desire for any other pleasure.

The love of the Name is all He craves. I speak only the leftovers of those saints; the truth was told by Vyasa and others.

Vyasa taught the path of devotion to cross the ocean of worldly existence. For the deliverance of people, the Bhagavata was composed: the cowherds, the gopis, devotees, mothers, and fathers.

Saving them all, He carried them across in one stroke, using the pretext of feigned anger. The saints know the secret of saving their devotees: as a mother protects her infant, sheltering the hungry child.

The hungry, thirsty child cries out again and again, and the mother, knowing its needs without being asked, responds. Knowing the secret, God ran at the mere words of Draupadi.

He runs as a cow runs to her calf; so does Narayana run to His devotees. Blessed beyond measure is the fortune of one whose soul yearns for Narayana.

The joy given to such a one has no end: the Name of Rama always on the lips. The two syllables of Rama's Name are the supreme and excellent; Shiva and Parvati themselves taught them.

Vishwanath whispers the teaching into the ear of every being who dies at Varanasi. If at the moment of death one says 'Rama,' one need not go to the city of Yama.

Such a jiva receives the finest place in Vaikuntha, where the Name dwells in the chitta at all times. God dwells forever in the homes of the Vaishnavas; He does not stay still for a moment elsewhere.

Do not search anywhere else; do the story of Hari, and He will appear suddenly. God is caught in the hands of the simple and faithful; the clever may die trying and still not find Him.

Nothing good comes without devotion. Ego, the sinful one, is the great deceiver.

God says, 'I have been tricked by My own devotees. The profit went to the people, and I was the one outwitted.' That one alone is God; there is no other.

Janardana is present in all four mines of creation. He fills all creation and remains within; there is no space left to describe Him.

There is no place empty of God. Such is the testimony of saints and scripture.

The great ones spoke and went ahead. To go against their words is to be deceived.

The deceiver does not understand the meaning of the Vedas; enslaved by the sense of difference, he remains trapped. Enslaved to his belly, to wealth, and to pride, he is therefore cut off from God.

Even the twice-born caste has been estranged from God. What chance then for others? Scholars and debaters who argue and slander will never see God, even if they complete all the six prescribed duties.

But one who is without those duties yet carries Rama's Name on his lips, God will embrace and walk alongside. God loves the simple and faithful; He purifies even the excluded and honors them.

If you do not believe these words, if you think chanting the Name is too simple a method, consider that the scriptures themselves fell silent, saying 'not this, not this,' their logic exhausted. They could not reach the end of His mystery.

Even Brahma and the gods could only glimpse His feet. What madness of devotion has seized this God? He becomes whatever His devotee desires.

He becomes both with form and formless, to satisfy the longing of His beloved. Like a child who speaks lisping, loving words and makes a sulky face to his father, so does God respond.

Like a patron who fulfills the supplicant's needs, He remains the protector at all times. Weapons, armies, and allies are useless for eternal protection.

He shows His might to those who show theirs, sending wave after wave of wrath against wrath. Anger has no death; it subsides only through peace.

For the good, the measure is goodness. The three gunas, sattva, rajas, and tamas, are themselves destroyed when one practices devotion to Vitthoba.

When the mind is steeped in devotion, it becomes pure consciousness itself. What then is lacking for the experience of the inner bliss? The ocean of bliss stands upon the brick.

He alone bestows the gift of grace. Let us fix our minds upon Vitthoba's feet alone; nothing more is needed for us.

Let us do Hari's kirtan, the samadhi of happiness. All other counsel is wicked and destructive.

Worldly existence, delusion, and maya are destroyed. Go, take refuge in Vitthoba.

The saints taught me, a fool, and I have remained firm in their words. I remain firm at Vitthoba's feet.

Says Tuka, nothing more is needed now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

First I bow to Panduranga, then to the feet of the saints. By their grace this telling grows. Tuka is the servant of the Sadguru Babaji. Will my words please the saints? Let me at least gladden my own heart. May this mind be seized by love of Hari's Name, the joy of singing Govinda. I was worn out by the toil of the world; this body has been cooled by the Name. There is no comparison for this joy. The formless has taken form. Wherever the Name resounds, wherever the cry of victory is heard, God runs to that place. What hurry is there but to sing Hari's praise? Every other effort is the root of sorrow. The pride of power and kingdom is the root of hell; it pushes God far off. One who slanders the Name is as far from God as a tick is from milk. This is the lovely road to Vaikuntha: the procession of the Rama Krishna story, with banners and flags. The wise have taught us to bar the door against the wandering mind. People know this, yet they go blind; the sorrow of the senses grips them. They have not freed themselves from wealth, greed, and illusion; they carry the staff and ashes and rest in the shade of a tree. One whose mind is fixed on wife, children, and kin, know that one is not free. Whether you know or do not know, sing the story of Hari; you will surely be saved. This is my solemn word. I have learned it on myself. There has been no greater wrongdoer than I. Others did at least some practice; I had nothing but kirtan. The devotee need not worry about his belly; God himself sees to it. God follows behind his devotee, watching his steps, dropping his yellow garment and stumbling in his haste. Why do these people stay frozen in place? This wonder amazes me. He who made stones float across the sea, hold him within your heart, my Lord. He set my very soul free. Such is Narayana, the compassionate one. This is my vow, this is my dharma: the Name of Vithoba always on my lips. The fire of the three afflictions has been lit, and the Name of Rama makes it cool. Take courage, my mind; hold firm. Shri Hari, our mother and father, will save us. This Father is kind to his faithful; he becomes a servant in their homes. He carries their burden on his own head, for those who have given him their whole being. Without devotion he is not won; so the Puranas say. Whoever loves to hear his story will not enter the womb again. If he must enter the womb, let it be as a servant of Vishnu, to lift up the world and be honored. Such souls are the darlings of God's heart, his cherished talismans; the Lord never leaves them for a moment. There is no division there, no sorrow, no fear; Vaikuntha lives wherever they are. God stays there always, where they chant his Name in purity. Their wealth does not run out, even at the end of time; through devotion they have won God himself. Blessed are they who, coming into this world, have made God their debtor through devotion. What madness has seized these foolish folk? Have they forgotten Narayana? Those who forgot him suffered a great loss, ground through the eighty-four lakh wombs. Though taught, none feels any shame; the taste of wealth is too sweet. There is one sweetness that never palls: Govinda. Every other passion perishes. Feel some longing for him. Why do you sleep while you head toward drowning? These people have no fear of Yama; they have thrown away their one great treasure. King Janaka, not knowing, once thrust his foot into fire. Those who bore hunger, thirst, and blows, did they lack hands and feet? They did not turn the world into a soft settlement; they strove to cut through mountains of sorrow. Devotion to God is possible only in this human birth; there is no other wisdom anywhere. There is no resting place ahead without coming back to this village again. To say all of it would take many days; so hold God in your heart. Grasp the feet of the saints with all your life; they are never parted from God. God wants no other pleasure; he craves only the love of his Name. I speak only the leavings of those saints; the truth was told by Vyasa and the rest. Vyasa taught the path of devotion, to cross the ocean of the world. For the saving of people the Bhagavata was made: the cowherds, the gopis, the devotees, the mothers and fathers. He carried them all across in one stroke, using feigned anger as the pretext. The saints know the secret of saving devotees: as a mother shelters her hungry infant. The hungry child cries out again and again, and the mother, knowing its need without being asked, comes. Knowing the secret, God ran at the mere words of Draupadi. He runs as a cow runs to her calf; so does Narayana run to his devotees. Blessed beyond measure is the fortune of one whose soul yearns for Narayana. The joy given to such a one has no end: the Name of Rama always on the lips. The two syllables of Rama's Name are the best; Shiva and Parvati themselves taught them. Vishwanath whispers the teaching into the ear of every being who dies at Varanasi. If at the end one says Rama, that one need not go to the city of Yama. That soul gets the finest place in Vaikuntha, where the Name lives in the heart always.

God lives forever in the homes of the Vaishnavas; he does not rest a moment anywhere else. Do not search elsewhere; do the story of Hari, and he will appear all at once. God is caught in the hands of the simple and faithful; the clever may die trying and still not find him. Nothing good comes without devotion. Ego, the sinful one, is the great robber. God says, I have been tricked by my own devotees; the profit went to them, and I was the one outwitted. That one alone is God; there is no other. Janardana is present in all four kinds of birth. He fills all creation and stays within; there is no room left to describe him. There is no place empty of God. So speak the saints and the scriptures. The great ones spoke and went on ahead. To go against their words is to be deceived. The deceiver does not grasp the meaning of the Vedas; enslaved to difference, he stays trapped. A slave to his belly, to wealth, and to pride, he is cut off from God. Even the twice-born has been estranged from God; what chance then for others? Scholars and debaters who argue and slander will never see God, even if they finish all six prescribed duties. But one who lacks those duties, yet carries Rama's Name on his lips, God will embrace and walk beside. God loves the simple and faithful; he purifies even the outcaste and honors him. If you do not believe these words, if you think the Name too easy a way, remember that the scriptures themselves fell silent, saying not this, not this, their logic spent. They could not reach the end of his mystery. Even Brahma and the gods could only glimpse his feet. What madness of love has seized this God? He becomes whatever his devotee wants. He becomes both with form and formless, to satisfy his beloved's longing. Like a child who lisps loving words and pulls a sulky face at his father, so God answers. Like a giver who meets the beggar's need, he is the protector at all times. Weapons, armies, and allies are useless for lasting safety. He shows his might to those who show theirs, sending wave on wave of wrath against wrath. Anger does not die; it stills only through peace. For the good, the measure is goodness. The three gunas, sattva, rajas, and tamas, are themselves destroyed when one does devotion to Vithoba. When the mind is steeped in devotion, it becomes pure consciousness itself. What then is lacking for the bliss within? The ocean of bliss stands on the brick. He alone gives the gift of grace. Let us fix our minds on Vithoba's feet alone; nothing more is needed for us. Let us do Hari's kirtan, the samadhi of joy; all other counsel is wicked and ruins. The world, the snare of people, and maya are destroyed. Go, take refuge in Vithoba. The saints taught me, a fool, and I have held firm to their word. Tuka says: I stand firm at Vithoba's feet; nothing more is needed now.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a long teaching-poem that lays out Tukaram's whole creed in one breath: the Name is everything, and everything else is the root of sorrow. He opens by bowing to Panduranga and the saints and confessing he is the lowest wrongdoer, with nothing to his credit but kirtan, so that the path he names can carry anyone. The single claim, repeated from every angle, is that singing Hari's Name saves you whether you understand it or not, while rituals, austerities, scholarship, wealth, and pride only keep the cycle of birth turning and push God away. He stacks proof on proof, that God runs to where the Name is sung as a cow runs to her calf, that he came at Draupadi's word, that he is caught by simple milkmaids and eludes the clever, that even Yama and the Vedas confirm the Name's power, and warns that the slanderer of the Name is as far from God as a tick from milk. The point of self-examination is sharp: knowing all this, people still go blind for the sweetness of wealth and the love of wife, children, and kin, so the verse keeps asking why you sleep while heading toward drowning. The close is the whole abhanga in miniature: fix on Vithoba's feet, do his kirtan, and nothing more is needed.

GATHA 4477

Devotion to Vitthal

The Name as the only gain, the world as drowning

मराठी मूळ

गार्ह्यन ओंविया पंढरिचा देव । आमुचा तो जीव पांडुरंग ॥1॥
 रंगलें हें चित्त माझें तया पायीं । ह्यणउनि घेई हा चि लाहो ॥2॥
 लाहो करीन मी हा चि संवसारीं । राम कृष्ण हरि नारायण ॥3॥
 नारायण नाम घालितां तुकासी । न येती या रासी तपतीथों ॥4॥
 तीथों रज माथां वंदिती संतांचे । जे गाती हरिचे गुणवाद ॥5॥
 गुणवाद ज्याचे गातां पूज्य जाले । बडिवार बोले कोण त्यांचा ॥6॥
 त्याचा नाही पार कळला वेदांसी । आणीक ही ऋषि विचारितां ॥7॥
 विचारितां तैसा होय त्यांच्या भावें । निजसुख ठावें नाही कोणा ॥8॥
 कोणा कवतुक न कळे हे माव । निजलिया जिवें करी धंदा ॥9॥
 करुनि कवतुक खेळे हा चि लीळा । व्यापूनि वेगळा पाहातुसे ॥10॥
 सेवटीं आपण एकला चि खरा । सोंग हा पसारा नट केला ॥11॥
 लावियेलें चाळा मीपणें हें जन । भोग- तया कोण भोगविशी ॥12॥
 विषयीं गुंतलीं विसरलीं तुज । कन्या पुत्र भाज धनलोभा ॥13॥
 लोभें गिळी फांसा आविसाच्या आशा । पडोनि मासा तळमळी ॥14॥
 तळमळ याची तरी शम होईल । जरी हा विठ्ठल आठविती ॥15॥
 आठव हा तरी संतांच्या सांगातें । किंवा हें संचित जन्मांतरें ॥16॥
 जन्मांतरें तीन भोगितां कळती । केलें तें पावती करितां पुढें ॥17॥
 पुढें जाणोनियां करावें संचित । पुजावे अतीत देव द्विज ॥18॥
 जन्म तुटे ऐसें नव्हे तुह्यां जना । पुढिल्या पावना धर्म करा ॥19॥
 करा जप तप अनुष्ठान याग । संतीं हा मारग स्थापियेला ॥20॥
 लावियेलीं कर्मे शुद्ध आचरणें । कोणा एका तेणें काळें पावे ॥21॥
 पावला सत्वर निष्काम उदार । जिंकिली अपार वासना हे ॥22॥
 वासनेचें मूळ छेदिल्या वांचून । तरलेंसें कोणी न ह्यणावें ॥23॥
 न ह्यणावें जाला पंडित वाचक । करुं मंत्रघोष अक्षरांचा ॥24॥
 चाळविलीं एके ते चि आवडीनें । लोक दंभमानें देहसुखें ॥25॥
 सुख तरी च घडे भजनाचें सार । वाचे निरंतर रामनाम ॥26॥
 राम हा उच्चार तरी च बैसे वाचे । अनंता जन्माचें पुण्य होय ॥27॥
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ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I shall sing ovis of the God of Pandhari. Panduranga is our very life.

My chitta has been dyed at His feet; therefore let me reap this blessed harvest. This alone shall be my gain in this world: Rama, Krishna, Hari, Narayana.

No amount of austerity or pilgrimage can equal what comes from chanting Narayana's Name to Tuka. The dust of the saints' feet is honored as holy by all the sacred sites; those who sing Hari's glories are venerated everywhere.

They who sing His praises have become worthy of worship; who can measure their greatness? Even the Vedas could not fathom His extent, nor could the sages with all their inquiry. As one contemplates, He becomes whatever their devotion makes Him; yet no one truly knows the bliss of the Self.

No one grasps this wonder, this divine play. While souls sleep, He conducts the business of creation.

He plays His sport as a game, pervading all yet standing apart, watching. In the end, He alone is real.

All this display is but an actor's costume. He has set the world spinning with the sense of 'I' and 'mine.' Who causes beings to experience what they experience? Entangled in sense pleasures, they have forgotten You, lost in children, wealth, and greed.

Greed swallows the hook of desperate hope; the fish, having taken the bait, writhes in agony. Their agony would cease if they would only remember this Vitthal.

But such remembrance comes only through the company of saints, or through the merit of past lives. The fruits of past actions across three lifetimes are realized through experience.

What one has done, one receives; what one does next shapes the future. Knowing what lies ahead, accumulate good merit; honor the guests, the gods, and the brahmins.

The cycle of birth does not break so easily for worldly people; practice dharma for the sake of a better future. Perform chanting, austerity, rituals, and worship.

The saints have established this path. The prescribed actions and pure conduct, through them one will reach God in time.

The selfless and generous one arrives swiftly. He who has conquered the great enemy of desire prevails.

Unless the root of desire is severed, do not claim to be liberated. Do not claim to be a scholar or a reciter just because you chant mantras and syllables.

Worldly people have been led astray by their own preferences, by the pride of the body, by vanity and pretense. True happiness comes only through the essence of devotion: the Name of Rama always on the lips.

The utterance of Rama settles on the tongue only through the merit of countless births. What merit can stand before the Name of Rama? What are those petty rituals and sacrifices? Rituals, sacrifices, and austerities only perpetuate the world; without the Name, they cannot cut through it.

Without the Name, how can the ocean of existence be crossed? There is no other wisdom. The great devotees and sages know this: the Name is the treasury of nectar's joy.

The essence of nectar, the seed of the highest truth, the innermost secret of secrets is Rama's Name. The Name has delivered countless wrongdoers beyond all measure.

This is the well-known truth of the Puranas. This joy we shall take at all times, performing the pure story of Hari.

During the kirtan, everyone attains samadhi; at once the wicked mind is destroyed. Greed, delusion, desire, craving, and illusion all perish when one sings the glories of Vitthoba.

The virtues of Vitthoba are dear to me. Nothing else attracts my chitta.

Let no one suggest any other remedy to me. My chitta holds no second allegiance.

Knowing this, I have given my whole being. I have firmly grasped His feet.

Having grasped them, I will not let go even at the cost of my life. My resolve is fixed in this alone.

I have severed my ties with worldly existence and settled firmly here. Panduranga has accepted me and dyed me in His own color.

He has spread His wing of protection over me; God Himself takes care of us. When God protects you, what can others do? Their schemes have no power there.

Not even Death can enter when one is called the servant of Vitthoba. We are the cherished little ones of Vitthoba.

The demons and Death tremble in dread of His devotees. The fear and authority of the Lord span all three worlds.

Remember Him, all of you. Do not lie sleeping, anyone.

Wake up and escape the mines of rebirth and the agonies of the womb. The suffering of the womb and the punishment of Yama bring great torment in the coming and going.

Hunger, thirst, and pain afflict the living. After death, the messengers of Yama torment.

You say, who has ever witnessed this? The Kauravas plunged headlong into hell. Duryodhana was cast into the boiling cauldron of Kumbhipaka and could not show his face to Dharma.

Dharma, the compassionate one, came near and sat in the nether world, unable to rise. He cannot rise, no matter what is tried.

God makes each one reap what they have sown. Those who have forgotten Narayana in this world truly dwell in the most terrible hells.

Accept the words of the saints as truth and go, all of you, to Narayana for refuge. Do not put your trust in anything else: not in sons, wife, hopes, or wealth.

Wealth, greed, and the snares of attachment are traps set by the messengers of Yama. Their agents have muzzled your mouths so that the word Narayana cannot escape your lips.

They do not let pure wisdom touch your chitta; all manner of karmic burdens keep God far away. Many who considered themselves wise have been estranged by slander, ego, disputation, and divisiveness.

Strife, division, and slander are the tricks of Death. They entrap the idle tongue with pointless words.

The idle mind wanders, unable to decide whether God exists or not, and is yoked to the mill of worry. In the end, Death places a rope around your neck and tidies up the loose ends of desire.

If desire's company persists at the hour of death, one takes birth again, even if endowed with the power of austerity. Those who have held God in their chitta will remember their former states.

Remember God at the hour of death. That is why the courageous ones have given their lives for this purpose.

The sages gave up all pleasures and ate roots and tubers in the forest. The root of happiness lies in God; without Him, one is dragged to the lowest state even for the smallest lapse.

The best path and the best effort is this: hold the feet of Vitthoba. Once settled at Vitthoba's feet with devotion, there is no need to go anywhere else, not even to the forest.

Even the weak are saved by Vitthoba's Name, even those who have no store of pure merit. If the chitta is pure, what marvel is it? Simply saying 'Vitthal' again and again is enough.

No one holds the hour of their death in their own hands. The course of destiny cannot be known.

Destiny cannot be escaped without experiencing it. Knowing this, purify your store of merit.

Strive for your own welfare during this human birth. If you use the human birth to find Narayana, well and good.

Otherwise you are lower than a beast. Animals know nothing of sin or merit.

Humans, however, are aware of such things. People know what sin and merit are, for they see others experiencing the results.

Some will suffer the sorrows of worldly life. The varieties of misery are beyond telling.

They want to eat well, dress well, and live in comfort. This is the only ambition of their worldly existence.

The world has swallowed everyone whole, feeding them the fruit of rebirth. Unless the root of desire is cut, the cycle of the womb cannot be ended.

Without effort, nothing is gained. One should not passively ride the current of fate.

Do not force your body upon thorns. Do not carelessly grasp a serpent.

What lies in one's own hands can be worked for one's benefit. Therefore the sages have spoken.

They teach these people, even if it means embarrassing them, for they themselves are the ones who crossed over. They raised their arms in the sand-bed of Pandhari.

The ocean of grace is Panduranga. At His feet, the river of sins is washed clean, when those sacred feet are contemplated in the chitta.

By whose contemplation stones were made to float, He liberates by the mere touch of His feet. Clap your hands and there is no need to sit in rigid meditation.

Take the joy of divine love in the company of saints. In the company of saints, do kirtan and tell the sacred story.

The joyful path is simply Rama, Rama. Then God can go nowhere far.

He settles within and stays in your throat. He pervades the entire body and does not let you forget Him.

He does not let His servants see suffering. He wards off rebirth and the messengers of Yama.

He does not let hunger, thirst, or worry touch His devotees. All anxieties are dispelled by taking the Name.

All living beings are also souls, yet they are bound by their accumulated actions. Those who were puffed up with body-pride were shown Narayana's grace.

This God is compassionate, the shelter of the helpless. We are attached to His hope.

Panduranga has yoked us to Himself. Says Tuka, through the company of the saints.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will sing ovis of the God of Pandhari. Panduranga is our very life. My heart has been dyed at his feet; so let me reap this blessed harvest. This alone shall be my gain in this world: Rama, Krishna, Hari, Narayana. When Tuka chants the Name of Narayana, no heaps of austerity or pilgrimage can equal it. The pilgrimage sites honor on their heads the dust of the saints' feet, the saints who sing Hari's praise. Those who sing his praise have become worthy of worship; who can tell their greatness? The Vedas did not reach the end of him, nor the sages with all their inquiry. He becomes whatever their devotion makes him; yet no one truly knows the bliss of the Self. No one grasps this wonder, this play. While souls sleep, he carries on the work of creation. He plays his sport as a game, filling all things yet standing apart and watching. In the end he alone is real; all this show is an actor's costume. He has set the world spinning with the sense of I and mine. Who makes beings taste what they taste? Tangled in the senses, they have forgotten you, lost in daughters, sons, kin, and the greed for wealth. Greed swallows the hook of desperate hope; the fish, having taken the bait, writhes. Its writhing would grow still if only it remembered this Vitthal. But such remembering comes through the company of saints, or through the merit of past lives. The fruits of three lifetimes are known through what one tastes; what you have done you receive, and what you do now shapes what comes. Knowing what lies ahead, gather good merit; honor the guests, the gods, the brahmins. The chain of birth does not break so easily for worldly people; do dharma for the sake of a better future. Do chanting, austerity, ritual, and worship; the saints have laid down this road. Through the prescribed acts and pure conduct, one reaches God in time. The selfless and generous one comes swiftly; he who has conquered the great enemy of desire prevails. Until the root of desire is cut, let no one claim to be freed. Do not claim to be a scholar or reciter just because you chant mantras and syllables. Worldly people have been led astray by their own likings, by pride of body, by show and vanity. True joy comes only through the heart of devotion: the Name of Rama always on the lips. The utterance of Rama settles on the tongue only through the merit of countless births. What merit can stand before the Name of Rama? What are those poor little rituals and sacrifices? Rituals, sacrifices, austerities only keep the world going; without the Name they cannot cut through it. Without the Name, how is the ocean of existence crossed? There is no other wisdom. The great devotees and sages know this: the Name is the treasury of nectar's joy. The essence of nectar, the seed of the highest truth, the secret of secrets, is Rama's Name. By the Name countless wrongdoers beyond measure have been saved; this is the known truth of the Puranas. This joy we shall take at all times, doing the pure story of Hari. During the kirtan everyone falls into samadhi; at once the wicked mind is destroyed. Greed, delusion, hope, craving, and illusion all perish when one sings the praise of Vithoba. The virtues of Vithoba are dear to me; nothing else holds my heart. Let no one suggest any other remedy to me; my heart holds no second love. Knowing this, I have given my whole being and firmly grasped his feet. Having grasped them, I will not let go even at the cost of my life; my resolve is fixed in this alone. I have cut my ties with the world and settled firmly here. Panduranga has accepted me and dyed me in his own color. He has spread his wing of shelter over me; God himself takes care of us. When God guards you, what can others do? Their schemes have no power there. Death cannot enter when one is called the servant of Vithoba. We are the cherished little ones of Vithoba; the demons and Death tremble in dread of his devotees. His fear and authority span the three worlds. Remember him, all of you. Do not lie sleeping. Wake and escape the wombs of rebirth and the agonies of the womb. The pain of the womb, the rod of Yama, the great weariness of coming and going. Hunger, thirst, and pain strike the living; after death the messengers of Yama torment. You ask, who has ever seen this? The Kauravas plunged into hell. Duryodhana was cast into the boiling cauldron and could not show his face to Dharma. Dharma, the kind one, came near and sat in the lower world, unable to rise. He cannot rise, no matter what is tried; God makes each reap what he has sown. Those who forgot Narayana in the world truly dwell in the most terrible hells. Take the saints' words as true, and go, all of you, to Narayana for refuge. Do not put your trust in anything else: not sons, wife, hopes, wealth. Wealth, greed, the snares of attachment, these are the traps set by Yama's messengers. His agents have gagged your mouths so the word Narayana cannot escape. They do not let pure wisdom touch your heart; all kinds of karma keep God far off. Many who thought themselves wise have been estranged by slander, ego, dispute, and division. Strife,

division, and slander are the tricks of Death; they trap the idle tongue with empty words. The idle mind cannot decide whether God is or is not, and is yoked to the mill of worry. In the end Death puts a rope around your neck and tidies up the loose ends of desire. If desire's company stays at the hour of death, one takes birth again, even with the power of austerity. Those who held God in their hearts will remember their former states. Remember God at the hour of death. That is why the brave ones gave their lives for this. The sages gave up all pleasures and ate roots and tubers in the forest. The root of joy is God; for a small lapse one is dragged to the lowest state. The best path, the best effort, is this: hold the feet of Vithoba. Once settled at Vithoba's feet with love, there is no need to go anywhere, not even to the forest. Even the weak are saved by Vithoba's Name, even those with no store of pure merit. If the merit is pure, what marvel is that? Simply saying Vitthal again and again is enough. No one holds the hour of death in his own hands; the course of destiny cannot be known. Destiny cannot be escaped without being lived through; knowing this, purify your store of merit. Strive for your own good in this human birth. If you use this human birth to find Narayana, well and good; otherwise you are lower than a beast. Animals know nothing of sin or merit; humans know these things. People know what sin and merit are, for they see others reap their results. Some will suffer the sorrows of the world; the kinds of misery are beyond telling. To eat well, dress well, live in comfort, that is their only ambition in the world. The world has swallowed everyone whole, feeding them the fruit of rebirth. Until the root of desire is cut, the cycle of the womb cannot end. Without effort nothing is won; do not passively ride the current of fate. Do not throw your body on thorns; do not carelessly grasp a serpent. What is in your own hands can be worked for your good; so the sages have said. They teach these people even at the cost of shaming them, for they themselves are the ones who crossed. They raised their arms in the sand-bed of Pandhari: Panduranga, the ocean of grace. At his feet the river of sins is washed clean, when those feet are held in the heart. By whose contemplation stones were made to float, he lifts you up by the touch of his feet. Clap your hands; you need not sit in rigid meditation. Take the joy of love in the company of saints. In the company of saints do kirtan and tell the sacred story; the joyful means is Rama, Rama. Then God cannot go anywhere far; he settles within and stays in your throat. He fills the whole body and does not let you forget him. He does not let his servant see suffering; he wards off the womb and the messengers of Yama. He does not let hunger, thirst, or worry touch them; all cares go when the Name is taken. They too are living beings, all of them, yet bound by their gathered karma. Those who woke from body-pride, on them Narayana showed his grace. This God is kind, the shelter of the helpless; we have set our hope on him. Tuka says: Panduranga has yoked us to himself, through the company of the saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a sweeping teaching-poem whose single insistence is that the Name of God, taken in the company of saints, is the only real gain a human birth offers. Tukaram opens by saying his heart is already dyed at Panduranga's feet, then argues that no austerity or pilgrimage can match the Name, because even the Vedas and sages never reached the end of God, who plays the whole world as a sport while remaining the one reality behind it. He names the trap plainly: people are hooked like a fish on the bait of wealth, sons, and wife, and forget Vitthal, so the cycle of wombs and the rod of Yama keep turning. Against this he sets a stark warning, illustrated by the Kauravas and Duryodhana fallen into hell, that to forget Narayana is to dwell in terrible suffering, while desire clinging at the hour of death drags one back into birth. The call to self-examination is urgent and double: this human birth is the one chance, lower than a beast if wasted, so do not sleep, do not trust wife or wealth, but cut the root of desire and take refuge. The resolution is mercy: God shelters even the weak and merit-less who simply say Vitthal, runs after his devotee, fills his very body, and yokes him to himself, so the whole effort comes down to kirtan in the company of saints.

GATHA 4478

Krishna Leela

The gopis' longing, Krishna comes to the ardent

मराठी मूळ

विचार करिती बैसोनि गौळणी । ज्या कृष्णकामिनी कामातुरा ॥1॥
 एकांत एकल्या एका च सुखाच्या । आवडती त्यांच्या गोष्टी त्यांला ॥2॥
 तर्कवितकिणीं दुराविल्या दुरी । मौन त्या परिचारी आरंभिलें ॥3॥
 कुशळा कवित्या कथित्या लोभिका । त्या ही येथें नका आह्मांपाशीं ॥4॥
 भेऊनियां जना एकी सवा जाल्या । वाती विझविल्या दाटोबळें ॥6॥
 कृष्णसुख नाहीं कळलें मानसीं । निंदिती त्या त्यासी कृष्णरता ॥7॥
 तो नये जवळी देखोनि कोल्हाळ । ह्मणउनि समेळ मेळविला ॥8॥
 अंतरीं कोमळा बाहेरी निर्मळा । तल्लीन त्या बाळा कृष्णध्यानीं ॥9॥
 हरिरूपीं दृष्ट कानीं त्या च गोष्टी । आळंगिती कंठीं एका एकी ॥10॥
 न साहे वियोग करिती रोदना । भ्रमिष्ट भावना देहाचिया ॥11॥
 विसरल्या मार्गे गृह सुत पती । अवस्था याचिती गोविंदाची ॥12॥
 अवस्था लागोनि निवळ चि ठेल्या । एका एकी जाल्या कृष्णरूपा ॥13॥
 कृष्णा ह्मणोनियां देती आलिंगन । विरहताप तेणें निवारेना ॥14॥
 ताप कोण वारी गोविंदावांचूनि । साच तो नयनीं न देखतां ॥15॥
 न देखतां त्यांचा प्राण रिघों पाहे । आजि कामास ये उसिर केला ॥16॥
 रित्या ज्ञानगोष्टी तयां नावडती । आंळगण प्रीती कृष्णाचिया ॥17॥
 मार्गे कांहीं आह्मी चुकलों त्याची सेवा । असेल या देवा राग आला ॥18॥
 आठविती मार्गे पापपुण्यदोष । परिहार एकीस एक देती ॥19॥
 अनुतापें जाल्या संतप्त त्या बाळा । टाकुनि विव्दळा धरणी अंग ॥20॥
 जाणोनि चरित्र जवळी च होता । आली त्या अनंता कृपा मग ॥21॥
 होउनी प्रगट दाखविलें रूप । तापत्रय ताप निवविले ॥22॥
 निवालेया देखोनि कृष्णाचें श्रीमुख । शोक मोह दुःख दुरावला ॥23॥
 साच भाव त्यांचा आणुनियां मना । आळंगितो राणा वैकुंठीचा ॥24॥
 हरिअंगसंगें हरिरूप जाल्या । बोलों विसरल्या तया सुखा ॥25॥
 व्यभिचारभावे भोगिलें अनंता । वतौनि असतां घराचारी ॥26॥
 सकळा चोरोनि हरि जयां चित्तीं । धन्य त्या नांदती तयामध्ये ॥27॥
 उणें पुरें त्यांचें पडों नेंदी कांहीं । राखे सर्वां ठायीं देव तयां ॥28॥
 न कळे लाघव ब्रह्मादिकां भाव । भक्तिभावे देव केला तैसा ॥29॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्यांचा धन्य व्यभिचार । साधिलें अपार निजसुख ॥30॥

बाळक्रीडा प्रारंभ अभंग - 100

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The gopis, consumed with longing for Krishna, gathered in solitude to deliberate. Alone, each devoted to one joy, they spoke of Him and delighted in the telling.

Those given to argument and speculation were kept at a distance. Those cunning, eloquent, narrative, and calculating ones were told, 'Do not come near us.' In fear of the people, they merged together as one and forcefully extinguished every lamp.

The bliss of Krishna is not known to the mind; those who do not know it slander the Krishna-devoted ones. Krishna does not come near where there is noise and commotion.

Therefore they gathered in silent harmony. Inwardly tender, outwardly pure, those maidens were absorbed in Krishna's meditation.

Their eyes were fixed on Hari's form, their ears on His stories alone. They embraced one another, each clasping the other to her chitta.

They could not endure separation and wept aloud, bewildered, forgetful of their own bodies. They forgot their homes, their children, and their husbands, calling out for Govinda's presence.

Lost in that state, they became still and clear. Each one became the very form of Krishna.

Crying 'Krishna!' they gave one another embraces, yet the fire of separation was not quenched. Who can cool this fever except Govinda Himself, when He is not seen with one's own eyes? Without seeing Him, their life-breath threatened to depart.

'He has made us wait too long,' they said. Empty philosophical talk did not please them; they craved only Krishna's embrace.

'Perhaps we have failed in some past service to Him. Perhaps God is angry.' They searched their past deeds for sins and merits, each offering the other consolation.

Overcome with remorse, those maidens burned with anguish and threw their bodies down upon the earth. Knowing their devotion, Krishna, who had been near all along, was moved to compassion.

He appeared and revealed His form, cooling the triple fire of their suffering. Seeing Krishna's blessed face, all grief, delusion, and sorrow vanished.

Perceiving the truth of their devotion, the Lord of Vaikuntha embraced them. Through union with Hari's body, they became Hari's form.

Words fell silent before that joy. Though outwardly living as householders, they had secretly embraced the Infinite through love.

Blessed are those who, while concealing Hari in their chitta, dwell among the people. God does not let them lack for anything.

He protects them in every place. The subtlety of this devotion is beyond even Brahma's grasp.

Through devotion, God is shaped to the devotee's vision. Says Tuka, blessed is their so-called transgression. Through it, they attained the supreme bliss.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The gopis, burning with longing for Krishna, sat together in secret to deliberate. Alone, each one fixed on a single joy, they spoke of him and delighted in the telling. Those given to argument and clever talk they kept at a distance, and began their silent service. The skilled, the eloquent, the calculating ones, those too they told: do not come near us. In fear of the people they merged into one and forcefully put out every lamp. The bliss of Krishna is not known to such minds; those who do not know it slander the ones who love Krishna. He does not come near where there is noise; so they gathered in silent harmony. Tender within, pure without, those young women were absorbed in the meditation of Krishna. Their eyes fixed on Hari's form, their ears on his stories alone, they embraced one another, each clasping the other to her heart. They could not bear separation; they wept aloud, bewildered, forgetful of their own bodies. They forgot their homes, their children, their husbands, crying out for Govinda's presence. Lost in that state, they grew still and clear; one by one they became the very form of Krishna. Crying Krishna, they gave one another embraces, yet the fire of separation was not quenched. Who can cool this fever but Govinda himself, when he is not seen with the eyes? Without seeing him their life-breath was ready to leave. He has made us wait too long, they said. Empty philosophical talk did not please them; they craved only Krishna's embrace. Perhaps we failed in some past service to him; perhaps God is angry. They searched their past deeds for sins and merits, each consoling the other. Overcome with remorse, those young women burned with anguish and threw their bodies to the ground. Knowing their devotion, Krishna, who had been near all along, was moved to pity. He appeared and showed his form, cooling the triple fire of their suffering. Seeing Krishna's blessed face, all grief and delusion and sorrow went far away. Seeing the truth of their devotion, the Lord of Vaikuntha embraced them. Through union with Hari's body they became Hari's form; words fell silent before that joy. Through love they enjoyed the Infinite, though they lived outwardly as householders. Blessed are those who hide Hari in their hearts and dwell among the people. God does not let them lack anything; he guards them in every place. The subtlety of this is beyond even Brahma's grasp; through devotion God is made to take that shape. Tuka says: blessed is their so-called transgression; through it they won the supreme bliss.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reads the gopis' love for Krishna as the model of total, single-pointed devotion. He shows them deliberately shutting out the arguers, the clever, and the calculating, because Krishna does not come where there is noise and disputation; only the tender and silent heart can hold him. Their longing is so complete that they forget home, husband, and children, weep, lose their own bodies, and dissolve until each becomes the very form of Krishna, and even then the fire of separation only burns hotter. The turn comes through their remorse and self-searching, after which Krishna, who was near all along, reveals himself and cools the threefold fire by his mere face. The closing line is the radical claim: their love looked like transgression by worldly measure, yet Tukaram blesses it, because longing that abandons everything for God is itself the highest attainment, and the householder who hides Hari in the heart is guarded everywhere.

GATHA 4479

Prayers

Prayer, the Name that burns karma

मराठी मूळ

देवा आदिदेवा जगत्रया जीवा । परियेसीं केशवा विनंती माझी ॥1॥
 माझी वाणी तुझे वर्णीं तुझे वर्णीं गुण नाम । ऐसी देई प्रेम कांहीं कळा ॥2॥
 कळा तुजपाशीं आमचें जीवन । उचित करून देई आह्मां ॥3॥
 आह्मां शरणागतां तुझा चि आधार । तूं तंव सागर कृपासिंधु ॥4॥
 सिंधु पायावाट होय तुझ्या नामें । जाळीं महाकर्मे दुस्तरें तीं ॥5॥
 तीं फळें उत्तमं तुझा निजध्यास । नाहीं गर्भवास सेविलिया ॥6॥
 सेविलिया राम कृष्ण नारायण । नाहीं त्या बंधन संसाराचें ॥7॥
 संसार तें काय तृणवतमय । अग्नि त्यासी खाय क्षणमात्रें ॥8॥
 क्षणमात्रें जाळी दोषांचिया रासी । निंद्य उत्तमासी वंद्य करी ॥9॥
 करीं िब्रदें साच आपलीं आपण । पतितपावन दिनानाथ ॥10॥
 नाथ अनाथाचा पति गोपिकांचा । पुरवी चित्तींचा मनोरथ ॥11॥
 चित्तीं जें धरावें तुका ह्मणे दासीं । पुरविता होसी मनोरथ ॥12॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God of gods, O Life of the three worlds, hear my prayer, O Keshava. Let my speech ever sing Your virtues and Your Name.

Grant me some art of love for this. The art of our life resides with You.

Grant us what is fitting. We who have surrendered have no support but You.

You are the ocean, the sea of compassion. By Your Name, the ocean itself makes way.

Your Name burns the greatest, most impassable karmas. The finest fruit of steadfast contemplation on You is freedom from the womb.

One who serves Rama, Krishna, and Narayana has no bonds of worldly existence. What is this world but a thing of straw? Fire devours it in an instant.

In a moment it burns away heaps of sins, transforming the despised into the honored. Make Your own pledges come true.

O Purifier of the Fallen, Lord of the humble. Lord of the helpless, Husband of the gopis, You fulfill the chitta's desire.

Says Tuka, whatever the servants hold in their chitta, You fulfill their every wish.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O God of gods, O Life of the three worlds, hear my prayer, O Keshava. Let my speech sing your virtues and your Name. Grant me some art of love for this. The art of our life rests with you. Grant us what is fitting. We who have surrendered have no support but you. You are the ocean, the sea of compassion. By your Name the ocean itself makes way. Your Name burns the greatest, most impassable karmas. The finest fruit of steady contemplation on you is freedom from the womb. One who serves Rama, Krishna, and Narayana has no bonds of the world. What is this world but a thing of straw? Fire eats it up in a moment. In a moment it burns away heaps of sins, turning the despised into the honored. Make your own pledges come true, O Purifier of the Fallen, Lord of the humble. Lord of the helpless, Husband of the gopis, you fulfill the heart's desire. Tuka says: whatever your servants hold in their heart, you fulfill their every wish.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a direct prayer, and its one request is small in words and large in stakes: let my speech be given over to singing God's Name. Tukaram surrenders entirely, saying the surrendered have no support but Keshava, the sea of compassion. He then names what the Name does: it parts the impassable ocean of existence, burns the heaviest karmas in a moment, and frees one from the cycle of the womb. He calls the whole world a thing of straw that fire eats up at once, so that the despised sinner is turned into the honored. The close holds God to his own titles, Purifier of the Fallen and Lord of the helpless, asking him to make his pledges true and fulfill what the devotee holds in the heart.

GATHA 4480

Krishna Leela

Krishna's birth, chains fall on their own

मराठी मूळ

मनोरथ जैसे गोकुळींच्या जना । पुरवावी वासना तयापरी ॥1॥
 रिण फेडावया अवतार केला । अविनाश आला आकारासी ॥2॥
 सीण जाला वसुदेवदेवकीस । वधी बाळें कंस दुराचारी ॥3॥
 दुराचारियासी नाहीं भूतदया । आप पर तया पाप पुण्य ॥4॥
 पुण्यकाळ त्याचा राहिलासे उभा । देवकीच्या गर्भा देव आले ॥5॥
 गर्भासी तयांच्य आला नारायण । तुटलें बंधन आपेंआप ॥6॥
 आपेंआप बेडएा तुटल्या शंकळा । बंदाच्या आगळा किलिया कोंडे ॥7॥
 कोंडमार केला होता बहु दिस । सोडवी निमिष्य नलगतां ॥8॥
 न कळे तो त्यासी सांगितला भाव । आपणासी ठाव नंदाघरीं ॥9॥
 नंदाघरीं जातां येतां वसुदेवा । नाहीं जाला गोवा सवें देव ॥10॥
 सवें देव तया आड नये कांहीं । तुका ह्मणे नाहीं भय चिंता ॥11॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

As the wishes of Gokul's people were fulfilled, so may our desires be granted. To repay a debt, the Incarnation was taken.

The Imperishable One came into form. Vasudeva and Devaki had suffered long.

The wicked Kamsa slaughtered infants. One without compassion, knowing neither sin nor merit, held sway.

But the holy hour arrived, and God entered Devaki's womb. God came to that womb as Narayana.

The chains and shackles fell apart on their own. The bolts and bars of the prison opened by themselves.

The captivity had been long and harsh, yet liberation came in an instant. The plan was whispered without Kamsa's knowledge.

God found His place at Nanda's home. As Vasudeva traveled to and from Nanda's house, God went along without any obstacle.

Says Tuka, with God alongside, nothing stands in the way. There is no fear, no worry.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As the wishes of Gokul's people were fulfilled, so may our longing be granted. To repay a debt, the Incarnation was taken; the Imperishable came into form. Vasudeva and Devaki had suffered long. The wicked Kamsa slaughtered their infants. The cruel one has no compassion for any creature; for him there is no self and other, no sin and merit. But his holy hour came to a stand, and God entered Devaki's womb. Narayana came to that womb, and the chains broke of themselves. By themselves the fetters and shackles fell apart; the bolts and bars of the prison opened. The captivity had lasted many days; he set them free in less than a breath. Without Kamsa's knowing, the plan was told: God's own place was at Nanda's home. As Vasudeva went to and came from Nanda's house, there was no obstacle, for God went with him. Tuka says: with God alongside, nothing stands in the way; there is no fear, no worry.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram retells the night of Krishna's birth to show how God's presence dissolves every barrier. He frames the avatara as the repaying of a debt: the Imperishable takes form to end the long suffering of Vasudeva and Devaki under the merciless Kamsa, who kills infants and recognizes no line between sin and merit. The moment Narayana enters Devaki's womb, the holy hour arrives and the prison undoes itself, chains, shackles, bolts, and bars opening with no human effort. The closing teaching draws the point out of the story: when God goes with you, as he went with Vasudeva carrying the child to Nanda's house, no obstacle can hold, and fear and worry simply have no place.

GATHA 4481

Krishna Leela

Krishna comes to Gokul, knowledge without austerity

मराठी मूळ

चिंता ते पळाली गोकुळाबाहेरी । प्रवेश भीतरी केला देवें ॥1॥
 देव आला घरा नंदाचिया गांवा । धन्य त्याच्या दैवा दैव आलें ॥2॥
 आलें अविनाश धरुनि आकार । दैत्याचा संहार करावया ॥3॥
 करावया भक्तजनाचें पालण । आले रामकृष्ण गोकुळासी ॥4॥
 गोकुळीं आनंद प्रगटलें सुख । निर्भर हे लोक घरोघरीं ॥5॥
 घरोघरीं जाला लक्ष्मीचा वास । दैन्यदाळद्रास त्रास आला ॥6॥
 आला नारायण तयांच्या अंतरा । दया क्षमा नरा नारीलोकां ॥7॥
 लोकां गोकुळींच्या जालें ब्रह्मज्ञान । केलियावांचून जपतपें ॥8॥
 केलीं नारायणें आपुलीं अंकित । तो चि त्यांचें हित सर्व जाणे ॥10॥
 सर्व जाणे एक विष्णु साच खरा । आणीक दुसरा नाहीनाहीं ॥11॥
 नाही भक्ता दुजें तिहीं त्रिभुवनीं । एका चक्रपाणीवांचूनियां ॥12॥
 याच्या सुखसंगें घेती गर्भवास । तुका ह्मणे आस त्यजूनियां ॥13॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Worry fled beyond the borders of Gokul. God entered within.

God came to the home of Nanda in Gokul. Blessed was their destiny; fortune itself arrived.

The Imperishable took on a form to destroy the demons. To nurture and protect His devotees, Rama and Krishna came to Gokul.

Joy was born in Gokul; happiness overflowed. Every household was filled with delight.

In every home, Lakshmi took up residence. Poverty and misery were driven away.

Narayana entered the hearts of all. Compassion and forgiveness filled the men and women.

The people of Gokul attained the knowledge of Brahman without performing any austerities. Narayana made them all His own.

He alone knows their true welfare. Says Tuka, Vishnu alone is the one true reality. There is nothing else.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Worry fled beyond the borders of Gokul; God entered within. God came to the home of Nanda, to his village. Blessed was their destiny; fortune itself arrived. The Imperishable came, taking a form, to destroy the demons. To nurture and protect his devotees, Rama and Krishna came to Gokul. Joy was born in Gokul; happiness broke open. The people overflowed, house by house. In every home Lakshmi took up dwelling; poverty and misery were driven off. Narayana entered their hearts; compassion and forgiveness filled the men and women. The people of Gokul gained the knowledge of Brahman without doing any chanting or austerity. Narayana made them all his own; he alone knows their true welfare. Vishnu alone is the one true reality, and there is no other, none. For the devotee there is no second in the three worlds, except the one who holds the discus. With the joy of his company they take birth in the womb, Tuka says, casting off all longing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram celebrates Krishna's coming to Gokul as a flood of grace that needs no spiritual technique. God enters, worry flees, and the village fills with joy, with Lakshmi dwelling in every house and poverty driven out. The striking claim is that the cowherds gained the knowledge of Brahman without any chanting or austerity, simply because Narayana entered their hearts and made them his own. From this Tukaram lifts a teaching of strict oneness: Vishnu alone is real, there is no second in the three worlds, and the holder of the discus is the devotee's only refuge. The closing line says that for such joy of his company even rebirth in the womb is worth taking, once all other longing is cast aside.

GATHA 4482

Krishna Leela

The gopis' merit, Krishna the unchanging crystal

मराठी मूळ

यांच्या पूर्वपुण्या कोण लेखा करी । जिंहीं तो मुरारी खेळविला ॥1॥
 खेळविला जिंहीं अंतर्बाहएसुखें । मेळवूनि मुखें चुंबन दिलें ॥2॥
 दिलें त्यांसी सुख अंतरीचें देवें । जिंहीं एका भावें जाणितला ॥3॥
 जाणितला तिहीं कामातुर नारी । कृष्णभोगावरी चित्त ज्यांचें ॥4॥
 ज्यांचें कृष्णीं तन मन जालें रत । गृह पति सुत विसरल्या ॥5॥
 विष तयां जालें धन मान जन । वसविती वन एकांतीं त्या ॥6॥
 एकांतीं त्या जाती हरीसी घेउनि । भोगइच्छाधणी फेडावया ॥7॥
 वयाच्या संपन्ना तैसा त्यांकारणें । अंतरींचा देणें इच्छाभोग ॥8॥
 भोग त्याग नाहीं दोन्ही जयापासीं । तुका ह्मणे जैसी स्पटिकशिळा ॥9॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who can count the past merits of those who played with Murari? They played with Him in both inner and outer delight, pressing their faces to His and kissing Him. God gave them the joy of His innermost chitta, for they knew Him with single devotion.

Those passion-filled women who knew Him, whose minds were fixed on the delight of Krishna, whose every thought was absorbed in Krishna, forgot their homes, husbands, and children. Wealth, honor, and people became poison to them.

They went to the forest seeking solitude. They took Hari with them into seclusion to satisfy the hunger of their longing.

He gave them the inner fulfillment they desired, matching the fullness of their youth. Says Tuka, neither enjoyment nor renunciation exists as two in His presence. He is like a crystal, clear and unchanged.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who can count the past merits of those who played with Murari? They played with him in inner and outer delight, pressing their faces to his and giving him kisses. God gave them the joy of his innermost heart, for they knew him with single love. Those passion-filled women knew him, their minds fixed on the delight of Krishna. Their body and mind grew absorbed in Krishna; they forgot home, husband, and children. Wealth, honor, and people became poison to them; they made the forest their dwelling, in solitude. Into that solitude they go, taking Hari with them, to satisfy the hunger of their longing. Matching the fullness of their youth, he gives them the inner enjoyment they desire. He in whom enjoyment and renunciation are not two, Tuka says, is like a slab of crystal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram praises the gopis' immense store of past merit, which let them play with Krishna in body and soul, and reads their passion as the highest knowing love. Their absorption is total: home, husband, children forgotten, and wealth, honor, and society turned to poison, so that they carry Hari into the forest's solitude to satisfy a longing that is finally for God himself. The point he draws is about God's nature, not theirs: he meets each one exactly according to her desire, giving the inner enjoyment she craves. The closing image of the crystal slab says God himself is unchanged by what passes through him; in him enjoyment and renunciation are not two opposing things but one clear, untouched reality.

GATHA 4483

Krishna Leela

God the crystal, guileless, runs to the faithful

मराठी मूळ

शिळा स्फटिकाची न पालटे भेदें । दाउनियां छंदे जैसी तैसी ॥1॥
 जैसा केला तैसा होय क्षणक्षणा । फेडावी वासना भक्तिभावे ॥2॥
 फेडावया आला अवघियांची धणी । गोपाळ गौळणी मायबापा ॥3॥
 मायबापा सोडविलें बंदीहुनि । चाणूर मदननी कंसादिक ॥4॥
 दिक नाही देणें अरिमित्रा एक । पूतना कंटक मुक्त केली ॥5॥
 मुक्त केला मामा कंस महादोषी । बाळहत्या रासी पातकांच्या ॥6॥
 पाप कोठें राहे हरी आठवितां । भक्ती द्वेषें चिंता जैसा तैसा ॥7॥
 साक्षी तयापार्शीं पूर्विलकर्मच्या । बांधला सेवेच्या रुणी देव ॥8॥
 देव भोळा धांवे भक्ता पाठोवाठी । उच्चारितां कंठीं मार्गेंमार्गें ॥9॥
 मानाचा कंटाळा तुका ह्मणे त्यासी । धांवे तो घरासी भाविकांच्या ॥10॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The crystal does not change its nature through reflections. It displays colors yet remains as it is.

He becomes whatever one makes of Him, moment by moment, fulfilling desire through devotion. He came to satisfy the longing of all: cowherds, milkmaids, parents.

He freed the parents from captivity and slew Chanura, Mardana, Kamsa, and the rest. He treats friend and foe the same.

He liberated the demoness Putana and all other tormentors. He freed His uncle Kamsa, the great wrongdoer burdened with the massacre of infants.

Where does sin remain when Hari is remembered? Through devotion or even through enmity, He is present just the same. The record of past deeds lies with Him.

God is bound by the debt of service. God, being guileless, runs after His devotees.

When they call His Name, He follows close behind. Says Tuka, He is repelled by pride. He runs to the homes of the faithful.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The crystal slab does not change with what falls on it; it shows colors yet stays as it is. He becomes whatever one makes of him, moment by moment, fulfilling desire through devotion. He came to satisfy the longing of all: cowherds, milkmaids, parents. He freed the parents from prison and slew Chanura, Mardana, Kamsa, and the rest. He gives no different treatment to friend and foe alike. He liberated the thorn-like demoness Putana; he freed his own uncle Kamsa, the great sinner, heaped with the killing of infants. Where can sin remain when Hari is remembered? Through devotion or even through enmity, he is present just the same. The record of past deeds lies with him; God is bound by the debt of service. God, being guileless, runs after his devotee; when they chant his Name, he follows close behind. Tuka says: he is wearied by pride, and he runs to the homes of the faithful.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram extends the crystal image: God is like a crystal that takes on every color yet is never altered, becoming whatever the devotee's love shapes him into without losing himself. The startling teaching is his evenhandedness, he gives the same to friend and foe, even liberating the demoness Putana and the infant-killing Kamsa, because in his presence the question of sin dissolves the moment Hari is remembered. He is present whether one comes through devotion or even through hatred, and he keeps the account of every deed. The close names the heart of Tukaram's God: he is guileless and runs after his devotee the instant the Name is chanted, but he is repelled by pride, so he comes to the homes of the simple and faithful, not the self-important.

GATHA 4484

Krishna Leela

God bound by milkmaids, caught by the simple

मराठी मूळ

चारी वेद ज्याची कीर्ती वाखाणितो । बांधवी तो हातीं गौळणीच्या ॥1॥
 गौळणिया गळा बांधितो धारणीं । पायां चक्रपाणी लागे त्या ॥2॥
 त्याघरीं रिघे चोरावया लोणी । रितें पाळतूनि शिरे माजी ॥3॥
 माजी शिरोनियां नवनीत खाये । कवाड तें आहे जैसैं तैसैं ॥4॥
 जैसा तैसा आहे अंतर्बाह्यात्कारीं । ह्मणउनि चोरी नसंपडे ॥5॥
 नसंपडे त्यां करितां खटपट । वाउगे बोभाट वर्माविण ॥6॥
 वर्म जाणतो त्या एकल्या एकटा । बैसतील वाटा निरोधूनि ॥7॥
 निवांत राहिल्या निःसंग होऊनि । निश्चळ ज्या ध्यानीं कृष्णध्यान ॥8॥
 न ये क्षणभरी योगियांचे ध्यानीं । धरितो गौळणी भाविका त्या ॥9॥
 भाविका त्यांसी येतो काकुलती । शाहाण्या मरती नसंपडे ॥10॥
 नलगे वेचावी टोळी धनानांवें । तुका ह्मणें भावें चाड एका ॥11॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The four Vedas sing His praises, yet He is bound by the hands of milkmaids. The milkmaids tie Him by the waist, and the Lord of the discus bows at their feet.

He enters their homes to steal butter, slipping in through any gap He finds. He enters and eats the fresh butter, leaving the doors exactly as they were.

Inside and outside, He is the same. Therefore His thievery is never detected.

Those who try and try cannot catch Him by cunning. Only those who know the secret can catch Him: single-minded women waiting alone in ambush.

When they are still, empty of self, and absorbed in Krishna's meditation, He who cannot be held even for a moment by the yogis' concentration is held by those simple milkmaids. He comes pleading to them.

The clever may die trying, yet He eludes them. Says Tuka, there is no need to spend armies of wealth. Only one thing is needed: pure devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He whose fame the four Vedas recount is bound by the hands of the milkmaids. The milkmaids tie him by the waist, and the Lord of the discus bows at their feet. He enters their homes to steal butter, slipping in through any gap. He goes in and eats the fresh butter, and the door stays just as it was. Inside and outside he is the same; so his theft is never caught. Those who try and try cannot catch him by scheming; the outcry without knowing the secret is useless. Only those who know the secret can catch him: single women waiting alone in ambush. When they stay quiet, free of self, still in the meditation of Krishna, he who cannot be held for a moment in the yogis' meditation is held by those faithful milkmaids. He comes pleading to them. The clever may die trying, yet he is not caught. There is no need to spend armies of wealth. Tuka says: through devotion, only one thing is wanted.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the Lord whom the four Vedas cannot exhaust against the milkmaids who tie him by the waist and make him bow at their feet. The butter-thief images carry the teaching: God is the same inside and outside, so cunning and clamor can never catch him, and the clever may die in the attempt. He is caught only by the woman who waits in still ambush, emptied of self and absorbed in Krishna; what no yogi's meditation can hold for a moment, simple loving devotion holds fast, until God himself comes pleading. The close states the lesson plainly: no wealth or technique is required, only single-hearted love. The way to seize the unseizable God is to stop scheming and simply long for him.

GATHA 4485

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, Yama's rod for the faithless

मराठी मूळ

चाड अनन्याची धरी नारायण । आपणासमान करी रंका ॥1॥
 रंक होती राजे यमाचिये घरीं । आचरणें बरी नाहीं ह्यणवोनि ॥2॥
 नसंपडे इंद्रचंद्रब्रह्मादिकां । अभिमानें एका तिळमात्रें ॥3॥
 तिळमात्र जरी होय अभिमान । मेरु तो समान भार देवा ॥4॥
 भार पृथिवीचा वाहिला सकळ । जड होती खळ दुष्ट लोक ॥5॥
 दुष्ट अभक्त जे निष्ठ मानसीं । केली हे तयांसी यमपुरी ॥6॥
 यमदूत त्यांसी करिती यातना । नाहीं नारायणा भजिजेले ॥7॥
 जे नाहीं भजले एका भावें हरी । तयां दंड करी यमधर्म ॥8॥
 यमधर्म ह्याने तयां दोषियांसी । कां रे केशवासी चुकलेती ॥9॥
 चुकलेती कथा पुराणश्रवण । होते तुह्यां कान डोळे मुख ॥10॥
 कान डोळे मुख संतांची संगति । न धरा च चित्तीं सांगितलें ॥11॥
 सांगितलें संतीं तुह्यां उगवूनि । गर्भाद येऊनि यमदंड ॥12॥
 दंडूं आह्मीं रागें ह्याने यमधर्म । देवा होय श्रम दुर्जनाचा ॥13॥
 दुर्जनाचा याणें करुनि संहार । पूर्णअवतार रामकृष्ण ॥14॥
 रामकृष्णनामें रंगले जे नर । तुका ह्याने घर वैकुंठी त्यां ॥15॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Narayana cherishes the one who is utterly surrendered and makes even a pauper equal to Himself. Kings become beggars in Yama's domain because their conduct was not righteous.

He cannot be grasped by Indra, Chandra, or Brahma, not even through a sesame seed's worth of pride. If there is even a sesame seed's pride, that pride weighs as heavy as Mount Meru upon God.

God bears the burden of the whole earth, yet the wicked and the faithless are heavy to Him. For those who are cruel, faithless, and hard of chitta, the city of Yama was made.

The messengers of Yama torment those who never worshiped Narayana. Those who did not worship Hari with single devotion are punished by Yama.

Yama says to those wrongdoers, 'Why did you stray from Keshava? You had ears, eyes, and a mouth. You had the company of saints.

Yet you did not hold to what was taught.' The saints explained everything, from the womb onward, about the rod of Yama. 'We shall punish them severely,' says Yama.

God Himself is wearied by the burden of the wicked. To destroy such evildoers, the full incarnation of Rama and Krishna was taken.

Those who are dyed in the Name of Rama and Krishna, says Tuka, have their home in Vaikuntha.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Narayana cherishes the one who is wholly surrendered and makes even a pauper equal to himself. Kings become beggars in Yama's house, because their conduct was not good. He is not caught by Indra, Chandra, or Brahma if there is even a sesame seed of pride. If there is a sesame seed of pride, that pride weighs as heavy as Mount Meru upon God. God bears the whole weight of the earth, yet the wicked and faithless are heavy to him. For the cruel and faithless, hard of heart, the city of Yama was made. Yama's messengers torment those who never worshiped Narayana. Those who did not worship Hari with single love are punished by Yama's law. Yama says to those wrongdoers: why did you stray from Keshava? You had ears, eyes, a mouth; you had the company of saints. Yet you did not hold in your heart what was taught. The saints explained it all, from the womb onward, the rod of Yama. We shall punish them in our anger, says Yama's law. God himself is wearied by the burden of the wicked. To destroy such evildoers, the full incarnation of Rama and Krishna was taken. Those who are dyed in the Name of Rama and Krishna, Tuka says, have their home in Vaikuntha.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contrasts two destinies that turn entirely on pride and surrender. The wholly surrendered one is raised to God's own level, even from beggary, while kings of bad conduct are reduced to beggars in Yama's house. The hard teaching is that the smallest pride, a sesame seed's worth, weighs on God like Mount Meru, so that not even Indra or Brahma can grasp him through it. The middle of the poem stages Yama's interrogation of the faithless: they had ears, eyes, mouth, and the company of saints, and were warned from the womb itself, yet did not hold the teaching, and so they meet the rod. The point is not gloating over the damned but self-examination, since the warning was always available; the resolution is that the avatara of Rama and Krishna came precisely to destroy this burden of wickedness, and those dyed in the Name find their home in Vaikuntha.

GATHA 4486

Devotion to Vitthal

Gokul love, God serves devotees

मराठी मूळ

वैकुंठीच्या लोकां दुर्लभ हरिजन । तया नारायण समागमें ॥1॥
 समागम त्यांचा धरिला अनंतें । जिहीं चित्तवित्त समपिनलें ॥2॥
 समर्थो तीं गाती हरीचे पवाडे । येर ते बापुडे रावराणे ॥3॥
 रामकृष्णं केलें कौतुक गोकुळीं । गोपाळांचे मेळीं गाई चारी ॥4॥
 गाई चारी मोहोरी पांवा वाहे पाठीं । धन्य जाळी काठी कांबळीचें ॥5॥
 काय गौळ्यांच्या होत्या पुण्यरासी । आणीक त्या ह्रैसी गाई पशु ॥6॥
 सुख तें अमुप लुटिलें सकळीं । गोपिका गोपाळीं धणीवरि ॥7॥
 धणीवरि त्यांसी सांगितली मात । जयाचें जें आर्त तयापरी ॥8॥
 परी याचि तुह्मी आइका नवळ । दुर्गम जो खोल साधनासि ॥9॥
 शिक लावूनियां घालिती बाहेरी । पाहाती भीतरी सवें चि तो ॥10॥
 तोंडाकडे त्यांच्या पाहे कवतुकें । शिव्या देतां सुखें हासतुसे ॥11॥
 हांसतसे शिव्या देतां त्या गौळणी । मरतां जपध्यानीं न बोले तो ॥12॥
 तो जेंजें करिल तें दिसे उत्तम । तुका ह्याने वर्म दावी सोपें ॥13॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The people of Vaikuntha consider the company of Hari's devotees a rare treasure. Ananta embraced those who surrendered their chitta and wealth to Him.

They are the truly powerful, singing Hari's heroic deeds. All other kings and rulers are mere wretches beside them.

Rama and Krishna performed wonders in Gokul, herding cows among the cowherds. He herded cows, carried a flute on His back.

Blessed were His staff, His blanket, His stick. He who is beyond even the contemplation of the three worlds runs to round up the cattle.

He wears the garlands they offer on His own head. The food offering He desires is a morsel begged from their hands.

He snatches morsels from their mouths and eats their leftovers with relish. He weaves peacock feathers into His crown and dances, clapping to their rhythms.

Those with whom Hari dances have forgotten all body-consciousness. Says Tuka, the worship of the faithful is received by God unknowingly. Without being asked, He reveals His true abode.

To reach that abode, He wanders behind them, in the company of His devotees.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even the people of Vaikuntha rarely reach the company of Hari's devotees; with those devotees Narayana keeps company. Ananta holds close those who gave Him their whole heart and all they own. They are the truly strong ones, who sing Hari's great deeds; beside them, kings and rulers are only poor wretches. Rama and Krishna made their play in Gokul, herding the cattle among the cowherds. He herds the cattle, carries a flute on His back. Blessed is His staff, His stick, His coarse blanket. What store of merit did the cowherds have? And their buffaloes too, their cows, their beasts. They all plundered boundless joy, the gopis and the cowherds, to their fill. He told each one according to her own longing, and satisfied her to the full. But hear this wonder, He says: He is hard to reach by hard practice. They scold Him and push Him outside; He looks in and stays right with them. He watches their faces with delight; when they curse Him He only laughs, glad. Those cowherd women curse Him and He laughs; the man who will not come for chanting and meditation at the hour of death. Whatever He does looks good to them. Tuka says: He shows the secret, and it is easy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is inverting the usual ladder of holiness. The heavenly beings of Vaikuntha envy the simple cowherds of Gokul, because God keeps company not with the high but with those who hand Him their whole heart and all they own. He measures greatness by that surrender: the cowherds who sing Hari's deeds outrank every king. The point of the herding and the flute and the rough blanket is that God who is unreachable by hard discipline comes close to people who simply scold Him, push Him out, and live with Him like family. The closing contrast is sharp: the devotee who curses Him familiarly is nearer than the man who only remembers God formally, in chanting and meditation, at the end. Tuka calls this the secret, and says it is easy: love, not technique, is the door.

GATHA 4487

Krishna Leela

Gopi love, answered in kind

मराठी मूळ

दावी वर्म सोपें भाविकां गोपाळां । वाहे त्यांच्या गळां पाले माळा ॥1॥
 मान देती आधीं मागतील डाव । देवा तें गौरव माने सुख ॥2॥
 मानती ते मंत्र हमामा हुंबरी । सिंतोडिती वरि स्नान तेणें ॥3॥
 वस्त्रें घोंगडिया घालुनियां तळीं । वरी वनमाळी बैसविती ॥4॥
 तिहीं लोकांसी जो दुर्लभ चिंतना । तो धांवे गोधना वळतियां ॥5॥
 यांच्या वचनाचीं पुष्पें वाहे शिरीं । नैवेद्य त्यांकरीं कवळ मागे ॥6॥
 त्यांचिये मुखींचें हिरोनियां घ्यावें । उच्छष्ट तें खावें धणीवरी ॥7॥
 वरी माथां गुंफे मोरपिसांवेटी । नाचे टाळी पिटी त्यांच्या छंदें ॥8॥
 छंदें नाचतील जयासवें हरी । देहभाव वरी विसरलीं ॥9॥
 विसरली वरी देहाची भावना । ते चि नारायणा सर्वपूजा ॥10॥
 पूजा भाविकांची न कळतां घ्यावी । न मागतां दावी निज ठाव ॥11॥
 ठाव पावावया हिंडे मागें मागें । तुका ह्मणे संगें भक्तांचिया ॥12॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God gave His devotees the bliss of His own Self. The gopis, those virtuous women, were embraced by Him.

God owed them a debt across many births. When they sulked, He soothed them, taking oaths and performing acts of atonement.

He told all the gopis, 'I shall never leave you.' 'You are in My heart with your whole being.' 'Let your devotion toward Me be as Mine is toward you. I am truly the same for you.' 'Let your own hearts be your witness.

Narayana is the guarantee for us both.' He pledges His own oath. God speaks truth according to each one's devotion, bringing it into experience.

He consoles each one in a different way. What one knows, the other does not.

No two share the same devotion. God receives each one's offering distinctly.

He does not let it be known that He is equally present everywhere. To all of them, in all conditions, He is the same.

Whatever desire each one holds in her heart, the Dark-Hued Lord fulfills it. He fulfilled the heart's desire of each gopi, and of all the people of Gokul.

He planted the seed of longing in Gokul's people, settling Govinda in their hearts. He even stole away their minds, every one of them.

The love they bore for their cowherds was beyond measure. Says Tuka, they loved the Lord of Vaikuntha. They forgot everything else.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He shows the easy secret to the simple cowherds; He wears the garlands they offer around His own neck. They claim their turn first, and He gives them honor; God takes their demand as a joy. Their crude shouts and teasing He counts as sacred chants; the water they splash on Him He counts as His bath. They spread their clothes and coarse blankets on the ground and seat Vanamali, the Lord of the Forest, on top. He whom the three worlds cannot reach even in thought, He runs to round up their cattle. He wears the flowers of their words on His head; the food He asks of them is a morsel from their hands. He snatches the morsels from their mouths and eats their leavings to the full. He weaves a crest of peacock feathers, and dances and claps to their tune. Those with whom Hari dances forget the body. When the body's sense is forgotten, that itself is the whole worship of Narayana. He takes the faithful one's worship without their knowing; unasked, He shows His own dwelling. To give them that place He goes wandering after them. Tuka says: He goes in the company of His devotees.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is showing how God receives love on the lover's own terms. The cowherds offer no formal ritual; their rough teasing becomes His sacred chants, their splashed water becomes His bath, their blanket becomes His seat. He who cannot be reached by the three worlds' contemplation gladly takes a half-eaten morsel from their hands and dances to their rhythm. The hinge of the poem is the line that forgetting the body is itself the whole worship of Narayana: self-forgotten love is the real offering, not the correct procedure. And the direction of seeking is reversed: God takes their worship unasked and goes wandering after them, rather than waiting to be sought.

GATHA 4488

Krishna Leela

Each gopi loved her own way

मराठी मूळ

भक्तजनां दिलें निजसुख देवें । गोपिका त्या भावें आळंगिल्या ॥1॥
 आळंगिल्या गोपी गुणवंता नारी । त्यांच्या जन्मांतरीं हरि ऋणी ॥2॥
 रुसलिया त्यांचें करी समाधान । करविता आण क्रिया करी ॥3॥
 क्रिया करी तुझां न वजे पासुनि । अवधियाजणी गोपिकांसी ॥4॥
 गोपिकांसी ह्मणे वैकुंठीचा पति । तुझीं माझ्या चित्तीं सर्वभावं ॥5॥
 भाव जैसा माझ्याठायीं तुझी धरा । तैसा चि मी खरा तुझांलागीं ॥6॥
 तुझां कळों द्या हा माझा साच भाव । तुमचा चि जीव तुझां ग्वाही ॥7॥
 ग्वाही तुझां आह्मां असे नारायण । आपली च आण वाहातसे ॥8॥
 सत्य बोले देव भक्तिभाव जैसा । अनुभवं रसा आणूनियां ॥9॥
 यांसी बुझावितो वेगळाल्या भावें । एकीचें हें ठावें नाहीं एकी ॥10॥
 एकी क्रिया नाहीं आवधियांचा भाव । पृथक हा देव घेतो तैसें ॥11॥
 तैसें कळों नेदी जो मी कोठें नाहीं । अवधियांचे ठायीं जैसा तैसा ॥12॥
 जैसा मनोरथ जये चित्तीं काम । तैसा मेघशाम पुरवितो ॥13॥
 पुरविले मनोरथ गोपिकांचे । आणीक लोकांचे गोकुळींच्या ॥14॥
 गोकुळींच्या लोकां लावियेला छंद । बैसला गोविंद त्याचा चित्तीं ॥15॥
 चित्ते ही चोरुनि घेतलीं सकळा । आवडी गोपाळांवरी तयां ॥16॥
 आवडे तयांसी वैकुंठनायक । गेलीं सकळक विसरोनि ॥17॥
 निंदा स्तुती कोणी न करी कोणाची । नाहीं या देहाची शुद्ध कोणा ॥18॥
 कोणासी नाठवे कन्या पुत्र माया । देव ह्मणुनि तया चुंबन देती ॥19॥
 देती या टाकून भ्रतारांसी घरीं । लाज ते अंतरीं आथी च ना ॥20॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Absorbed in Hari's form, the desires of the gopis became transcendent. These daughters-in-law of the cowherds were indifferent to all else.

Krishna assumed the forms of their husbands and consorted with each in her own home. He performed wonders according to each one's nature.

Some saw Him as Hari, others as their child. The devotion of each was unique, and so His form appeared accordingly.

They regarded their mantras to be the sounds of joking and teasing. Their ritual bath was the water splashed upon each other in play.

They spread out their shawls and blankets beneath Him and seated the Lord of the Forest upon them. Those three worlds found Him unattainable in contemplation, yet He ran to round up their cattle.

He wore their garlands of flowers on His head. The food He craved was a morsel begged from their hands.

He snatched morsels from their mouths and ate them. He wove peacock feathers into His crest and danced, clapping and swaying to their rhythms.

Those with whom Hari danced forgot all sense of the body. Says Tuka, the worship of the faithful is accepted by God without their knowing. Unasked, He reveals His own dwelling.

He wanders after them, seeking their company.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God gave His devotees the joy of His own Self; with love He embraced those gopis. He embraced the gopis, those women rich in virtue; Hari is in debt to them across their births. When they sulk He soothes them; He swears oaths and does whatever it takes. He swears: I will never leave you, He tells all the gopis. The Lord of Vaikuntha says to the gopis: you are in My heart with your whole being. Hold the same love toward Me, and I am just as true toward you. Let this true love of Mine become clear to you; your own life is your witness. Narayana stands as witness for you and for us; He swears His own oath. God speaks the truth as each one's love is, bringing it into living experience. He consoles each with a different feeling; what one knows, another does not. There is no single act, no single love for all; God receives each one apart, as she is. So He does not let it be known that there is nowhere He is not; He is the same in all of them, just as He is. Whatever the wish, whatever the longing in a heart, the dark cloud-hued one fulfills it. He fulfilled the gopis' wishes, and the wishes of the people of Gokul. He set a longing in the people of Gokul; Govinda settled in their hearts. He stole away the hearts of them all; their love went out to the cowherd boys. The Lord of Vaikuntha is dear to them; they have forgotten everything. No one praises or blames anyone; no one keeps any sense of the body. No one remembers daughter, son, or worldly bond; they call Him God and give Him kisses. They leave their husbands at home and go; there is no shame left in their hearts at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

The claim here is that God meets each devotee exactly as that devotee loves Him, and even calls Himself indebted to that love. He gives oaths, mirrors back each gopi's feeling, and fulfills the precise wish each heart holds, consoling each in her own way so that no two share the same experience. Tukaram says God hides the fact that He is equally everywhere, because love wants its own particular Beloved, not a general presence. The strong ending, gopis leaving husbands and shame behind to kiss Him, is not literal scandal but the measure of a love that has burned away every lesser attachment and self-consciousness; the test it sets for the reader is whether anything in us is still held back from God.

GATHA 4489

Krishna Leela

Many forms, one Lord at play

मराठी मूळ

मनें हरिरूपीं गुंतल्या वासना । उदास या सुना गौळ्यांच्या ॥1॥
 यांच्या भ्रतारांचीं धरुनियां रूपें । त्यांच्या घरीं त्यापें भोग करी ॥2॥
 करी कवतुक त्याचे तयापरी । एकां दिसे हरि एकां लेंक ॥3॥
 एक भाव नाहीं सकळांच्या चित्तीं । ह्यणऊनि प्रीति तैसें रूप ॥4॥
 रूप याचें आहे अवघें चि एक । परि कवतुक दाखविलें ॥5॥
 लेंकरुं न कळे स्थूल कीं लहान । खेळे नारायण कवतुकें ॥6॥
 कवतुक केलें सोंग बहुरूप । तुका ह्यणे बाप जगाचा हा ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The gopis' desires were wholly absorbed in Hari's form, and the daughters-in-law of the cowherds were indifferent to all else. Taking the forms of their husbands, Krishna went to their homes and enjoyed with each one.

He played each marvel according to its kind. To some He appeared as Hari, to others as their child.

The devotion of each was different, and so was His form. His form is in reality one, yet He displayed this wonder.

The child does not know large from small. Narayana plays with innocent delight.

Says Tuka, what a spectacle He created: the many-formed disguise of the Father of the world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Their minds, their desires, are caught up in Hari's form; these daughters-in-law of the cowherds are cold to all else. Taking the forms of their husbands, He goes to their homes and gives them His company there. He plays each wonder according to its kind; to some He looks like Hari, to some like their child. The same love is not in everyone's heart; so as their love is, such is the form. His form is in truth only one, yet He showed this wonder. The child does not know large from small; Narayana plays with simple delight. He made this play, this disguise of many forms. Tuka says: He is the Father of the world.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is explaining why the one God appears in many shapes. The form a devotee sees is shaped by the love she brings: to one He is the Beloved, to another the child, because no two hearts hold the same feeling. He insists the form is in reality single; the variety is His play, His chosen disguise. The image of the child who does not know large from small points to a God who delights without calculation, giving Himself wholly into each relationship. The closing line keeps this from becoming mere whimsy: this many-faced player is the Father of the whole world, holding all those forms at once.

GATHA 4490

Krishna Leela

Greed blinds, God stands near

मराठी मूळ

जगाचा हा बाप दाखविलें माये । माती खातां जाये मारावया ॥1॥
 मारावया तिणें उगारिली काठी । भुवनें त्या पोटीं चौदा देखे ॥2॥
 देखे भयानक झांकियेले डोळे । मागुता तो खेळे तयेपुढे ॥3॥
 पुढें रिघोनियां घाली गळां कव । कळों नेदी माव मायावंता ॥4॥
 मायावंत विश्वरूप काय जाणे । माझें माझें ह्मणे बाळ देवा ॥5॥
 बाळपणीं रीठा रगडिला दाढे । मारियेले गाढे कागबग ॥6॥
 गळां बांधऊनि उखळासी दावें । उन्मळी त्या भावें विमळार्जुन ॥7॥
 न कळे जुनाट जगाचा जीवन । घातलें मोहन गौळ्यांसी ॥8॥
 सिंकीं उतरुनि खाय नवनीत । न कळे बहुत होय तरी ॥9॥
 तरीं दुधडेरे भरले रांजण । खाय ते भरून दावी दुणी ॥10॥
 दुणी जालें त्याचा मानिती संतोष दुभत्याची आस धरुनियां ॥11॥
 आशाबद्धा देव असोनि जवळी । नेणती ते काळीं स्वार्थामुळें ॥12॥
 मुळें याच देव न कळे तयांसी । चित्त आशापाशीं गोवियेलें ॥13॥
 लेंकरुं आमचें ह्मणे दसवंती । नंदाचिये चित्तीं तो चि भाव ॥14॥
 भाव जाणावया चरित्र दाखवी । घुसिळतां रवी डेरियांत ॥15॥
 डेरियांत लोणी खादलें रिघोनि । पाहे तों जननी हातीं लागे ॥16॥
 हातीं धरुनियां काढिला बाहेरी । देखोनियां करी चोज त्यासी ॥17॥
 सिकवी विचार नेणे त्याची गती । होता कोणे रीती डेरियांत ॥18॥
 यांसी पुत्रलोभें न कळे हा भाव । कळों नेदी माव देव त्यांसी ॥19॥
 त्यांसी मायामोहजाळ घाली फांस । देर आपणास कळों नेदी ॥20॥
 नेदी राहों भाव लोभिकांचे चित्तीं । जाणतां चि होती अंधळीं तीं ॥21॥
 अंधळीं तीं तुका ह्मणे संवसारीं । जिहीं नाहीं हरि ओळखिला ॥22॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He is the Father of the world, yet His mother came to punish Him for eating dirt. She raised a stick to beat Him, and in His mouth she saw all fourteen worlds.

Terrified by that fearful vision, she shut her eyes. And there He was again before her, playing as before.

He ran ahead and threw His arms around her neck, concealing His divine illusion from the Great Enchanter's mother. She, the mother of the Cosmic Illusionist, knew nothing of His universal form.

'Mine, mine,' she said, claiming the infant God. In infancy He crushed the demoness Putana with His teeth.

He slew the mighty demons Kaga and Baka. His mother tied Him to a mortar with a rope, and He uprooted the twin Arjuna trees.

The ancient Lord of the universe, the life of all creation, cast His spell upon the cowherds. He climbed down from the hanging pot and ate the butter; no matter how much He consumed, there was always more.

The churning pots and milk vessels stayed full. He ate them full and showed them doubled over.

The people counted themselves fortunate in their increasing yield, holding on to hopes of still more butter. Yet, though God stood beside them, they did not recognize Him, their minds tethered to worldly desires.

Because of this, God remained unknown to them, for their chitta were snared by hope. 'This child is ours,' said Yashoda.

Nanda's chitta held the same feeling. To reveal their blindness, He let Himself be caught.

Entering the butter pot to eat, His mother found Him and pulled Him out. She saw the marvel but could not make sense of it.

How had He gotten inside with the doors shut? Their love for their son blinded them to the truth. God concealed His mystery from them.

He cast the net of maya and illusion over them, not letting them know His true identity. He does not allow devotion to remain in the chittas of the greedy.

The knowing become blind. Says Tuka, blind are those in this world who have not recognized Hari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He is the Father of the world, yet He showed it to His mother: He ate dirt, and she came to strike Him. She raised the stick to beat Him, and in His mouth she saw the fourteen worlds. She saw that fearful sight and shut her eyes; and again He was playing there before her. He runs ahead and throws His arms around her neck; the Lord of Maya lets none of His magic be known. How could she know the universal form of the Lord of Maya? Mine, mine, says the infant God's mother. As a child He crushed the demoness with His teeth; He killed the strong demons Kaga and Baka. Tied by the neck to the mortar with a rope, with that He uprooted the twin Arjuna trees. The ancient one, the life of the world, is not known; He cast His spell over the cowherds. He takes down the hanging pot and eats the butter; however much He eats, it is not noticed, there is still more. The milk pots and jars stay full; He eats them and shows them doubled again. They count it good fortune that the yield is doubled, holding on to their hope of more milk. Bound by hope, with God right beside them, in that hour they do not know Him, because of their own gain. For this reason God is not known to them; the heart is tangled in the noose of hope. This is our child, says Yashoda; in Nanda's heart is the same feeling. To make their feeling known, He shows His play: while she churns the curd in the pot. He slips in and eats the butter in the pot; when she looks, the mother catches Him by the hand. She takes Him by the hand and pulls Him out; seeing it, she marvels at Him. She tries to make sense of it, but cannot grasp His way: how was He inside the pot? Their love for their son blinds them to this truth; God lets none of His magic be known to them. He throws the net of maya and delusion over them like a snare, and lets none of it be known. He does not let true feeling stay in the hearts of the greedy; even the knowing become blind. Tuka says: blind in this world are those who have not recognized Hari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram threads the childhood miracles into a single point about seeing and not seeing. Yashoda glimpses the fourteen worlds in the infant's mouth, then shuts her eyes and goes back to mothering Him, because God deliberately covers His own greatness so that her love can stay love. The same veiling falls on the cowherds whose butter never runs out: they read the abundance only as good luck and more profit, and so, with God standing beside them, they miss Him. The named danger is the noose of hope and gain, which tangles the heart and blinds even the clever. The closing turn aims the lesson at us, not at Yashoda's tender blindness: the truly blind are those caught in greed who never recognize Hari at all.

GATHA 4491

Devotion to Vitthal

Single-pointed devotion, the cowherds' rare joy

मराठी मूळ

ओळखी तयांसी होय एका भावें । दुसरिया देवें न पविजे ॥1॥
 न पविजे कदा उन्मत्त जालिया । डंबु तो चि वांयां नागवण ॥2॥
 वनवास देवाकारणें एकांत । करावीं हीं व्रततपें याग ॥3॥
 व्रत याग यांसी फळलीं बहुतें । होतीं या संचितें गौळ्यांची ॥4॥
 यांसी देवें तारियेलें न कळतां । मागील अनंता ठावें होतें ॥5॥
 होतें तें द्यावया आला नारायण । मायबापां रीण गौळ्यांचें ॥6॥
 गौळ्यांचें सुख दुर्लभ आणिकां । नाहीं ब्रह्मादिकां तुका ह्मणे ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He can be known only through single-pointed devotion. By no other means can God be reached.

He can never be attained by the intoxicated and the proud. Pretense and ego are only self-deception.

The purpose of solitude, of forest-dwelling, of vows, austerities, and rituals, is to reach God. All these bore fruit for the cowherds through their accumulated merit.

God saved them without their even knowing it; their past was known to the Infinite One. He came as Narayana to give what was due, to repay His debt to the parents and cowherds.

Says Tuka, the joy of the cowherds is beyond the reach of even Brahma and the gods.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He is recognized only by single-pointed love; by no other god is He reached. He is never reached by the drunk and proud; their show is only useless ruin. Forest-dwelling for God's sake, solitude, the keeping of vows and austerities and sacrifices: vow and sacrifice bore much fruit for the cowherds; this was their store of merit. God saved them without their knowing; the Infinite One knew their past. Narayana came to give what was theirs, to repay His debt to the cowherd parents. Tuka says: the joy of the cowherds is hard for others to reach; even Brahma and the gods do not have it.

WHAT IT MEANS

This poem names the one thing that reaches God and the one thing that bars the way. He is recognized only by undivided love; pride and intoxicated self-display, even when dressed as devotion, end in nothing but ruin. Tukaram does not throw away vows, austerities, and forest discipline; he says their whole purpose is to reach God, and that the cowherds' simpler love already carried the merit such practices aim at. The striking claim is that God saved them before they even knew it and came as if repaying a debt He owed them. The verse ends by ranking their joy above Brahma and the gods, putting humble single-hearted love higher than any cosmic station.

GATHA 4492

Krishna Leela

Two homes, parents drowned in Him

मराठी मूळ

नेणतियांसाठीं नेणता लाहान । थिंकोनि भोजन मागे माये ॥1॥
 माया दोनी यास बाप नारायणा । सारखी भावना तयांवरी ॥2॥
 तयांवरी त्याचा समचित्त भाव । देवकीवसुदेव नंद दोघे ॥3॥
 घेउनियां एके ठायीं अवतार । एकीं केला थोर वाढवूनि ॥4॥
 उणा पुरा यासी नाहीं कोणी ठाव । सारिखा चि देव अवघियांसी ॥5॥
 यासी दोनी ठाव सारिखे अनंता । आधील मागुता वाढला तो ॥6॥
 वाढला तो सेवाभक्तिचिया गुणें । उपचारमिष्टान्नं करूनियां ॥7॥
 करोनियां सायास मेळविलें धन । तें ही कृष्णार्पण केलें तीहीं ॥8॥
 कृष्णासी सकळ गाई घोडे ह्यैसी । समपिनल्या दासी जीवें भाव ॥9॥
 जीवें भावें त्याची करितील सेवा । न विसंबती नांवा क्षणभरी ॥10॥
 क्षणभरी होतां वेगळा तयांस । होती कासावीस प्राण त्यांचे ॥11॥
 त्यांचे ध्यानीं मनीं सर्वभावें हरि । देह काम करी चित्त त्यापें ॥12॥
 त्याचें चि चिंतन कृष्ण कोठें गेला । कृष्ण हा जेविला नाहीं कृष्ण ॥13॥
 कृष्ण आला घरा कृष्ण गेला दारा । कृष्ण हा सोयरा भेटों कृष्णा ॥14॥
 कृष्ण गातां ओंव्या दळणीं कांडणीं । कृष्ण हा भोजनीं पाचारिती ॥15॥
 कृष्ण तयां ध्यानीं आसनीं शयनीं । कृष्ण देखे स्वपनीं कृष्णरूप ॥16॥
 कृष्ण त्यांस दिसे आभास दिश्चतां । धन्य मातापिता तुका ह्यणे ॥17॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For the sake of the innocent, He became small and innocent, crying and begging His mother for food. He had two sets of parents, Narayana's love equal for both.

His regard was balanced and impartial: Devaki and Vasudeva on one side, Nanda and Yashoda on the other. He was born in one place, raised to greatness in another.

He shows neither more nor less to anyone; God is the same to all. Both homes were equal to Him.

What grew from before continued growing. He grew through the nourishment of devoted service, through lovingly prepared offerings.

Through their efforts and earnings, they offered their wealth, and all of it was surrendered to Krishna. They gave Krishna everything: cows, horses, buffaloes, servants, their very lives.

They served Him with all their being and did not leave His Name for even a moment. Even a moment apart from Him made their jivas frantic and distressed.

Their thoughts, meditations, and entire being were devoted to Hari. The body went through its work, but the chitta was with Him.

Their constant thought was: 'Where has Krishna gone? Has Krishna eaten? Has Krishna not?' 'Krishna has come home, Krishna has gone out. Krishna is our kinsman.

Let us meet Krishna.' Singing ovis of Krishna while grinding and pounding, calling Krishna at mealtimes. Krishna in their waking, in their sitting, in their sleeping.

Krishna in their dreams, Krishna's form everywhere. Krishna appeared to them even in passing shadows and fleeting worries.

Says Tuka, blessed are the mother and father of such a child.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For the simple ones He became small and simple; crying, He begs His mother for food. He has two mothers and Narayana for father; His feeling is the same toward them. Toward them His heart is even and equal: Devaki and Vasudeva, and Nanda, the two pairs. He took birth in one place; in the other He was raised to greatness. He has no place for more or less; God is the same to all. Both homes are equal to the Infinite One; He grew where He was raised, the latter home. He grew through the strength of their loving service, through their care and the sweet food they made. With great effort they gathered wealth, and all of it they offered to Krishna. To Krishna they gave their cows, horses, buffaloes; the servant-women gave their very lives in love. With heart and soul they serve Him; they cannot bear to be apart from His Name for a moment. To be parted from Him even a moment makes their breath gasp in distress. In their meditation and mind, with their whole being, is Hari; the body does its work, the heart is with Him. Their one thought: where has Krishna gone? Has Krishna eaten or not? Krishna has come home, Krishna has gone out; Krishna is our kinsman, let us meet Krishna. Singing songs of Krishna while grinding and pounding, they call on Krishna at their meals. Krishna in their meditation, their sitting, their lying down; Krishna they see in dreams, the form of Krishna. Krishna they see even in a passing shadow when distracted. Tuka says: blessed are that mother and father.

WHAT IT MEANS

The verse holds two truths together: God is impartial, and God lets Himself be utterly possessed by love. He gives equal regard to both his birth parents and his foster parents, showing no more or less to anyone; yet He grows up in Gokul fed by service and love, accepting all they own and even their lives. Tukaram then paints constant remembrance as the form their love takes: the hands grind and pound while the heart is wholly on Krishna, His name spoken at meals, His form seen in sleep and even in a passing shadow. This is the picture of a mind so saturated with God that nothing else fully registers. The benediction at the end blesses Nanda and Yashoda, holding up such absorbed, all-day remembrance as the life worth envying.

GATHA 4493

Krishna Leela

Taste Him once, never return

मराठी मूळ

कृष्ण हा परिचारी कृष्ण हा वेव्हारी । कृष्ण घ्या वो नारी आणिकी ह्मणे ॥1॥
 ह्मणे कृष्णाविण कैसें तुह्मां गमे । विळ हा करमे वांयांविण ॥2॥
 वांयांविण तुह्मीं पिटीत्या चाकटी । घ्या गे जगजेठी क्षणभरी ॥3॥
 क्षणभरी याच्या सुखाचा सोहळा । पहा एकवेळा घेऊनियां ॥4॥
 याचें सुख तुह्मां कळलियावरि । मग दारोदारीं न फिराल ॥5॥
 लटिकें हें तुह्मां वाटेल खेळणें । एका कृष्णाविणें आवघें चि ॥6॥
 अवघ्यांचा तुह्मीं टाकाल सांगात । घेऊनि अनंत जाल राना ॥7॥
 नावडे तुह्मांस आणीक बोलिलें । मग हें लागलें हरिध्यान ॥8॥
 न करा हा मग या जीवा वेगळा । टोंकवाल बाळा आणिका ही ॥9॥
 आणिका ही तुह्मा येती काकुलती । जवळी इच्छती क्षण बैसों ॥10॥
 बैसों चला पाहों गोपाळाचें मुख । एकी एक सुख सांगतील ॥11॥
 सांगे जंव ऐसी मात दसवंती । तंव धरिती चित्तीं बाळा ॥12॥
 बाळा एकी घरा घेउनियां जाती । नाहीं त्या परती तुका ह्मणे ॥13॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The women say, 'Krishna is our attendant, Krishna is our dealer. Take Krishna, O women, give Him to one another.' Yashoda says, 'How do you pass the time without Krishna? How does the day go by?' 'Why do you stand empty-handed, clapping in vain? Take the Lord of the World for even a moment.' 'Once you taste His joy, you will never wander door to door again.' 'All this play will seem false to you, everything except Krishna.' 'You will abandon every companion and go with Krishna alone to the wilderness.' 'No other words will please you once this Hari-meditation has taken root.' 'You will not then make Him separate from your jiva.

You will urge even others toward Him.' 'Others too will come pleading to you, longing to sit near Him for a moment.' 'Come, let us sit and gaze at Gopala's face,' they tell each other, sharing news of their joy. Says Tuka, some women take the child home. They do not bring Him back.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Krishna is our helper, Krishna is our companion in work; take Krishna, O women, says one to another. How do you pass the time without Krishna? she says; the hour goes by in waste. For nothing you sit clapping your hands; take the Lord of the World for even a moment. For just a moment look upon the joy of Him; take Him once and see. Once you know His joy you will not wander door to door again. This play will seem false to you; everything is empty except Krishna alone. You will leave the company of everyone and take the Infinite One and go to the forest. No other talk will please you once this meditation on Hari has taken hold. Then you will not let Him be apart from your life; you will draw even others toward the child. Others too will come begging to you, longing to sit by Him a moment. Come, let us sit and look at Gopala's face, they tell one another, sharing their joy. While Yashoda is speaking such words, they take the child to their hearts. Some women take the child home. Tuka says: they do not bring Him back.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is one devotee urging another to taste God just once, sure that one taste will change everything. The argument runs through the poem: try Him for a moment, and you will stop wandering door to door, every other pleasure will look hollow, and you will want to draw others in too. The drift is toward total claim: the lover ends up leaving all company for the Infinite One alone. The quiet final line, that the women who take the child home do not bring Him back, lands the stakes plainly. Once God is truly received into the heart, He is not handed back; that is the cost and the gift of the first taste.

GATHA 4494

Krishna Leela

Lost in Krishna, distinctions forgotten

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्याने पुन्हा न येती मागुल्या । कृष्णासीं खेळतां दिवस गमे ॥1॥
 दिवस राती कांहीं नाठवे तयांसी । पाहातां मुखासी कृष्णाचिया ॥2॥
 याच्या मुखें नये डोळयासी वीट । राहिले हे नीट ताटस्थ चि ॥3॥
 ताटस्थ राहिलें सकळ शरीर । इंद्रियें व्यापार विसरलीं ॥4॥
 विसरल्या तान भुक घर दार । नाही हा विचार आहों कोठें ॥5॥
 कोठें असों कोण जाला वेळ काळ । नाठवे सकळ विसरल्या ॥6॥
 विसरल्या आह्मीं कोणीये जातीच्या । वर्णा ही चहूंच्या एक जाल्या ॥7॥
 एक जाल्या तेव्हां कृष्णाचिया सुखें । निःशंकें भातुकें खेळतील ॥8॥
 खेळता भातुकें कृष्णाच्या सहित । नाही आशंकित चित्त त्यांचें ॥9॥
 चित्तीं तो गोविंद लटिकें दळण । करिती हें जन करी तैसें ॥10॥
 जन करी तैसा खेळतील खेळ । अवघा गोपाळ करुनियां ॥11॥
 करिती आपला आवघा गोविंद । जना साच फंद लटिका त्या ॥12॥
 त्याणीं केला हरि सासुरें माहेर । बंधु हे कुमार दीर भावें ॥13॥
 भावना राहिली एकाचिये ठायीं । तुका ह्याने पायीं गोविंदाचे ॥14॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, once gone, they do not return. Playing with Krishna, the day passes unnoticed.

Day and night mean nothing to them, gazing upon Krishna's face. Looking at Him, the eyes never tire.

They remain motionless and still. The whole body becomes transfixed.

The senses forget their functions. They forgot hunger, thirst, home, and threshold.

They did not think about where they were. They forgot what time it was, what moment had passed.

They forgot everything. They forgot what caste they belonged to.

All four varnas became one. Becoming one in Krishna's joy, they played house without a care.

They played house together with Krishna, free of any hesitation. Govinda was in their chitta.

The grinding was only a pretense. The world took it for real, but they played it as a game.

What the world took as serious, they played as sport, making Govinda the center of it all. They made Hari their in-laws' home and their mother's home.

Brothers, husbands, kinsmen, all were cast in the role by that devotion. Says Tuka, all feeling settled at the feet of Govinda.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: once gone, they do not come back again; the day passes while they play with Krishna. Day and night mean nothing to them, gazing on Krishna's face. The eyes never tire of His face; they stand fixed and still. The whole body stands transfixed; the senses forget their work. They forget thirst and hunger, home and door; there is no thought of where they are. Where are we, what hour, what time has passed, they remember nothing, they have forgotten. We have forgotten what caste we are; all four classes have become one. Become one, then, in Krishna's joy, they play house without a care. They play house together with Krishna; their hearts hold no doubt. In their hearts is Govinda; the grinding is only a pretense. The world does this for real; they play at it as the world does. The play the world takes as serious, they play as sport, making Gopala the whole of it. They make Govinda their everything; what the world takes as true is false to them. They made Hari their husband's home and their mother's home; brothers, sons, kinsmen, all by their love. All their feeling settled in one place. Tuka says: at the feet of Govinda.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what total absorption in God does to ordinary life. Time, hunger, place, even the body's sense all drop away under the gaze on Krishna's face, and with them drops caste: all four classes become one in His joy. The poem then draws the line between the world and the devotee through the same daily chores. The world grinds and keeps house in deadly earnest; these lovers do the very same acts as play, because Govinda, not the work, is the real center. Every relation, husband's home, mother's home, brother, son, has been recast as a way of holding Him. The closing image gathers it all: their whole feeling has come to rest at one place, the feet of Govinda.

GATHA 4495

Krishna Leela

Play wedding, One in every role

मराठी मूळ

गोविंद भ्रतार गोविंद मुळहारी । नामें भेद परि एक चि तो ॥1॥
 एकाचीं च नामें ठेवियेलीं दोनी । किल्पतील मनीं यावें जावें ॥2॥
 जावें यावें तिहीं घरळिचया घरीं । तेथिची सिदोरी तेथें न्यावी ॥3॥
 विचारितां दिसे येणें जाणें खोटें । दाविती गोमटें लोका ऐसें ॥4॥
 लोक करुनियां साच वर्तताती । तैशा त्या खेळती लटिक्याची ॥5॥
 लटिकीं करिती मंगळदायकें । लटिकीं च एकें एकां व्याही ॥6॥
 व्याही भाई हरि सोयरा जावायी । अवघियांच्या ठायीं केला एक ॥7॥
 एकासि च पावे जें कांहीं करिती । उपचार संपित्त नाना भोग ॥8॥
 भोग देती सर्व एका नारायणा । लटिक्या भावना व्याही भाई ॥9॥
 लटिका च त्यांणीं केला संवसार । जाणती साचार वेगळा त्या ॥10॥
 त्यांणीं मृत्तकेचें करुनि अवघें । खेळतील दोघें पुरुषनारी ॥11॥
 पुरुषनारी त्यांणीं ठेवियेलीं नावें । कवतुकभावे विचरती ॥12॥
 विचरती जैसे साच भावें लोक । तैसें नाहीं सुख खेळतीया ॥13॥
 यांणीं जाणितलें आपआपणया । लटिकें हें वांयां खेळतों तें ॥14॥
 खेळतों ते आह्मीं नव्हों नारीनर । ह्यणोनि विकार नाहीं तयां ॥15॥
 तया ठावें आहे आह्मी अवघीं एक । ह्यणोनि निःशंक खेळतील ॥16॥
 तयां ठावें नाहीं हरिचिया गुणें । आह्मी कोणकोणें काय खेळों ॥17॥
 काय खातों आह्मी कासया सांगातें । कैसें हें लागतें नेणों मुखी ॥18॥
 मुखीं चवी नाहीं वरी अंगीं लाज । वरणा याती काज न धरिती ॥19॥
 धरितील कांहीं संकोच त्या मना । हांसतां या जना नाइकती ॥20॥
 नाइकती बोल आणिकांचे कानीं । हरि चित्तीं मनीं बैसलासे ॥21॥
 बैसलासे हरि जयांचिये चित्तीं । तयां नावडती मायबापें ॥22॥
 मायबापें त्यांचीं नेती पाचारुनि । बळें परि मनीं हरि वसे ॥23॥
 वसतील बाळा आपलाले घरीं । ध्यान त्या अंतरीं गोविंदाचें ॥24॥
 गोविंदाचें ध्यान निजलिया जाग्या । आणीक वाउग्या न बोलती ॥25॥
 न बोलती निजलिया हरिविण । जागृति सपन एक जालें ॥26॥
 एकविध सुख घेती नित्य बाळा । भ्रमर परिमळालागीं तैशा ॥27॥
 तैसा त्यांचा भाव घेतला त्यांपरी । तुका ह्यणे हरि बाळलीला ॥28॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Govinda as husband, Govinda as the one to whom the bride is given: different names, but one and the same. They gave Him two names but imagined Him coming and going between homes.

They would go and come between their households, carrying provisions from one place to the other. Upon reflection, all this coming and going is false.

They showed the world a lovely appearance. The world takes life seriously; those women played at life as make-believe.

They performed mock-auspicious ceremonies, pretending to arrange marriages among themselves. The in-laws, brothers, husbands, sons-in-law: all these roles were filled by the One alone.

Whatever they offered, whatever rituals they performed, all the offerings, ceremonies, and pleasures went to the one Narayana. The entire household was a beautiful pretense.

In-laws and brothers were make-believe. Says Tuka, they knew what was truly different. Their so-called married life was a knowing game.

They fashioned everything from clay: pots, vessels, cooking utensils. They played as man and woman, naming things in playful sport.

They played as worldly folk do, but their joy was nothing like the world's. They knew within themselves that their play was an illusion.

'We are playing; we are not really man and woman.' Therefore there was no confusion or desire among them. They knew, 'We are all one.' Therefore they played without any inhibition.

They did not know, by Hari's grace, who was who or what they were playing. They did not know what they ate or why they kept company.

They did not know how this taste came to their mouths. They had no taste for anything else, yet no sense of modesty about it.

They cared nothing for distinctions of caste or status. They held to whatever came, without any self-consciousness.

They did not listen to outsiders' words. Hari was seated in their chitta and minds.

Says Tuka, in those whose chittas Hari has entered, mothers and fathers are not even loved.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Govinda the husband, Govinda the one who gives the bride: the names differ, but He is one and the same. They set two names on the one, and imagine in their minds a coming and going. They go and come between those make-believe homes, carrying provisions from one to the other. Looked at closely, all this going and coming is false; they show the people a lovely sight. The people live it as real; those women play it as make-believe. They make mock auspicious rites; in play one becomes the other's in-law. In-law, brother, kinsman, son-in-law, Hari is made all of them in every place. Whatever they do reaches the One alone: the rites, the wealth, the many offerings. All the offerings go to the one Narayana; in-law and brother are make-believe feeling. They made the whole household a pretense; they truly know that He is apart from it. They make everything out of clay, and the two play, man and woman. They set names of man and woman, and move about in playful delight. They move about as worldly people do in earnest, yet their joy is not like the world's. They know within themselves: this play is empty, we play it for nothing. We who play are not really woman and man; so there is no lust in them. They know we are all one; so they play without any fear. By Hari's grace they do not know who is who, or who plays what. They do not know what they eat or why they keep company; they do not know how this taste comes to their mouths. There is no taste in their mouths, yet no shame on their bodies; they hold no care for class or caste. If their minds feel any shyness, when people laugh they do not hear it. They do not let others' words into their ears; Hari is seated in their hearts and minds. In those whose hearts Hari has entered, mother and father are no longer dear. Their mothers and fathers call and take them away by force, but Hari stays in the mind. The children sit in their own homes, with the meditation of Govinda within. The meditation of Govinda, asleep or awake; they speak nothing else, nothing idle. Asleep, they speak nothing but Hari; waking and dream have become one. The children take this single joy always, as the bee goes for the fragrance. Just so He took their love in their own way. Tuka says: Hari, the child's play.

WHAT IT MEANS

The children's game of pretend weddings becomes Tukaram's picture of a heart that sees through the whole world to the One. Every role they assign, husband, in-law, brother, son-in-law, is secretly filled by Hari alone, and every mock offering reaches Narayana; they perform the household earnestly outside while knowing inside it is play. Because they know they are all one and not really man and woman, the play carries no lust and no shame, and the laughter of onlookers cannot touch them. The deeper turn is that even the players forget who is who, swallowed in a single joy, so that waking and dream become one. Tukaram offers this as the model: like the bee drawn only to fragrance, give the world its outward forms but let the heart rest wholly in Hari, until even mother and father grow distant before that one love.

GATHA 4496

Krishna Leela

Cosmic infant, the leaf of devotion

मराठी मूळ

लीलाविग्रही तो लेववी खाववी । यशोदा बैसवी मांडीवरी ॥1॥
 मांडीवरी भार पुष्पाचिये परी । बैसोनियां करी स्तनपान ॥2॥
 नभाचा ही साक्षी पाताळापरता । कुर्विळते माता हातें त्यासि ॥3॥
 हातें कुर्वाळुनी मुखीं घाली घांस । पुरे ह्मणे तीस पोट धालें ॥4॥
 पोट धालें मग देतसे ढेंकर । भक्तीचें तें फार तुळसीदळ ॥5॥
 तुळसीदळ भावें सहित देवापाणी । फार त्याहुनि क्षीरसागरा ॥6॥
 क्षीराचा कांटाळा असे एकवेळ । भक्तीचें तें जळ गोड देवा ॥7॥
 देवा भक्त जिवाहुनि आवडती । सकळ हि प्रीति त्यांच्याठायीं ॥8॥
 त्यांचा हा अंकित सर्व भावें हरि । तुका ह्मणे करी सर्व काज ॥9॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He who fills the universe with His play, He lets Yashoda seat Him on her lap, feed Him, and dress Him. She sits Him in her lap, light as a flower, and He suckles at her breast.

He who is the witness of the sky and reaches beyond the netherworld, that One she pats and caresses with her hands. She feeds Him morsels by hand, and He says, 'Enough, my belly is full,' and gives a little belch.

But what fills Him is the tulsi leaf of devotion, offered with faith and water. That is more to Him than the ocean of milk.

He may tire of the milk-ocean at times, but the water offered by a devotee is always sweet to God. Devotees are dearer to God than His own life.

All His love rests with them. Says Tuka, He is entirely in their service. He does their every task.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He who holds the whole play in His form, He lets Yashoda dress Him and feed Him and seat Him on her lap. Light as a flower He is on her lap; sitting there He drinks at her breast. He who is the witness of the sky and beyond the netherworld, that one His mother caresses with her hands. With her hand she caresses Him and puts a morsel in His mouth; He says, enough, my belly is full. His belly full, then He gives a little belch; but a leaf of devotion is much more to Him. A tulsi leaf offered with love and water is far more to Him than the ocean of milk. He may grow weary of milk at times, but the water of devotion is sweet to God. Devotees are dearer to God than His own life; all His love rests with them. Hari is wholly bound to them with His whole heart. Tuka says: He does their every task.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the infinite and the intimate side by side: the One who witnesses the whole cosmos lets Yashoda dress Him, feed Him by hand, and burp Him like any baby. The turn comes with His full belly: the milk that fills Him matters less than a single tulsi leaf offered with love. He can tire of the ocean of milk, but the plain water of a

devotee's faith is always sweet to Him. The point is that God measures an offering by the love in it, not its size or richness. The poem ends in the most personal claim of all: devotees are dearer to Him than His own life, and He binds Himself to them so completely that He does their every task.

GATHA 4497

Krishna Leela

Krishna is all, Brahma bows

मराठी मूळ

जयेवेळीं चोरुनियां नेलीं वत्सें । तयालागीं तैसें होणें लागे ॥1॥
 लागे दोहीं ठायी करावें पाळण । जगाचा जीवन मायबाप ॥2॥
 माय जाल्यावरी अवध्या वत्सांची । घरीं वत्सें जीचीं तैसा जाला ॥3॥
 जाला तैसा जैसे घरिंचे गोपाळ । आणिक सकळ मोहरी पांवे ॥4॥
 मोहरी पांवे सिंगें वाहिल्या काहाळा । देखिला सोहाळा ब्रह्मादिकीं ॥5॥
 ब्रह्मादिकां सुख स्वपनीं ही नाहीं । तैसें दोहीं ठायीं वोसंडलें ॥6॥
 वोसंडल्या क्षीर अमुप त्या गायी । जैसी ज्याची आई तैसा जाला ॥7॥
 लाघव कळलें ब्रह्मयासी याचें । परब्रह्म साचें अवतरलें ॥8॥
 तरले हे जन सकळ ही आतां । ऐसें तो विधाता बोलिलेला ॥9॥
 लागला हे स्तुती करुं अनंताची । चतुर्मुख वाची भक्ती स्तोत्रें ॥10॥
 भक्तिकाजें देवें केला अवतार । पृथ्वीचा भार फेडावया ॥11॥
 पृथिवी दाटीली होती या असुरीं । नासाहावे वरीभार तये ॥12॥
 तया काकुलती आपल्या दासांची । तयालागीं वेची सर्वस्व ही ॥13॥
 स्वहित दासांचें करावयालागीं । अव्यक्त हें जगीं व्यक्ती आलें ॥14॥
 हरी नाममात्रें पातकांच्या रासी । तो आला घरासि गौळ्यांच्या ॥16॥
 गौळये अवघीं जालीं कृष्णमय । नामें लोकत्रय तरतील ॥17॥
 तरतील नामें कृष्णाचिया दोषी । बहुत ज्यांपाशीं होइल पाप ॥18॥
 पाप ऐसें नाहीं कृष्णनामें राहे । धन्य तो चि पाहे कृष्णमुख ॥19॥
 मुख माझें काय जो मी वणूप पार । मग नमस्कार घाली ब्रह्मा ॥20॥
 ब्रह्मा नमस्कार घाली गोधनासी । कळला तयासि हा चि देव ॥21॥
 देव चि अवगा जालासे सकळ । गाई हा गोपाळ वत्सें तेथें ॥22॥
 तेथें पाहाणें जें आणीक दुसरें । मूर्ख त्या अंतरे दुजा नाहीं ॥23॥
 दुजा भाव तुका ह्याने जया चित्ती । रवरव भोगिती कुंभपाक ॥24॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When Brahma stole the calves, God had to become the same to maintain both sides. He became the mother of every calf.

In every home where a calf belonged, He became that very calf. He became every cowherd in every household, complete with flutes and horns and trumpets.

Brahma and the gods witnessed this spectacle. Such joy had never come to them even in dreams, yet now it overflowed in both directions.

The cows gave torrents of milk. He became each one's own mother.

This subtlety became known to Brahma: the supreme Brahman had truly incarnated. 'All these people are now saved,' the Creator declared.

He began to praise the Infinite One, the four-faced one chanting hymns of devotion. It was for the sake of devotees that God took incarnation, to relieve the burden of the earth.

The earth had been oppressed by demons, unable to bear their weight. God spends all He has for the sake of His servants who cry to Him.

The Unmanifest became manifest in this world for the welfare of His devotees. By the mere power of Hari's Name, heaps of sins are destroyed.

That God has come to the homes of cowherds. The cowherds have all become one with Krishna.

The three worlds shall be saved by His Name. Even the sinful shall be saved by Krishna's Name, no matter how great their sins.

No sin can survive before the Name of Krishna. Blessed is the one who beholds Krishna's face.

'What is my mouth that I should describe His extent?' said Brahma, and then bowed before the cattle. He recognized that this was God Himself.

God was everything: the cows, the cowherds, the calves. To look for anything second there was the mark of a fool; there was no 'other.' Says Tuka, those who hold duality in their chitta will suffer the torments of hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the calves were stolen away, He had to become the same as them. He had to keep the herd on both sides, He the life and the mother-father of the world. He became the mother of all the calves; where a calf belonged to a house, He became that calf. He became just like the cowherd boys of the houses, with all their flutes and reed-pipes. Flutes and pipes, horns and trumpets they sounded; Brahma and the gods saw the festival. Such joy was not given to Brahma and the gods even in dreams; so it overflowed on both sides. The cows poured out boundless milk; as each one's own mother, so He became. Brahma came to know His skill: the supreme Brahman had truly come down. All these people are saved now, so the Creator spoke. He began to praise the Infinite One; the four-faced one chanted hymns of devotion. God took birth for the sake of His devotees, to lift the burden of the earth. The earth was crowded with these demons; their weight upon her could not be borne. He pities His own servants who cry to Him; for them He spends all He has. To do good for His servants, the Unmanifest came into the world manifest. By Hari's Name alone the heaps of sins are gone; He came to the homes of the cowherds. The cowherds all became filled with Krishna; by the Name the three worlds will cross over. Even sinners will cross over by Krishna's Name, those with great sin upon them. No sin can stay before Krishna's Name; blessed is the one who beholds Krishna's face. What is my mouth, that I could measure His extent, said Brahma, and bowed down. Brahma bowed down before the cattle; he had understood that this very thing is God. God had become everything, all of it: the cows, the cowherd boys, the calves were there. To look for any second thing there, the fool has no other within him. Tuka says: those who hold a second feeling in the heart suffer the torments of hell.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram retells how Krishna, when Brahma hid the calves and boys, became every missing calf and every missing cowherd Himself, mothering each so perfectly that no home noticed and the cows poured out milk in joy. The marvel teaches Brahma the lesson: the one Brahman has truly become all of it, and so the four-faced creator, who

could not measure God's extent, bows down before mere cattle, recognizing God in them. This grounds the poem's wider claim that God incarnates for His devotees' sake and to ease the earth, and that His Name alone burns away even the greatest heaps of sin. The closing line states the nondual stakes bluntly: where God has become everything, to keep seeing a second, separate reality is the fool's error, and that divided seeing is itself the torment of hell. The warning points at the habit of dividing the world from God, not at any particular person.

GATHA 4498

Krishna Leela

Seeing God in all, the cowherds' merit

मराठी मूळ

कुंभपाक लागे तयासि भोगणें । अवघा चि नेणे देव ऐसा ॥1॥
 देव ऐसा ठावा नाही जया जना । तयासि यातना यमकरी ॥2॥
 कळला हा देव तया साच खरा । गाई वत्सें घरा धाडी ब्रह्मा ॥3॥
 ब्रह्मादिकां ऐसा देव अगोचर । कैसा त्याचा पार जाणवेल ॥4॥
 जाणवेल देव गौळ्यांच्या भावें । तुका ह्याने सेवे संचित हें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who does not see everything as God must suffer the torments of the lowest hells. He to whom God is not known is punished by Yama's tortures.

When Brahma recognized God for certain, he sent the cows and calves back home. If God is beyond even Brahma's comprehension, how can His extent be known by anyone? Says Tuka, God is known through the devotion of the cowherds. Their accumulated merit made it possible.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who does not see everything as God must boil in the lowest hells. The one to whom God is unknown is tortured by Yama. Brahma knew this God for what he truly is, and sent the cows and calves back home. If God is hidden even from Brahma, how can anyone measure him? God is known through the cowherds' love. Tuka says: such devotion is their stored-up merit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the seeing of God in everything against the failure to see it, and names what hangs on each. The one who cannot see God in all suffers Yama and the cycle of birth; the one who can is free. He recalls that even Brahma, who once tried to test the boy by stealing the calves, finally recognized him and gave them back, which shows that God lies beyond the reach of the learned. The plain cowherds reach him instead through love, and Tukaram calls that love their accumulated merit. The point is that devotion, not intellect, is what opens the eyes to God present everywhere.

GATHA 4499

Worldly Metaphors

God the true master, the open field

मराठी मूळ

संचित उत्तम भूमि कसूनियां । जाऊं नेणे वांयां परि त्याचें ॥1॥
 त्याचिया पिकासि आलिया घुमरी । आल्या गाईवरी आणिक गाई ॥2॥
 गाई दवडुनि घालिती बाहेरी । तंव ह्मणे हरि बांधा त्या ही ॥3॥
 त्याही तुह्मी बांधा तुमच्या सारिख्या । भोवंडा पारिख्या वाडणांतुनि ॥4॥
 पारिख्या न येती कोणाचिया घरा । सूत्रधारी खरा नारायण ॥5॥
 नारायण नांदे जयाचिये ठायीं । सहज तेथें नाहीं घालमेली ॥6॥
 मेलीं हीं शाहाणीं करितां सायास । नाहीं सुखलेश तुका ह्मणे ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Like a well-tilled, fertile field that never fails, so is good merit. When the harvest is abundant, neighboring cows wander over to graze.

They drive the cows away, but Hari says, 'Tie them up too.' 'Tie them also; they are as good as yours. Let the strangers share the pasture.' Strangers do not come to anyone's door by accident.

The true master is Narayana, who directs everything. Where Narayana dwells, there is no turmoil or strife.

Says Tuka, the clever who labor without God know no happiness at all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Good merit is like a fertile, well-tilled field that never fails. When the harvest is thick, the neighbors' cows wander in to graze. They drive the strange cows out, but Hari says, tie them up too. Tie them as if they were your own; let the strangers share the pasture. Strangers do not arrive at anyone's door by accident. Narayana is the true master who works it all. Where Narayana lives, there is no quarrel. Tuka says: the clever who toil without God find no happiness at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes one image carry the whole teaching: merit is a field that bears, and what it draws is not only your own but the stranger too. When the cowherds want to drive off the outsiders' cows, Hari overturns them and says welcome them, treat them as your own, for no stranger comes to your door by chance. The deeper claim is that Narayana is the one who arranges everything, the hidden master of the field, and where he is present there is no strife or grasping. By contrast the clever who labor on their own strength, leaving God out, get no peace from all their cleverness. He is teaching open-handedness and trust in God as the real worker behind the harvest.

GATHA 4500

Krishna Leela

The cowherds' artless dance, God in their midst

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्मणे सुख घेतलें गोपाळीं । नाचती कांबळीं करुनि ध्वजा ॥1॥
 करुनियां टिरी आपुल्या मांदळ । वाजविती टाळ दगडाचे ॥2॥
 दगडाचे टाळ कोण त्यांचा नाद । गीत गातां छंद ताल नाहीं ॥3॥
 नाही ताल गातां नाचतां गोपाळां । घननीळ सावळा तयामध्ये ॥4॥
 मधीं जयां हरि तें सुख आगळें । देहभाव काळें नाहीं तयां ॥5॥
 तयांसि आळंगी आपुलिया करीं । जाती भूमीवरी लोटांगणीं ॥6॥
 निजभाव देखे जयांचिये अंगीं । तुका ह्मणे संगीं क्रीडे तयां ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Says Tuka, the cowherds tasted that bliss to the full. They danced, making flags of their blankets.**They fashioned their own drums and clapped stones together for cymbals. What kind of rhythm did those stone cymbals produce? They sang without melody and danced without keeping time.**The cowherds danced and sang without proper beat, yet the dark, beautiful Lord was in their midst. Those who have Hari in their midst have a joy beyond all others; body-consciousness does not exist for them.**He embraces them in His own arms. They fall to the ground in ecstatic prostrations.**He sees the sincerity in their being. Says Tuka, He plays in the company of such souls.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: the cowherds tasted joy to the full, dancing with their blankets raised like flags. They slapped their thighs for drums and clashed stones for cymbals. What sound do stone cymbals make? They sang with no tune and danced with no beat. Yet there, among them, was the dark and beautiful Lord. Those who have Hari among them have a joy beyond all joys; body-sense is gone for them. He gathers them into his own arms. They throw themselves flat on the ground before him. He sees the honest love in their bodies. Tuka says: he plays in the company of such souls.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram celebrates worship that has no polish and lacks nothing. The cowherds drum on their own thighs, clash stones for cymbals, sing off-key and dance out of time, and Tukaram openly admits there is no skill in it. What makes it complete is that the dark Lord stands in their midst, so their bodies forget themselves in joy. He is saying that God answers the heart, not the technique: he embraces these unschooled cowherds and plays among them precisely because he sees the sincerity in them. The poem quietly rebukes any worship that prizes correctness over love.

GATHA 4501

Krishna Leela

The shared feast, God who hoards nothing

मराठी मूळ

तयांसवें करी काला दहीभात । सिदोःया अनंत मेळवुनी ॥1॥
 मेळवुनी अवघियांचे एके ठायीं । मागे पुढे कांहीं उरों नेदी ॥2॥
 नेदी चोरी करुं जाणे अंतरींचें । आपलें हीं साचें द्यावें तेथें ॥3॥
 द्यावा दहीभात आपले प्रकार । तयांचा वेव्हार सांडवावा ॥4॥
 वांटी सकळांसि हातें आपुलिया । जैसें मागे तया तैसें द्यावें ॥5॥
 द्यावें सांभाळुनी सम तुकभावे । आपण हि खावें त्यांचें तुक ॥6॥
 तुक सकळांचे गोविंदाचे हातीं । कोण कोणे गति भला बुरा ॥7॥
 राखे त्यासि तैसें आपलाल्या भावें । विचारुनि द्यावें जैसें तैसें ॥8॥
 तैसें सुख नाही वैकुंठीच्या लोकां । तें दिलें भाविकां गोपाळांसि ॥9॥
 गोपाळांचे मुखीं देउनी कवळ । घांस माखे लाळ खाय त्यांची ॥10॥
 त्यांचिये मुखींचे काढूनियां घांस । झोंबतां हातांस खाय बळें ॥11॥
 बळें जयाचिया ठेंगणें सकळ । तयातें गोपाळ पाडितील ॥12॥
 पाठी उचलून वाहातील खांदीं । नाचतील मांदीं मेळवुनी ॥13॥
 मांदीं मेळवुनी धणी दिली आह्वां । तुका ह्मणे जमा केल्या गाई ॥14॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With them He shared the feast of curds and rice, combining the packed lunches of all the cowherds. He gathered everything together in one place, not allowing anyone to hoard or hide anything.

He would not tolerate any secret keeping; He knows the inner hearts. One must offer one's own portion honestly there.

He told them to set aside their usual ways. He distributed to all with His own hands, giving each one exactly what was asked.

He shared attentively, in equal measure, eating the same portion Himself. All accounts were in Govinda's hands: who was good, who was wanting, and the nature of each.

He provided to each according to their faith, giving thoughtfully and justly. Such happiness is not found even among the people of Vaikuntha.

This was the gift He gave to the faithful cowherds. He placed morsels into the cowherds' mouths with His own hand.

He ate the morsels smeared with their saliva. He snatched morsels from their mouths and ate them with delight.

The One before whose might everything bows, the cowherds would wrestle to the ground. They would lift Him on their shoulders and carry Him.

They would dance in a ring, gathered together. Says Tuka, dancing in that circle, He gave them their fill. Then they rounded up the cows.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With them he makes the kala of curds and rice, mixing the lunches of all the cowherds into one. He gathers everything in one place and lets nothing be held back, before or behind. He allows no hiding; he knows each inner heart. Each must give his own portion honestly there. Set out your curds and rice in your own way and give up your private keeping. He shares it to all with his own hands, giving each one just what he asks. He shares it carefully, in equal weight, and eats his own measure too. All the weighing is in Govinda's hands: who is good, who is bad, the way of each. He keeps each one according to his own love, and gives, after thought, exactly as is fitting. Even the people of Vaikuntha have no such joy as this; he gave it to the faithful cowherds. He puts the morsel into the cowherds' mouths with his own hand. He eats the morsels smeared with their spit, eats their leavings with delight. He snatches the morsel from their mouths and eats it by force as their hands clutch at it. The one before whose strength all things are small, the cowherds wrestle to the ground. They lift him onto their shoulders and carry him, and dance gathered in a crowd. Tuka says: gathered in a crowd, he gave us our fill; then they rounded up the cows.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the cowherds' picnic, the kala, where every boy's lunch is poured into one common heap, and reads it as a picture of God's way with the heart. No one is allowed to hide a private portion, because Govinda knows each inner heart and weighs each life himself; honesty before him is the price of the feast. The astonishing turn is the intimacy: God who is too vast to measure puts food into their mouths with his own hand, eats their saliva-smeared leavings, snatches morsels from them, lets them pin him to the ground and carry him on their shoulders. Tukaram says this joy is greater than anything the dwellers of Vaikuntha have, because it is given to plain, faithful cowherds. The teaching is that nearness to God is for the open-hearted who keep nothing back, and that he repays such love by becoming utterly familiar.

GATHA 4502

Krishna Leela

Going home behind God, no joy apart from him

मराठी मूळ

केला पुढें हरि अस्तमाना दिसा । मागें त्यासरिसे थाट चाले ॥1॥
 थाट चाले गाई गोपाळांची धूम । पुढें कृष्ण राम तयां सोयी ॥2॥
 सोयी लागलिया तयांची अनंती । न बोलवितां येती मागें तया ॥3॥
 तयांचिये चित्तीं बैसला अनंत । घेती नित्यनित्य तें चि सुख ॥4॥
 सुख नाही कोणा हरिच्या वियोगें । तुका ह्मणे जुगें घडी जाय ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With the setting of the sun, Hari led the way home, the whole troop of cows and cowherds following behind. The cows and cowherds streamed forward, with Krishna and Rama leading in the right direction.

Once their course was set toward the Infinite, they followed without needing to be called. The Infinite One sat firmly in their chitta.

Day after day they drank the same bliss. No one knows happiness apart from Hari.

Says Tuka, without Him, a single moment feels like an age.

IN PLAIN WORDS

At sundown Hari led the way home, and the whole troop came on behind him. The cows and cowherds streamed forward in a noisy crowd, with Krishna and Rama ahead to set their course. Once their course was set toward the Infinite, they followed without being called. The Infinite One sat firmly in their minds; day after day they drank that same joy. No one knows happiness apart from Hari. Tuka says: without him a single moment stretches into an age.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the simple evening scene, the herd walking home behind Krishna at dusk, and reads it as the soul following God. Once the cowherds are turned toward the Infinite, they no longer need to be called; they go because he goes ahead, and he stays seated in their minds so the joy renews itself each day. The closing line names the stake plainly: there is no happiness anywhere except in Hari, and to be without him even for a moment feels like an age. He is describing the pull of a heart that has found its direction and can no longer bear separation.

GATHA 4503

Krishna Leela

Parting at the gates, longing in separation

मराठी मूळ

जाय फाकोनियां निवडितां गाई । आपलाल्या सोयी घराचिये ॥१॥
 घराचिये सोयी अंतरला देव । गोपाळांचे जीव गोविंदापे ॥२॥
 गोविंदे वेधिलें तुका ह्मणे मन । वियोगें ही ध्यान संयोगाचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

As the cows are sorted and separated, each heading toward its own home, God too fades from sight, each cowherd going his own way. The cowherds' souls remain with Govinda.

Says Tuka, Govinda has captured their minds. Even in separation, they meditate on reunion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The cows scatter as they are sorted out, each turning toward its own home. As they head for home, God slips out of sight; each cowherd goes his own way, but their souls stay with Govinda. Tuka says: Govinda has caught their minds. Even in separation, they keep meditating on reunion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram catches the moment the day's company breaks up, when the cows are sorted and each boy turns toward his own house and Krishna passes from sight. Outwardly they separate, but their souls do not leave Govinda; he has captured their minds, so distance changes nothing inward. The closing claim is that even in separation they are meditating on reunion, which is the mark of true love. He is showing that once the heart is bound to God, parting only turns into longing, and longing is itself a form of communion.

GATHA 4504

Krishna Leela

The mother wards off the eye, God becomes small

मराठी मूळ

संयोग सकळां असे सर्वकाळ । दिशुचत गोपाळ आला दिसे ॥1॥
 गोपाळ गुणाचा ह्मणे गुणमय । निंबलोण माये उतरिलें ॥2॥
 उतरुनि हातें धरि हनूवठी । ओवाळूनि दिठी सांडियेली ॥3॥
 दिठी घाली माता विश्वाच्या जनका । भक्तिचिया सुखा गोडावला ॥4॥
 लहान हा थोर जीवजंत भूतें । आपण दैवतें जाला देवी ॥5॥
 देवी ह्रैसासुर मुंजिया खेचर । लहान हि थोर देव हरि ॥6॥
 हरि तुका ह्मणे अवघा एकला । परि या धाकुला भक्तासाठीं ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Union is with them at all times. The cowherd came home looking worried.**His mother, seeing the precious cowherd-boy, performed a ritual warding off the evil eye and cast it away. She waved the charm and then held his chin.**She cast the glance of protection and threw it aside. The mother cast her eyes upon the Father of the universe.**Relishing the sweetness of devotion, He who is greater than the greatest became small. Among all the small and great living things, He became the child of His own divine power.**The goddess slew the buffalo-demon and other celestial beings. Both small and great are all God, all Hari.**Says Tuka, Hari is all in all, but for the sake of His devotees, He becomes small.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Union with them is always there, yet the cowherd came home looking troubled. His mother, calling the dear boy full of virtue, waved the salt and mustard about him to ward off the evil eye and threw it away. She lifted her hand, held his chin, waved the charm before his eyes and cast it off. The mother casts the glance of protection on the Father of the universe. He has grown sweet on the joy of his devotee. Among all things, small and great, the living and the dead, he himself became the deities, the goddess. The goddess who slew the buffalo-demon, the spirits, the sky-rangers, the small and the great, all are God, all are Hari. Tuka says: Hari is all of it, alone, yet for the sake of his devotees he becomes small.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lingers on a tender household scene: a worried boy comes home and his mother performs the common rite to ward off the evil eye, waving salt and mustard, holding his chin. The wonder he points to is who is letting her do it, for this is the Father of the universe submitting to a mother's care because he has grown sweet on her love. Tukaram then widens the frame: the same Hari is everything, the goddess who slew the buffalo-demon, every spirit and being, small and great alike. The last line lands the paradox: the one who is all things, and is alone, willingly shrinks himself into a child for the sake of those who love him. The teaching is that God's greatness and his smallness are one act of love toward the devotee.

GATHA 4505

Krishna Leela

The universe in his mouth, I alone am real

मराठी मूळ

भक्तीसाठीं केली यशोदेसी आळी । थिंकोनिया चोळी डोळे देव ॥1॥
 देव गिळुनियां धरिलें मोहन । माय ह्मणे कोण येथें दुजें ॥2॥
 दुजें येथें कोणी नाही कृष्णाविण । निरुते जाणोन पुसे देवा ॥3॥
 देवापाशीं पुसे देव काय जाला । हांसें आलें बोला याचें हरि ॥4॥
 यांचे मी जवळी देव तो नेणती । लटिकें मानिती साच खरें ॥5॥
 लटिकें तें साच साच तें लटिके । नेणती लोभिकें आशाबद्ध ॥6॥
 सांग ह्मणे माय येरु वासी तोंड । तंव तें ब्रह्मांड देखे माजी ॥7॥
 माजी जया चंद्र सूर्य तारांगणें । तो भक्तांकारणें बाळलीला ॥8॥
 लीळा कोण जाणे याचें महिमान । जगाचें जीवन देवादिदेव ॥9॥
 देवें कवतुक दाखविलें तयां । लागतील पायां मायबापें ॥10॥
 मायबाप ह्मणे हा चि देव खरा । आणीक पसारा लटिका तो ॥11॥
 तो हि त्यांचा देव दिला नारायणें । माझें हें करणें तो हि मी च ॥12॥
 मीं च ह्मणउनि जें जें जेथें ध्याती । तेथें मी श्रीपति भोगिता तें ॥13॥
 तें मज वेगळें मी तया निराळा । नाही या सकळा ब्रह्मांडांत ॥14॥
 ततभावना तैसें भविष्य तयाचें । फळ देता साचें मी च एक ॥15॥
 मी च एक खरा बोलें नारायण । दाविलें निर्वाण निजदासां ॥16॥
 निजदासां खूण दाविली निरुती । तुका ह्मणे भूतीं नारायण ॥17॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For the sake of devotion, He threw tantrums with Yashoda, rubbing His eyes and demanding food. He swallowed the universe and held it under His spell.

His mother said, 'Who else is here?' There was no one besides Krishna. She asked the child, knowing the answer intuitively.

She asked God what had happened to God, and Hari smiled at the absurdity of her question. 'God is right beside them, yet they do not know Him.

They believe the false to be true.' They take the false for real and the real for false. The hope-bound and greedy cannot see.

'Open your mouth,' said His mother. He opened His mouth wide, and she saw the entire universe inside.

Within Him were the moon, the sun, and the stars. He who contains all this performs His child's play for the devotees' delight.

Who can know the mystery of His greatness? He is the life of the world, the God of gods. God showed them this wonder, and the parents fell at His feet.

The parents said, 'This alone is the true God. All else is illusion.' Yet that God too was given to them by Narayana.

'My doing and that are also Me,' He said. 'Whatever is contemplated anywhere, I am the one who experiences it.' 'Nothing is separate from Me, and I am not separate from anything, in all these universes.' 'As is the feeling, so is the destiny.

I alone am the one who gives the fruit.' 'I alone am real,' says Narayana. 'I have shown My servants the ultimate truth.' Says Tuka, He revealed the certain sign to His own servants: Narayana is present in all beings.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For his devotees' sake he threw a tantrum with Yashoda, rubbing his eyes, the God himself crying. He had swallowed the universe and held it under his spell. The mother said, who else is here? There was no one but Krishna. She asked the child, knowing the truth within. She asks God what has become of God, and Hari smiles at her words. I am right beside them, and they do not know me; they take the false for true. The false is taken for true and the true for false; the greedy and the desire-bound cannot tell. Open your mouth, says his mother. He opens it wide, and she sees the whole cosmos inside. Within it are moon, sun, and the fields of stars; he who holds all this plays the child for his devotees' delight. Who can know the measure of his greatness? He is the life of the world, the God of gods. God showed them this wonder, and the parents fell at his feet. The parents said, this alone is the true God; all the rest is false. Yet that very God was given to them by Narayana. My doing, and that too, are myself, he said. Whatever is contemplated, wherever, I am the one who enjoys it there. It is not separate from me, and I am not apart from it, in all these universes. As the feeling is, so is the destiny; I alone am the one who gives the fruit. I alone am real, says Narayana. He has shown his servants the final truth. Tuka says: he has shown his own servants the sure sign, that Narayana lives in all beings.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram retells the scene where the child Krishna is accused of eating dirt and, told to open his mouth, shows Yashoda the entire universe inside it, with the moon, the sun and the stars. He reads it as God deliberately playing the child for his devotees while secretly holding all things under his spell. The hard saying is in the middle: God is right beside people and they do not know him, because the desire-bound take the false for the real and the real for the false. The vision in the mouth is meant to break that error, and the parents fall at his feet confessing this alone is the true God. The poem closes with God's own claim, that he is the doer of everything, the one who experiences and gives the fruit of every act, nothing apart from him, and the sure sign he reveals to his servants is that Narayana dwells in every being.

GATHA 4506

Appeals and Exhortations

Seeing God in all, the wildfire swallowed

मराठी मूळ

नारायण भूतीं न कळे जयांसि । होय गर्भवासीं येणें जाणें ॥1॥
येणें जाणें होय भूतांच्या मत्सरें । न कळतां खरें देव ऐसा ॥2॥
देव ऐसा जया कळला सकळ । गेली तळमळ द्वेषबुद्धि ॥3॥
बुद्धीचा पालट नव्हे कोणे काळीं । हरि जळीं स्थळीं तया चितीं ॥4॥
चित्त तें निर्मळ जैसें नवनीत । जाणिजे अनंत तयामाजी ॥5॥
तयामाजी हरि जाणिजे त्या भावें । आपलें परावें सारिखें चि ॥6॥
चिंतनें तयाच्या तरती आणीक । जो हें सकळक देव देखे ॥7॥
देव देखे तो ही कसा देव नव्हे । उरला संदेहे काय त्यासि ॥8॥
यांसि कवतुक दाखविलें रानीं । वोणवा गिळूनि गोपाळांसि ॥10॥
गोपाळांसि डोळे झांकविले हातें । धरिलें अनंतें विश्वरूप ॥11॥
पसरुनि मुख गिळयेलें ज्वाळ । पहाती गोपाळ बोटं सांदी ॥12॥
संधि सारुनियां पाहिलें अनंता । ह्मणती ते आतां कळलांसी ॥13॥
कळला हा तुझा देह नव्हे देवा । गिळला वोणवा आणीक तो ॥14॥
तो तयां कळला आरुषां गोपाळां । दुर्गम सकळां साधनांसि ॥15॥
सीण उरे तुका ह्मणे साधनाचा । भाविकांसि साचा भाव दावी ॥16॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who do not see Narayana in all beings must continue coming and going through the cycle of birth. Coming and going is caused by ill will toward other beings, when the truth is not recognized.

But one to whom God is known in everything is freed of all restlessness and hostility. That change of vision, once it occurs, is irreversible.

Such a one sees Hari in water, on land, and in the chitta. That chitta is as pure as fresh butter.

Know that the Infinite resides within it. Know Him within through the right devotion.

One's own and another's become the same. Through the contemplation of such a being, others too are saved, for such a one sees God in everything.

One who sees God, how can that one not be God? What doubt remains for such a person? God showed them a wonder in the forest, swallowing the wildfire for the cowherds' sake. God told the cowherds to cover their eyes with their hands, and then assumed His cosmic form.

He spread His mouth wide and swallowed the flames. The cowherds peeked through the gaps between their fingers.

When it was over, they said, 'Now we know You.' Says Tuka, the effort of spiritual practices leaves one exhausted. God reveals the easy truth to the faithful.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who cannot see Narayana in all beings keep coming and going through the womb. The coming and going comes of ill will toward other beings, when the truth is not known. But the one to whom God is known in everything, his restlessness and hatred are gone. That turn of mind never reverses; Hari is in his heart, in water and on land. The heart is then as clean as fresh butter, and the Infinite is known within it. There Hari is known by that love; one's own and the stranger become the same. Through such a one's remembrance others too cross over, for he sees God in everything. The one who sees God, how is he himself not God? What doubt is left to him? He showed them a wonder in the forest, swallowing the wildfire for the cowherds' sake. He had the cowherds cover their eyes with their hands, and the Infinite took on the cosmic form. He opened his mouth wide and swallowed the flames; the cowherds peeked through the cracks of their fingers. Looking through the gaps they watched the Infinite, and said, now we have known you. Tuka says: the labor of practices only leaves you tired; to the faithful he shows the truth simply.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes the test sharp before he tells the story: not seeing Narayana in all beings keeps you in birth and death, because that blindness breeds the ill will that drives the cycle, while seeing God everywhere ends restlessness and hatred and never reverses. Such a heart becomes clean as fresh butter, treats stranger and self alike, and even carries others across by its remembrance, so that one who truly sees God is not other than God. He then grounds this in the forest fire, where Krishna has the cowherds shut their eyes and swallows the wildfire, and they peek through their fingers to see and cry, now we know you. The closing line points at self-examination: straining at spiritual techniques only exhausts you, while God shows the plain truth to those who simply trust. The teaching is that vision of God in all things, won by faith rather than effort, is what frees.

GATHA 4507

Krishna Leela

God credits his servants, the wildfire survived

मराठी मूळ

भाव दावी शुद्ध देखोनियां चित्त । आपल्या अंकित निजदासां ॥1॥
 सांगे गोपाळांसि काय पुण्य होतें । वांचलों जळते आगी हातीं ॥2॥
 आजि आह्मां येथें राखिले देवें । नाही तरी जीवें न वंचतो ॥3॥
 न वंचत्या गाई जळतो सकळें । पूर्वपुण्यबळें वांचविलें ॥4॥
 पूर्वपुण्य होतें तुमचिये गांठी । बोले जगजेठी गोपाळांसि ॥5॥
 गोपाळांसि ह्मणे वैकुंठनायक । भले तुम्ही एक पुण्यवंत ॥6॥
 करी तुका ह्मणे करवी आपण । द्यावें थोरपण सेवकांसि ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God reveals the pure truth to those whose chittas are clean, to His own devoted servants. He tells the cowherds, 'What good fortune you must have had! We were saved from that burning fire.' 'Today God has protected us here.

Otherwise, we would not have survived.' 'The cows and all of us would have perished. It was the power of your past merits that saved us.' 'You had great merit stored within you,' says the Lord of Vaikuntha to the cowherds.

'You are truly blessed and virtuous,' He tells them. Says Tuka, He acts and He makes others act. He gives the credit to His servants.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Seeing the heart clean, he shows the truth to his own marked servants. He says to the cowherds, what merit you must have had; we have come alive out of the burning fire. Today God has saved us here; otherwise we would not have escaped with our lives. The cows and all of us were burning; the strength of your past merit saved us. You had past merit stored in your bundle, says the Lord of the world to the cowherds. You cowherds are good, each one of you full of merit, says the Lord of Vaikuntha. Tuka says: he does it and he makes it done himself, yet he gives the greatness to his servants.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram shows God's humility after the fire he himself put out. Krishna, who swallowed the wildfire, turns to the cowherds and tells them it was their own past merit that saved them, calling them blessed and good. The point is in the last line: God is the one who acts and the one who makes everything happen, yet he hands the credit to his servants. Tukaram is naming a pattern in how God treats those he loves, lifting them up rather than claiming the glory. It invites the devotee to recognize that even our merit and our rescue are finally his doing, given back to us as a gift.

GATHA 4508

Krishna Leela

The cowherds answer, inner sight was open

मराठी मूळ

काय आह्मां चाळविसी वायांविण । ह्मणसी दुरून देखिलासि ॥1॥
 लावूनियां डोळे नव्हतों दिशचत । तुज परचित्त माव होती ॥2॥
 होती दृष्ट आंत उघडी आमची । बाहेरी ते वायां चि कुंची झाकुं ॥3॥
 आगी खातो ऐसा आमचा सांगाती । आनंदें नाचती भोंवताली ॥5॥
 भोंवतीं आपणा मेळविलीं देवें । तुका ह्मणे ठावें नाहीं ज्ञान ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The cowherds say, 'Why do You deceive us for nothing? You say You saw the fire from afar.' 'Our eyes were open inside. We were not distracted.

The illusion was Yours alone.' 'Our inner sight was open, though outwardly we pretended to close our eyes.' 'Our companion eats fire!' they cry, and dance around Him in delight. Says Tuka, God surrounded Himself with them, yet they did not possess true knowledge.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why do you put us off for nothing, the cowherds say; you say you saw the fire from far off. We shut our eyes but we were not blind inside; the illusion was yours alone. Our inner sight stayed open; only outwardly, for nothing, did we cover it with our hands. Our companion eats fire, they cry, and dance around him in delight. Tuka says: God gathered them about himself, though they had no learned knowledge.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lets the cowherds talk back to Krishna with the freedom of love. He had told them to close their eyes and pretended he only saw the fire from a distance, but they tease him that the trick was his, since their inner sight never closed even when their hands covered their faces. Then, delighted rather than awed, they shout that their playmate eats fire and dance around him. The closing line is the quiet teaching: God drew these boys close to himself even though they had no formal knowledge, no scripture or learning. He is showing that intimacy and inner sight come through love, not through schooling.

GATHA 4509

Krishna Leela

Trust against argument, Hari's company is the only journey

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं त्याची शंका वैकुंठनायका । नेणती ते एकाविण दुजा ॥1॥
जाणतियां सर्वे येऊं नेदी हरि । तर्कवादी दुरी दुराविले ॥2॥
वादियासि भेद निंदा अहंकार । देऊनियां दूर दुराविले ॥3॥
दुरावले दूर आशाबद्ध देवा । करितां या सवा कुटुंबाची ॥4॥
चितीं द्रव्यदारा पुत्रादिसंपत्ती । समान ते होती पशु नर ॥5॥
नरक साधिले विसरोनि देवा । बुडाले ते भवा नदीमाजी ॥6॥
जीहीं हरिसंग केला संवसारीं । तुका ह्मणे खरी खेप त्यांची ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

They had no suspicion about the Lord of Vaikuntha. They knew no one besides Him.

God does not let the argumentative and disputatious come near. He keeps them far away.

To those given to dispute, He gives divisiveness, slander, and pride, keeping them at a distance. Those bound by desire are kept far from God, entangled as they are in family concerns.

Those whose chittas are occupied with wealth, women, children, and possessions become no different from beasts. Those who forget God and sink into the river of worldly existence have earned their place in hell.

Those who kept Hari's company in this world, says Tuka, theirs was the only journey that mattered.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They had no doubt about the Lord of Vaikuntha; they knew no one but the One. Hari does not let the clever come along with him; the arguers he keeps far off. To the men of dispute he hands division, slander, and pride, and pushes them away. Far off are kept the desire-bound, busy with the affairs of the household. With wealth, wife, children and property in their hearts, men become no different from beasts. They have built their own hell, forgetting God, and have drowned in the river of the world. But those who kept Hari's company in this world: Tuka says: theirs was the journey that was real.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the trusting cowherds against the clever arguers. The cowherds had no suspicion of the Lord and knew no one but him, and that simple trust is what lets them stay near, while the disputatious are kept at a distance and left with the very division, slander and pride their arguing breeds. He widens it to all who are bound

by desire, whose hearts are full of wealth, wife and children, saying such people become no better than beasts and drown in the river of worldly life, building their own hell by forgetting God. The point lands in the final line: only those who kept Hari's company made a journey that was real. The poem aims its sharpness at the pattern of grasping cleverness, and calls the reader to plain trust instead.

GATHA 4510

Krishna Leela

Krishna at home, the veil lifting

मराठी मूळ

खेळींमेळीं आले घरा गोपीनाथ । गोपाळांसहित मातेपार्शी ॥1॥
 मातेपार्शीं एक नवल सांगती । जाली तैसी ख्याती वोणव्याची ॥2॥
 ओवाळलें तिनें करुनि आरती । पुसे दसवंती गोपाळांसि ॥3॥
 पुसे पडताळुनी मागुती मागुती । गोपाळ सांगती कवतुक ॥4॥
 कवतुका कानीं आइकतां त्यांचे । बोलतां ये वाचे वीट नये ॥5॥
 नयन गुंतले श्रीमुख पाहतां । न साहे लवतां आड पातें ॥6॥
 तेव्हां कवतुक कळों आलें कांहीं । हळुहळु दोहीं मायबापां ॥7॥
 हळुहळु त्यांचें पुण्य जालें वाड । वारलें हें जाड तिमिराचें ॥8॥
 तिमिर हें तेथें राहों शके कैसें । जालियां प्रकाशें गोविंदाच्या ॥9॥
 दावी तुका ह्मणे देव ज्या आपणा । पालटे तें क्षणामाजी एका ॥10॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Krishna returned home with the cowherds, coming to His mother's side. Yashoda asked Nanda and the cowherds to tell her the news of the wildfire.

She waved the ritual lamp of protection and asked the cowherds to confirm the tale. She asked again and again, and they told the wondrous story.

The delight of hearing their account never grew stale. Her eyes were fixed on His blessed face, and she could not bear to blink.

Then, little by little, both parents began to glimpse the truth. Little by little, their merit grew; the thick veil of ignorance lifted.

How could darkness remain where the light of Govinda shone? Says Tuka, when God reveals Himself to someone, everything changes in a single moment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Gopinath comes home from play, the cowherds with Him, to His mother's side. They tell Yashoda a wonder: how the wildfire was put out. She waves the lamp of protection, and asks the cowherds again. She asks once more, and again, and they tell the marvel. Hearing it never grows stale; her words never tire of telling it. Her eyes are caught on His blessed face, and she cannot bear to blink. Then, little by little, both parents begin to see something. Little by little their merit grows large, and the thick darkness is driven off. How can darkness stay where the light of Govinda has dawned? Tuka says: when God shows Himself to someone, everything turns over in a single moment.

WHAT IT MEANS

This opens a long retelling of Krishna's childhood deeds, here the homecoming after the wildfire. Yashoda listens to the cowherds' account over and over, and her gaze locks on His face so completely that she will not even blink. Tukaram marks the slow turning in the parents: as they keep looking, their inner merit ripens and the darkness of not-knowing lifts. The point is that no darkness can stand once Govinda's light has dawned. The closing claim is the whole frame: when God truly reveals Himself, the change is not gradual but instant, complete in one moment.

GATHA 4511

Krishna Leela

The child who is Lord of all

मराठी मूळ

काय आतां यासि ह्मणावें लेंकरुं । जगाचा हा गुरु मायबाप ॥1॥
 माया याची यासि राहिली व्यापून । कळों नये क्षण एक होतां ॥2॥
 क्षण एक होतां विसरलीं त्यासि । माझेंमाझें ऐसें करी बाळा ॥3॥
 करी कवतुक कळों नेदी कोणा । योजूनि कारणा तें चि खेळे ॥4॥
 तें सुख लुटिलें घरिचिया घरीं । तुका ह्मणे परी आपुलाल्या ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How can this one be called a mere child? He is the Guru and parent of the whole world. His maya keeps the world in its grip, yet for one moment it may lift, and then it falls again.

In one moment they forget Him, and the sense of 'mine, mine' takes over in the child. He plays His wonders without letting anyone know, designing each event for its hidden purpose.

Says Tuka, that bliss was tasted right there at home, each one in their own way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What can you call this one, a mere child? He is the Guru, the mother and father of the whole world. His own maya keeps the world wrapped up; it lifts for a moment, and you cannot tell. In one moment they forget Him, and the child takes up its 'mine, mine.' He works His wonders and lets no one know, planning each event and so playing it out. Tuka says: that bliss was plundered right there at home, each one taking their own share.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses the surface: the one Yashoda dandles is no ordinary infant but the Guru and parent of all worlds. His maya is exactly what hides this from those nearest Him; it lifts for an instant and falls again, so they keep forgetting and slipping back into 'mine, mine.' He stages His every play deliberately while letting no one catch the design. The note Tukaram lands is intimate: the bliss of God is not far off in some heaven but tasted right at home, each devotee taking it in their own measure.

GATHA 4512

Krishna Leela

The ballgame, follow the Lord or stray

मराठी मूळ

आपुलाल्यापरी करितील सेवा । गीत गाती देवा खेळवूनि ॥1॥
 खेळु मांडियेला यमुने पाबळीं । या रे चेंडुफळी खेळूं आतां ॥2॥
 आणविल्या डांगा चवगुणां काठी । बैसोनिया वांटी गडिया गडी ॥3॥
 गडी जंव पाहे आपणासमान । नाहीं नारायण ह्मणे दुजा ॥4॥
 जाणोनि गोविंदें सकळांचा भाव । तयांसि उपाव तो चि सांगे ॥5॥
 सांगे सकळांसि व्हा रे एकीकडे । चेंडू राखा गडे तुह्मी माझा ॥6॥
 मज हा न लगे आणीक सांगाती । राखावी बहुतीं हाल माझी ॥7॥
 माझे हाके हाक मेळवा सकळ । नव जा बरळ एकमेकां ॥8॥
 एका समतुकें अवघेचि राहा । जाईल तो पाहा धरा चेंडू ॥9॥
 चेंडू धरा ऐसें सांगतो सकळां । आपण निराळा एकला चि ॥10॥
 चिंडुनियां चेंडू हाणे ऊर्ध्वमुखें । ठेलीं सकळक पाहात चि ॥11॥
 पाहात चि ठेलीं न चलतां कांहीं । येरु लवलाहीं ह्मणे धरा ॥12॥
 धरावा तयानें त्याचें बळ ज्यासि । येरा आणिकांसि लाग नव्हे ॥13॥
 नव्हे काम बळ बुद्ध नाहीं त्याचें । न धरवे निचें उंचाविण ॥14॥
 विचारीं पडिले देखिले गोपाळ । या ह्मणे सकळ मजमागें ॥15॥
 मार्ग देवाविण न दिसे आणिका । चतुर होत का बहुत जन ॥16॥
 चतुर चिंतिती बहुत मारग । हरि जाय लाग पाहोनियां ॥17॥
 या मागें जे गेले गोविंदा गोपाळ । ते नेले सीतळ पंथ ठायां ॥18॥
 पंथ जे चुकले आपले मतीचे । तयांमागें त्यांचे ते चि हाल ॥19॥
 हाल दोघां एक मोहरां मागिलां । चालतां चुकलां वाट पंथ ॥20॥
 पंथ पुढिलांसी चालतां न कळे । मागिलांनीं डोळे उघडावे ॥21॥
 वयाचा प्रबोध विचार ज्या नाहीं । समान तो देहीं बाळकांसी ॥22॥
 सिकविलें हित नायिके जो कानीं । त्यामागें भल्यांनीं जाऊं नये ॥23॥
 नये तें चि करी श्रेष्ठाचिया मना । मूर्ख एक जाणा तो चि खरा ॥24॥
 रानभरी जाले न कळे मारग । मग तो श्रीरंग आठविला ॥25॥
 लाज सांडूनियां मारितील हाका । कळलें नायका वैकुंठीच्या ॥26॥
 चारी वेद ज्याची कीर्ती वाखाणीती । तया अति प्रीति गोपाळांची ॥27॥
 गोपाळांचा धांवा आडकिला कानीं । सोयी चक्रपाणि पालविलें ॥28॥
 साया धरुनियां आले हरिपासीं । लहान थोरांसी सांभाळलें ॥29॥
 सांभाळलें तुका ह्मणे सकळ हि । सुखी जाले ते ही हरिमुखें ॥30॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Each one served God in their own way, singing songs as they played with Him. A game was organized on the banks of the Yamuna.

'Come, let us play ball now.' They brought long sticks and poles of four lengths and sat down to divide themselves into teams. When Govinda looked for someone equal to Himself as a partner, He said, 'There is no second player like Me.' Knowing the disposition of each one, He devised the plan Himself.

He told them all, 'All of you stand on one side. Guard my ball, my teammates.' 'I need no other companion.

All of you together must match my skill.' 'Join your cries to my shout. Do not scatter in confusion.' 'Stay together, all of you.

Watch where the ball goes and catch it.' He tells everyone this, yet He stands apart, alone. He struck the ball upward with His bat.

Everyone stood frozen, just watching. They stood watching, unable to move.

He cried, 'Catch it!' They could not. Only one whose strength matches His can catch it.

No one else has the speed. The cowherds fell into confusion.

He said, 'Come, follow Me.' Without God, no other path appears, no matter how clever the crowd. The clever devise many routes, but Hari waits and watches for the right moment.

Those cowherds who followed Govinda were led along the cool and safe path. Those who strayed on their own suffered the consequences.

The hardship is the same for those in front and those behind, for leaders and followers who have lost the way. The path ahead is unknown to the leaders; those behind must open their eyes.

One who lacks the discernment that comes with maturity is no better than a child in a grown body. One who will not listen to sound advice, the wise should not follow such a person.

The fool insists on doing what offends the good. Such a one alone is the true fool.

They wandered through the whole forest and lost the path. Then they remembered the Lord.

Casting aside all pride, they cried out to Him. The Lord of Vaikuntha heard their call.

The four Vedas sing His praises, yet His deepest love is for these cowherds. God heard the cowherds' cry and signaled to them.

Holding His hand, they all came to Hari's side. He comforted the small and the great and took care of all.

Says Tuka, they were all sheltered, and they rejoiced in Hari's presence.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Each one serves Him in their own way, singing as they play with Him. A game is set up on the bank of the Yamuna. 'Come, let us play ball now.' They bring the long sticks and bats of four lengths and sit to choose sides, friend with friend. When Govinda looks for a partner equal to Himself, He says there is no second like Narayana. Knowing the heart of each one, He Himself tells them the way. He tells them all: stand on one side; guard my ball, friends. 'I need no other companion. All of you together must match my skill. Join your shout to my shout. Do not scatter and babble at each other. Stay all together, as one. Watch where it goes, and catch the ball.' He tells everyone this, yet He Himself stands apart, alone. He strikes the ball upward with His bat. They all stand still, only watching. They stand watching, unable to move, while He cries, catch it. Only one whose strength matches His own can catch it; no one else can keep up. It is not within their power; they have not His strength or wit; the low cannot reach the high. The cowherds fall into doubt. He says, all of you, come behind Me. Without God no other path appears, however many clever people there are. The clever think out many roads, but Hari waits and watches for His moment. The cowherds who went behind Govinda were led along the cool, safe path. Those who strayed by their own cleverness, behind them came their own ruin. The hardship is one for those ahead and those behind, for leaders and followers who have lost the way. The path ahead is not known to the leaders; those behind must open their eyes. One without the discernment that comes with age is, in the body, the same as a child. The one who will not hear good counsel in his ear, the good should not walk behind such a one. The fool insists on doing what offends a worthy mind; know that one alone for the true fool. They wandered the whole forest and lost the path; then they remembered Shrirang. Casting off shame they will raise a cry, and the Lord of Vaikuntha hears. The four Vedas sing His fame, yet His deep love is for the cowherds. Chakrapani hears the cowherds' cry and signals them His way. Holding His robe they come to Hari's side; small and great, He keeps them safe. Tuka says: He sheltered them all, and through Hari's face they were made happy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the children's ballgame into a teaching about guidance. Krishna will take no equal partner; He stands alone and tells them only one thing will work, stay together, match your cry to mine, follow Me. When He hits the ball up and they cannot field it, the lesson lands: no one's own strength or cleverness reaches that height. The poem then widens to a flat rule, that without God no road opens however clever the crowd, and that leaders who have lost the way drag their followers into the same ruin. Real maturity is discernment, not age; the true fool is the one who will not hear good counsel and offends the wise, and the good should not walk behind him. Only when the cowherds drop their pride and cry out is the Lord of Vaikuntha, whom the Vedas praise, moved to come and shelter great and small alike.

GATHA 4513

Krishna Leela

The real and its reflection

मराठी मूळ

मुखें सांगे त्यांसि पैल चेंडू पाहा । उदकांत डोहाचिये माथां ॥1॥
 माथां कळंबाचे अवघडा ठायीं । दावियेला डोहीं जळामाजी ॥2॥
 जळांत पाहातां हाडति या दृष्टि । ह्मणे जगजेठी ऐसें नव्हे ॥3॥
 नव्हे साच चेंडू छाया दिसे आंत । खरा तेथें चित्त लावा वरी ॥4॥
 वरी देखियेला अवघ्यांनीं डोळां । ह्मणती गोपाळा आतां कैसें ॥5॥
 कैसें करुनियां उतरावा खालीं । देखोनियां भ्यालीं अवघीं डोहो ॥6॥
 डोहो बहु खोल काळ्या भीतरी । सरलीं माघारीं अवघीं जणें ॥7॥
 जयाचें कारण तयासी च ठावें । पुसे त्याच्या भावें त्यास हरि ॥8॥
 त्यासि नारायण ह्मणे राहा तळीं । चढे वनमाळी झाडावरी ॥9॥
 वरि जातां वरि पाहाती गोपाळ । ह्मणति सकळ आह्मी नेणों ॥10॥
 नेणों ह्मणती हें करितोसि काई । आह्मां तुझी आई देइल सिव्या ॥11॥
 आपुलिया कानां देउनियां हात । सकळीं निमित्त टाळ्येलें ॥12॥
 निमित्त्याकारणें रचिलें कारण । गेला नारायण खांदीवरी ॥13॥
 खांदीवरी पाव ठेवियेला देवें । पाडावा त्या भावें चेंडू तळीं ॥14॥
 तळील नेणती तुका ह्मणे भाव । अंतरींचा देव जाणों नेदी ॥15॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Krishna pointed and said, 'Look, the ball is over there, on top of the deep pool, at the crown of the kadamba tree.' He showed them the ball reflected in the water of the deep pool. Looking into the water dazzled their sight.

The Lord of the World said, 'This will not do.' 'The ball in the water is only a shadow. Fix your attention upward, on the real one.' They all looked up and saw the real ball in the tree.

'O Gopala, what shall we do now?' they cried. 'How can we bring it down?' The pool was terrifyingly deep and dark.

They all shrank back in fear. The One for whose purpose all this was arranged knows the secret.

Hari asks each one, according to their understanding, what should be done. Narayana told them to wait below.

He climbed the tree Himself. As He climbed higher, the cowherds watched from below.

They said, 'We do not understand what You are doing.' 'Our mothers will scold us,' they protested. They covered their own ears and washed their hands of it.

Says Tuka, beneath the surface they do not know the true intent. God within does not let them see.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He tells them with His own mouth: look, the ball is over there, on the deep pool, at the top of the kadamba tree. At the crown, in a hard place, He shows it reflected down in the water. Looking into the water makes their sight reel. The Lord of the World says, this will not do. The ball in the water is not the true one; it is only a shadow seen inside; the real one is up there, fix your attention on it. They all see it overhead with their eyes, and cry, O Gopala, what now? How to bring it down? Seeing the pool, they are all afraid. The pool is very deep, with Kaliya inside; every one of them shrinks back. The one for whose purpose this is done, He alone knows it; Hari asks each according to their feeling. Narayana tells them, wait below, and Vanamali climbs the tree. As He goes up the cowherds watch from below and say, we know nothing of this. They say, what are You doing? Your mother will scold us. They put their hands over their own ears and wash their hands of it. For the sake of a pretext He has made the whole occasion, and Narayana goes up onto a branch. He set His foot on the branch, meaning to drop the ball below. Tuka says: those below do not know His intent; the God within does not let them see.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes the lost ball a lesson in real and apparent. The boys look down at the ball's reflection in the dark pool and grow dizzy; Krishna corrects them, that is only a shadow, the true one is above, look up. Yet the whole episode is staged: He has arranged a pretext, and the deep pool He sends the ball toward is Kaliya's lair. The cowherds, frightened, cover their ears and disown the deed, protesting their mothers will scold them. The closing line names the frame the boys cannot see: God hides His own purpose from those nearest the action, letting the design unfold while they remain in the dark.

GATHA 4514

Krishna Leela

The Lord leaps in, the grief begins

मराठी मूळ

नेदी कळों केल्याविण तें कारण । दाखवी आणून अनुभवा ॥1॥
 न पुरेसा हात घाली चेंडूकडे । ह्मणीतलें गडे सांभाळावें ॥2॥
 बरें विचारुनी करावें कारण । ह्मणे नारायण बऱ्या बरें ॥4॥
 बरें ह्मणउनि तयांकडे पाहे । सोडविला जाय चेंडू तळा ॥5॥
 तयासवें उडी घातली अनंतें । गोपाळ रडते येती घरा ॥6॥
 येतां त्यांचा लोकीं देखिला कोल्हाळ । सामोरीं सकळ आलीं पुढें ॥7॥
 पुसतील मात आपआपल्यासि । हरिदुःखें त्यांसी न बोलवे ॥8॥
 न बोलवे हरि बुडालासें मुखें । कुटितील दुःखें उर माथे ॥9॥
 मायबापें तुका ह्मणे न देखती । ऐसें दुःख चित्तीं गोपाळांच्या ॥10॥
 जालें काय ऐसें न कळे कोणासी । ह्मणती तुह्मांपासीं देव होता ॥2॥
 देवासवें दुःख न पवते ऐसें । कांहीं अनारिसें दिसे आजी ॥3॥
 आजि दिसे हरि फांकला यांपाशीं । ह्मणउनि ऐशी परि जाली ॥4॥
 जाणविल्याविण कैसें कळे त्यांसि । शाहाणे तयांसि कळों आले ॥5॥
 कळों आलें तीहीं कुंफद शांत केला । ठायींचा च त्यांला थोडा होता ॥6॥
 होता तो विचार सांगितला जना । गोपाळ शाहाणा होता त्याणें ॥7॥
 सांगे आतां हरि तुह्मां आह्मां नाहीं । बुडाला तो डोहीं यमुनेच्या ॥8॥
 यासी अवकाश नव्हे चि पुसतां । जालिया अनंता कोण परि ॥9॥
 परि त्या दुःखाची काय सांगों आतां । तुका ह्मणे माता लोकपाळ ॥10॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God does not reveal the purpose until the deed is done. He brings everything to experience directly.

He reached for the ball but His arm fell short. 'Watch out, friends,' He called, 'take care.' He said, 'Think carefully before you act.' Narayana said, 'All right, very well.' Saying 'very well,' He looked toward them.

The ball was freed and fell. Along with it, the Infinite One leaped into the pool.

The cowherds came home weeping. The people saw their distress and rushed forward.

Each parent asked their own child for news. In their grief for Hari, the children could not speak.

They said Hari had drowned, and they beat their chests and heads. Says Tuka, the grief of the parents who could not find their children was beyond any comparison. No one knew what had really happened.

People said, 'God was with you.' 'When God is with you, such sorrow does not come. Something different has happened today.' 'Today Hari seems to have parted from them; that is why this has happened.' Only when told could they understand.

The wiser ones among them grasped it. The one who understood calmed the others.

He had always been the thoughtful one. 'Hari is no longer with us,' he told them.

'He drowned in the pool of the Yamuna.' There was no time for further questions. The situation with Ananta was beyond remedy.

Says Tuka, the grief of those mothers and people was indescribable.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He does not let the purpose be known until the deed is done; He brings it out into plain experience. His arm falls short reaching toward the ball. Watch out, friends, He calls, take care. Think well before you act, says Narayana, all right, very well. Saying very well, He looks toward them; the ball is loosed and falls below. With it the Infinite One leaps in. The cowherds come home weeping. As they come, the people see the uproar, and all rush out to meet them. Each one asks their own child for news; in grief for Hari, they cannot speak. They cannot speak the words: Hari has drowned; and they beat their breasts and heads with sorrow. Tuka says: the parents who could not see their boys, such grief was in the cowherds' hearts. No one can tell what has happened. They say, God was with you. With God along, such sorrow does not come; something strange has happened today. Today it seems Hari has parted from them, and so this has come about. Without being told, how could they know? The wise among them came to understand. They understood and quieted the outcry; in themselves it was already small. The one who had the thought told the people; that cowherd was the wise one. He says, now Hari is not with you or us; He has drowned in the pool of the Yamuna. There was no time even to ask; once it has befallen Ananta, what can be done? Tuka says: as for that grief, what can I tell now, the grief of the mothers and the people.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here the staged play turns to anguish. Krishna sends the ball down and leaps into the pool after it, and the weeping cowherds carry the news home, unable even to say the words, Hari has drowned. Tukaram lingers on the raw grief: parents who cannot find their boys, breasts and heads beaten. The villagers reason aloud that sorrow could never touch them while God was with them, so He must have parted from them today. Notice the quiet thread Tukaram keeps, that God reveals the purpose only after the deed; the people grieve precisely because the meaning is still hidden from them. The wise one among them states the bare fact and there is no time even to question it.

GATHA 4515

Krishna Leela

Gokul empties out in grief

मराठी मूळ

पाषाण फुटती तें दुःख देखोनि । करितां गौळणी शोक लोकां ॥1॥
 काय ऐसें पाप होतें आह्मांपासीं । बोलती एकासी एक एका ॥2॥
 एकांचिये डोळां असुं बाहणात्कारी । नाहीं तीं अंतरीं जळतील ॥3॥
 जळतील एकें अंतर्बाहणात्कारें । टाकिलीं लेकुरें कडियेहूनि ॥4॥
 निवांत चि एकें राहिलीं निश्चिंत । बाहेरी ना आंत जीव त्यांचे ॥5॥
 त्यांचे जीव वरी आले त्या सकळां । एका त्या गोपाळांवांचूनियां ॥6॥
 वांचणें तें आतां खोटें संवसारीं । नव्हे भेटी जरी हरिसवें ॥7॥
 सवें घेऊनियां चालली गोपाळां । अवधीं च बाळा नर नारी ॥8॥
 नर नारी नाहीं मनुष्याचें नावें । गोकुळ हें गांव सांडियेलें ॥9॥
 सांडियेलीं अन्नं संपदा सकळ । चितीं तो गोपाळ धरुनि जाती ॥10॥
 तिरीं माना घालूनियां उभ्या गाई । तटस्थ या डोहीं यमुनेच्या ॥11॥
 यमुनेच्या तिरीं झाडें वृक्ष वल्ली । दुःखें कोमाइलीं कृष्णाचिया ॥12॥
 यांचें त्यांचें दुःख एक जालें तिरीं । मग शोक करी मायबाप ॥13॥
 मायबाप तुका ह्मणे सहोदर । तोंवरी च तीर न पवतां ॥14॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Stones would crack at the sight of that grief. The milkmaids and all the people lamented.

'What terrible sin must we have committed?' they asked one another. Some wept openly, tears streaming; inwardly they burned.

Others burned both inside and out, throwing their children from their arms. Some stood still and silent, as if their jivas had departed.

Every soul among them had risen to the brink, all except the cowherds who had been with Him. Life itself now seemed false in this world, for without meeting Hari, what was the use of living? Taking the cowherds with them, everyone set out: men, women, children, all.

The word 'human' no longer applied; the whole village of Gokul was abandoned. They left behind food, wealth, and everything, holding only the image of that cowherd-boy in their chitta.

The cows stood at the water's edge with lowered heads, staring silently into the pool of the Yamuna. The trees, plants, and creepers along the Yamuna had wilted with grief for Krishna.

The sorrow of all became one on that bank. Then the parents began to wail.

Says Tuka, the parents and siblings, they had been untroubled until they reached the water's edge.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Stones would split at the sight of that grief, as the milkmaids and the people wail. What sin was in us, they say to one another, each to each. In the eyes of some there are outward tears; those without them burn inside. Some burn within and without and throw their children down from their arms. Some stay quite still, settled, their jivas neither inside nor out. The very souls of them all rise to the brink, all but those cowherds who had been with Him. To live on now is false in this world, if there is to be no meeting with Hari. Taking the cowherds with them, they all set out, children, men, women, all. They are men and women in name no longer; the village of Gokul is abandoned. They leave behind food and all their wealth, holding only that cowherd in their hearts as they go. The cows stand at the bank with lowered necks, motionless at the pool of the Yamuna. On the Yamuna's bank the trees and plants and creepers have withered with grief for Krishna. The grief of these and those becomes one at the bank, and then the parents wail. Tuka says: the parents and the kin, only until they had not yet reached the bank.

WHAT IT MEANS

The whole of Gokul empties out toward the pool. Tukaram piles the grief high: some weep outwardly, some burn within, some drop their own children, some sit as if their life has already left. Living seems worthless if Hari cannot be met again, so the village abandons food and wealth and walks out, carrying only His image in the heart, while even cows, trees and creepers wilt in sorrow. The point under the lament is the measure of love, the loss of God felt as the loss of life itself. The last line is a hinge, that their grief had held them only up to the bank; what waits there will change everything.

GATHA 4516

Krishna Leela

Fear at the brink, the flaw in love

मराठी मूळ

तीर देखोनियां यमुनेचें जळ । कांठीं च कोल्हाळ करिताती ॥1॥
 कडवाड नव्हे घालावया उडी । आपणासि ओढी भय मागें ॥2॥
 मार्गे सरे माय पाउला पाउलीं । आपल्या च घाली धाकें अंग ॥3॥
 अंग राखोनियां माय खेद करी । अंतरीचें हरी जाणवलें ॥4॥
 जाणवलें मग देवें दिली बुडी । तुका ह्मणे कुडी भावना हे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Seeing the water of the Yamuna, they raised a great outcry on the bank. They could not bring themselves to leap in.

Fear held them back. The mother stepped back, foot by foot, instinctively protecting her own body.

She mourned outwardly while guarding her body. Hari saw what lay in her heart.

Seeing that, God dove deeper. Says Tuka, this was the falseness in their devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Seeing the water of the Yamuna, they raise a great cry at the bank. None has the daring to leap in; fear drags each one back. The mother steps back, foot by foot, and in her fright shields her own body. Guarding her body, the mother grieves; Hari knows what is in her heart. Knowing it, God dives deeper down. Tuka says: this was the falseness in their feeling.

WHAT IT MEANS

At the water's edge the great love meets its limit. They wail, but no one dares jump in; even the mother backs away step by step, instinctively protecting her own body while she mourns. Tukaram says Hari reads exactly this in her heart, and in response He dives deeper, withdrawing further. The hard word he lands is kudi bhavana, a falseness in the feeling: grief that still guards the self is not yet surrender. The aim here is self-examination, the test of whether our devotion will actually risk the self or only weep from the safe bank.

GATHA 4517

Krishna Leela

Empty words, God withdraws

मराठी मूळ

भावनेच्या मुळें अंतरला देव । शिरला संदेह भयें पोटीं ॥1॥
 पोटीं होतें मागें जीव द्यावा ऐसें । बोलिल्या सरिसें न करवे ॥2॥
 अंतरला बहु बोलतां वाउगें । अंतरींच्या त्यागेंविण गोष्टी ॥4॥
 गोष्टी सकळांच्या आइकिल्या देवें । कोण कोण्याभावे रडती तीं ॥5॥
 तीं गेलीं घरास आपल्या सकळ । गोधनें गोपाळ लोक माय ॥6॥
 मायबापांची तों ऐसी जाली गति । तुका ह्मणे अंतीं कळों आलें ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Because of this false feeling, God distanced Himself. Doubt and fear had entered their hearts.

They had earlier declared they would give their lives, but when the moment came, they could not match their words with action. God had been greatly estranged by empty talk and gestures without inner surrender.

God heard everyone's lamentations, noting who wept and for what reason. They all went home: people, cattle, cowherds, mothers.

Says Tuka, such was the state of the parents. In the end, the truth became clear.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Because of that feeling God drew away; doubt and fear entered their hearts. They had said before that they would give their lives, but when it came, they could not do as they had spoken. He drew far off; much was said in vain, talk without any giving up within. God heard the talk of all of them, who wept and in what spirit. They all went home, the cattle, the cowherds, the people, the mothers. Tuka says: such was the state the parents came to; in the end it became clear.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names the gap between word and deed. They had vowed to give their lives for Hari, but at the brink they could not match the vow with action, and so God draws away and doubt fills them. He weighs not the loud talk but the inner giving, the tyaga, the surrender that was missing; lamenting without it is empty. The line points at our own pattern, the easy promise that collapses when it is tested. In the end the truth of where each one stood becomes plain, which is itself the deed's purpose, to reveal the real measure of their love.

GATHA 4518

Krishna Leela

The hidden purpose, subduing Kaliya

मराठी मूळ

आला यांचा भाव देवाचिया मना । अंतरीं कारणांसाठी होता ॥1॥
 होता भाव त्यांचा पाहोनि निराळा । नव्हता पाताळा गेला आधीं ॥2॥
 आधीं पाठीमोरीं जालीं तीं सकळें । मग या गोपाळें बुडी दिली ॥3॥
 दिली हाक त्याणें जाऊनि पाताळा । जागविलें काळा भुजंगासि ॥4॥
 भुजंग हा होता निजला मंदिरीं । निर्भर अंतरीं गर्वनिधि ॥5॥
 गर्व हरावया आला नारायण । मिस या करून चेंडुवाचें ॥6॥
 चेंडुवाचे मिसें काळया नाथावा । तुका ह्मणे देवा कारण हें ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Their true feelings reached God's awareness. He had been holding back, waiting for the right moment.

He had seen that their devotion was mixed. He had not actually gone to the nether world at first.

Only after they turned away did the Cowherd-Boy dive deep. He went down to the nether world and called out to the serpent.

He roused the Kaliya serpent who had been sleeping in his palace. That serpent was deep in slumber, full of arrogant pride.

Narayana came to crush that pride, using the ball as His pretext. Says Tuka, subduing Kaliya was the Lord's true purpose.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Their true feeling reached God's mind; in His heart He had a purpose. Seeing their feeling held back and apart, He had not in fact gone down to the nether world at first. Only after they all turned their backs did the Cowherd-Boy dive in. Diving, He went down to the nether world and woke Kaliya the serpent. The serpent had been lying asleep in his palace, full to the brim within, a hoard of pride. Narayana came to take away that pride, making the ball His pretext. Under cover of the ball, He came to master Kaliya. Tuka says: this was the Lord's true purpose.

WHAT IT MEANS

Now Tukaram lifts the curtain on the whole episode. The lost ball and the dive were never the point; Krishna's true aim was to crush the pride of Kaliya, the great serpent sleeping in his pool swollen with arrogance. He did not even go down at first; only when the people turned away did He descend, reading their inner feeling. The ball was

a pretext, a setting arranged for the real work. The teaching is that God stages the visible drama for a hidden purpose, and pride, here the serpent's hoard, is what He comes to break.

GATHA 4519

Krishna Leela

Kaliya's wife beholds the beauty

मराठी मूळ

काळयाचे मागे चेंडु पत्नीपाशीं । तेजःपुंज राशी देखियेला ॥1॥
 लावण्यपूतळा मुखप्रभाराशी । कोटि रवि शशी उगवले ॥2॥
 उघवला खांब कदनळीचा गाभा । ब्रीदें वांकी नभा देखे पायीं ॥3॥
 पाहिला सकळ तिनें न्याहाळूनि । कोण या जननी विसंबली ॥4॥
 विसरु हा तीस कैसा याचा जाला । जीवाहुनि वाल्हा दिसतसे ॥5॥
 दिसतसे रूप गोजिरें लाहान । पाहातां लोचन सुखावले ॥6॥
 पाहिलें पतौनि काळा दुष्टाकडे । मग ह्मणे कुडें जालें आतां ॥7॥
 आतां हा उठोनि खाईल या बाळा । देईल वेल्हाळा माय जीव ॥8॥
 जीव याचा कैसा वांचे ह्मणे नारी । मोहिली अंतरीं हरिरूपें ॥9॥
 रूपे अनंताचीं अनंतप्रकार । न कळे साचार तुका ह्मणे ॥10॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He asked Kaliya's wife for the ball. She beheld a radiant being, blazing with light.

A figure of perfect beauty, a flood of facial radiance, as if ten million suns and moons had risen. He gleamed like the core of a golden plantain stem, His glory reaching beyond the sky, visible even at His feet.

She examined Him from head to toe. 'What mother could have parted from this child?' she wondered.

'How could anyone forget one so dear, more precious than life itself?' His form was exquisitely small and beautiful. Her eyes drank in the sight with satisfaction.

She glanced warily at the sleeping Kaliya and thought, 'Trouble is coming.' 'When he wakes, he will devour this child, and the child's tender mother will die of grief.' 'How can this little one survive?' she wondered, her heart captivated by Hari's beauty. Says Tuka, the forms of the Infinite are beyond all reckoning.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Behind Kaliya, near his wife, He goes for the ball; she sees a heap of pure radiance. A figure of perfect loveliness, a flood of light from His face, as if ten million suns and moons had risen. He shines like the core of a golden plantain stem; His emblems and anklets, His feet seem to touch the sky. She looks Him over from head to foot. What mother could have let go of this child, she wonders. How could she ever forget Him? He looks dearer than life itself. His form is lovely and small; her eyes are gladdened just looking. She glances over at wicked Kaliya, and then says, now trouble has come. Now when he wakes he will eat this child, and the tender mother will give up her life. How can this little one live, she says, her heart taken within by Hari's beauty. Tuka says: the forms of the Infinite are of endless kinds; their truth is not known.

WHAT IT MEANS

The scene softens at the serpent's wife, who comes upon the child Krishna blazing like ten million suns and moons, beautiful past telling. She drinks in His form head to foot and her heart is captured; she cannot imagine the mother who could part from such a child. Then dread breaks in, that when her husband Kaliya wakes he will devour the boy and break his mother's heart. Tukaram lets her wonder carry the awe of the Lord's beauty even as danger looms. The closing line names the mystery directly, that the Infinite wears endless forms and their true nature cannot be grasped.

GATHA 4520

Krishna Leela

The serpents close in, calling Garuda

मराठी मूळ

ह्मणे चेंडू कोणें आणिला या ठाया । आलों पुरवाया कोड त्याचें ॥1॥
 त्याचें आइकोन निष्ठ वचन । भयाभीत मन जालें तीचें ॥2॥
 तिची चित्तवृत्ती होती देवावरी । आधीं ते माघारी फिरली वेगीं ॥3॥
 वेगीं मन गेलें भ्रताराचे सोयी । विघ्न आलें कांहीं आह्मांवरिं ॥4॥
 वरि उदकास अंत नाहीं पार । अक्षोभ सागर भरलासे ॥5॥
 संचार करुनि कोण्या वाटे आला । ठायीं च देखिला अवचिता ॥6॥
 अवचिता नेणों येथें उगवला । दिसे तो धाकुला बोल मोठे ॥7॥
 मोठणानें बोलतो भय नाहीं मनीं । केला उठवूनी काळ जागा ॥8॥
 जागविला काळसर्प तये वेळीं । उठिला कल्लोळीं विषाचिये ॥9॥
 यमुनेच्या डोहावरी आला ऊत । काळ्याकृतांतधूदकारें ॥10॥
 कारणें ज्या येथें आला नारायण । जालें दुरुषण दोघांमधीं ॥11॥
 दोघांमध्ये जाले बोल परस्परें । प्रसंग उत्तरें युद्धाचिया ॥12॥
 चिंतावला चित्तीं तोंडे बोले काळ । करीन सकळ ग्रास तुझा ॥13॥
 जाला सावकाश झेंप घाली वरी । तंव ह्मणे हरि मिष्टघातें ॥14॥
 तेणें काळें त्यासि दिसे काळ तैसा । हरावया जैसा जीव जाला ॥15॥
 आठवले काळा हाकारिलें गोत । मिळालीं बहुतें नागकुळें ॥16॥
 कल्हारीं संधानीं धरियेला हरि । अवघा विखारीं व्यापियेला ॥17॥
 यांस तुका ह्मणे नाहीं भक्तीविण । गरुडाचें चिंतन केलें मनीं ॥18॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Krishna said, 'Who brought the ball to this place? I have come to fulfill his wish.' Hearing His fearless words, terror filled her mind. Her chitta, which had been drawn to God, now turned back in alarm toward her husband.

Her mind rushed back to her husband's side: 'Some calamity has come upon us.' Above, the water stretches without end, a bottomless ocean brimming full. 'By what path did He come here? He appeared suddenly, out of nowhere.' 'He looks small, but His words are mighty.' He spoke boldly and without fear.

He woke the Kaliya serpent from sleep. The serpent rose in billowing coils of venom.

The waters of the Yamuna boiled and overflowed, with Death-like fury roaring. The purpose for which Narayana had come was fulfilled: the two faced each other.

Words were exchanged between them, leading to the confrontation of battle. Kaliya, brooding and enraged, snarled, 'I will swallow you whole.' He lunged, but Hari struck him with His fists.

Then Kaliya saw death before his eyes, as though his very life was being torn away. Kaliya summoned his kin.

Hordes of serpents gathered from every side. They coiled around Hari and saturated Him with their venom.

Says Tuka, against those without devotion, Krishna summoned the thought of Garuda.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He says, who brought the ball to this place? I have come to satisfy his wish. Hearing His hard, fearless words, her mind was filled with fear. Her chitta had been on God; now first it turned quickly back. Quickly her mind ran to her husband: some calamity has come on us. Above, the water has no end, no shore; a vast unshaken sea is brimming. By what path did He come and pass? She saw Him there all at once. All at once, who knows, He has appeared here; He looks small, but his words are big. He speaks boldly, no fear in his mind, and he has roused Kaliya awake. The death-serpent was wakened then, and rose in billows of venom. A flood came over the Yamuna's pool, with the roar of Death itself. The purpose for which Narayana came was met: the two stood face to face. Words passed between the two, the speech that leads to battle. Brooding and enraged, Kaliya snarls with his mouth, I will swallow you whole. At leisure he rears up to strike from above; then Hari answers with a blow of His fist. By that blow death looms before the serpent, as if his life is being torn away. Kaliya remembers and calls his kin, and many serpent clans gather. In the joining of the fray they seize Hari, and He is wholly wrapped in venom. Tuka says: against these there is nothing but devotion; in His mind He called the thought of Garuda.

WHAT IT MEANS

The confrontation breaks open. Krishna speaks with such fearless force that the serpent's wife turns from devotion back to dread for her husband, and Kaliya wakes in coils of venom while the Yamuna boils with the roar of death. This was exactly the purpose for which Narayana came: the two face each other, words turn to battle, and when Kaliya boasts he will swallow Him whole, Hari answers with His fist. The serpent calls his whole clan, and they coil around Hari and drown Him in poison. The closing line is the key the poem hands over, that against such venom nothing avails but devotion, and so even Krishna in play turns His mind to Garuda, His own carrier and the serpents' natural dread.

GATHA 4521

Krishna Leela

Garuda comes, Kaliya subdued

मराठी मूळ

निजदास उभा तात्काळ पायापें । स्वामी देखे सर्पे विष्टयेला ॥1॥
 लहानथोरें होतीं मिळालीं अपारें । त्याच्या धुदकारें निवारिलीं ॥2॥
 निघतां आपटी धरुनि धांवामधीं । एकाचें चि वधी माथें पायें ॥3॥
 एकीं जीव दिले येतां च त्या धाकें । येतील तीं एकें काकूलती ॥4॥
 यथेष्ट भिक्षलीं पोट धाये वरी । तंव ह्मणे हरि पुरे आतां ॥5॥
 आतां करुं काम आलों जयासाठीं । हरी घाली मिठी काळयासि ॥6॥
 यासि नाथूनियां नाकीं दिली दोरी । चेंडू भार शिरीं कमळांचा ॥7॥
 चालविला वरी बैसे नारायण । गरुडा आळंगुन बहुडविलें ॥8॥
 विसरु न पडे संवगडण गाई । यमुनेच्या डोहीं लक्ष त्यांचें ॥9॥
 त्याच्या गोष्टी कांठीं बैसोनि सांगती । बुडाला दाविती येथें हरि ॥10॥
 हरीचें चिंतन करितां आठव । तुका ह्मणे देव आला वरी ॥11॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

His true servant stood at His feet in an instant. The Lord saw Himself surrounded by serpents.

Small and great, they had gathered in countless numbers. At Garuda's thunderous roar, they were scattered.

He seized them in his talons as they fled, crushing the head of one beneath his feet. Some died of fright at his mere approach.

Others came pleading for mercy. He devoured them to his full satisfaction, until Hari said, 'Enough now.' 'Let me do what I came for.' Hari seized Kaliya and placed a bridle on his nose, loading his head with lotuses and the ball.

He climbed upon Kaliya's back. Narayana then embraced Garuda and sent him on his way.

The cowherds never forgot their companion and the cows. Their attention was fixed on the Yamuna's pool.

They sat on the bank telling stories of Krishna, pointing, 'Here is where Hari dove in.' As they remembered and spoke of Hari, says Tuka, God arose from the water.

IN PLAIN WORDS

His own servant stands at His feet in an instant; the Lord sees Himself wrapped in serpents. Small and great, they had gathered without number; at his roar they were driven off. As they flee he catches and dashes them down in his rush, killing one with his head, one with his feet. Some give up their lives at his mere approach; some come pleading for mercy. He feeds to his fill, till his belly is full, until Hari says, enough now. Now let me do the work I came for; Hari throws His arms around Kaliya. He bridles him and puts a rope through his nose, and loads his head with the ball and with lotuses. He drives him up, and Narayana sits on him; embracing Garuda, He sends him back. The cowherds and the cows are not forgotten; their gaze is on the Yamuna's pool. Sitting on the bank they tell stories of Him, pointing here, this is where Hari drowned. As they remember Hari and call Him to mind, Tuka says: God comes up from the water.

WHAT IT MEANS

Garuda arrives the instant Krishna calls, and the eagle scatters and devours the serpent hordes until Hari tells him, enough. Then Krishna does the work He came for: He embraces Kaliya, bridles him through the nose, crowns his head with the ball and lotuses, and rides him up, sending Garuda home. The deed done, the poem returns to the grieving cowherds still fixed on the pool, telling stories, pointing to where He went under. The closing turn is the reward of remembrance, that as they keep Hari in mind and call on Him, God Himself rises out of the water to them. Devotion that does not let go is what draws the Lord back into sight.

GATHA 4522

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, rescue from the serpent

मराठी मूळ

अवचित त्याणीं देखिला भुजंग । पळतील मग हाउ आला ॥1॥
 आला घेऊनियां यमुनेबाहेरी । पालवितो करीं गडियांसि ॥2॥
 गडियांसि ह्मणे वैकुंठनायक । या रे सकळक मजपाशीं ॥3॥
 मजपाशीं तुझां भय काय करी । जविळ या दुरी जाऊं नका ॥4॥
 कानीं आइकिले गोविंदाचे बोल । ह्मणती नवल चला पाहों ॥5॥
 पाहों आले हरीजवळ सकळ । गोविंदें गोपाळ आंळगिले ॥6॥
 आल्या गाई वरी घालितील माना । वोरसलें स्तना क्षीर लोटें ॥7॥
 लोटती सकळें एकावरी एक । होउनि पृथक कुर्वाळीं ॥8॥
 कुर्वाळीं आनंदें घेती चारापाणी । तिहीं चक्रपाणी देखियेला ॥9॥
 त्यां च पाशीं होता परि केली माव । न कळे संदेह पडलिया ॥10॥
 याति वृक्ष वल्ली होत्या कोमेलिया । त्यांसि कृष्णें काया दिव्य दिली ॥11॥
 दिलें गोविंदें त्या पदा नाहीं नाश । तुका ह्मणे आस निरसली ॥12॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Suddenly they saw the great serpent. They began to flee in terror.

Krishna came out of the Yamuna, waving to His companions. The Lord of Vaikuntha said, 'Come to Me, all of you.' 'What harm can anything do in My presence? Come close.

Do not go away.' Their ears heard Govinda's voice. They said, 'What a wonder! Let us go and see.' They came near Hari, all of them.

Govinda embraced the cowherds. The cows came and lowered their heads upon Him.

Milk flooded from their udders. They all rushed upon each other, one on top of another, each nuzzling and caressing the others.

Amid this joy they began eating and drinking. They saw their Chakrapani.

He had been with them all along, but His illusion had hidden Him. When confusion falls, He cannot be seen.

The trees, plants, and creepers that had wilted were given divine new bodies by Krishna. Says Tuka, Govinda gave them an imperishable state. All longing was fulfilled.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All at once they saw the great serpent. They began to flee in terror. Then Krishna came out of the Yamuna. He waved His hand to His friends. The Lord of Vaikuntha said to His companions: come here, all of you, come to Me. What harm can anything do while you are with Me? Come close; do not go far away. Their ears heard Govinda's words. They said: what a wonder, let us go and see. They all came near Hari. Govinda embraced the cowherd boys. The cows came and laid their heads upon Him. Their udders overflowed; milk poured out. They all pressed together, one upon another, each nuzzling and caressing the rest. In that joy they began to eat and drink. They saw their Chakrapani. He had been there with them all along, but His maya had hidden Him. When doubt falls, He cannot be seen. The trees and plants and creepers had wilted; Krishna gave them divine new bodies. Govinda gave them a state that does not perish. Tuka says: every longing was satisfied.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga sings the close of the Kaliya episode, when Krishna rises unharmed from the Yamuna and gathers His terrified friends back to Him. The teaching is folded into the story: when fear and doubt fall over the mind, God can stand right beside you and you will not see Him; the same Lord who was always present only seems to appear once the confusion lifts. His maya is what hides Him, not any distance on His part. The wilted plants given imperishable new bodies say the rest: contact with Him does not merely comfort, it transfigures, granting a state that does not pass away. So the closing line lands every longing satisfied, because what was wanted all along was this presence.

GATHA 4523

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, separation deepens love

मराठी मूळ

आस निरसली गोविंदाचे भेटी । संवसारा तुटी पुढिलिया ॥1॥
 पुढें पाठविलें गोविंदें गोपाळां । देउनि चपळां हातीं गुढी ॥2॥
 हाका आरौळया देउनि नाचती । एक सादाविती हरि आले ॥3॥
 आरंधीं पडिलीं होतीं तयां घरीं । संकीर्ण त्या नारी नरलोक ॥4॥
 लोका भूक तान नाहीं निद्रा डोळा । रूप वेळोवेळां आठविती ॥5॥
 आहाकटा मग करिती गेलिया । आधीं ठावा तयां नाहीं कोणा ॥6॥
 आधीं चुकी मग घडे आठवण । तुका ह्मणे जन परिचयें ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All longing was fulfilled by meeting Govinda. The cycle of future births was broken.

Govinda sent the cowherds ahead, placing victory-banners in the hands of those lively ones. They shouted, cheered, and danced.

Some called out, 'Hari has come!' The homes they had left in turmoil, the anxious women and men, knew no hunger, thirst, or sleep. Again and again they remembered that beautiful form.

When He was gone, they cried out, 'Alas!' Before that, none had known how much He meant. Says Tuka, first comes separation, then comes the depth of remembrance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Every longing was satisfied by meeting Govinda. The chain of births to come was broken. Govinda sent the cowherds on ahead. He put victory-banners in the hands of those lively boys. They shouted and cheered and danced. Some called out: Hari has come. The homes they had left were in turmoil; the women and men there were full of fear. Those people felt no hunger, no thirst, no sleep on their eyes. Again and again they kept remembering His form. When He had gone, then they cried out: alas. Before that, none of them had known how much He was. First comes the missing, then comes the remembering. Tuka says: people only know by what they have lost.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here the cowherds run home as heralds of Krishna's return, while at home the families have been sick with worry over Him. Tukaram catches the strange arithmetic of love in the last lines: while Krishna was present and safe, no one measured what He meant to them; it is His absence that woke the ache of remembrance. Separation is not punishment here but a teacher, the thing that finally makes the heart see how much it holds. The everyday truth, people only know by what they have lost, is pointed inward: do not wait for the loss to learn the worth of what is near.

GATHA 4524

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, the mother's grief and the omen

मराठी मूळ

जननी हे ह्मणे आहा काय जालें । शरीर रिक्षलें काय काजें ॥1॥
 काय काज आतां हरिविण जिणें । नित्य दुःख कोणें सोसावें हें ॥2॥
 हें दुःख न सरे हरि न भेटे तों । त्यामार्गे चि जातों एका वेळे ॥3॥
 एकवेळ जरी देखतें मी आतां । तरी जीवापरता न करितें ॥4॥
 करितां हे मात हरीचें चिंतन । शुभ तो शकुन तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mother says, 'Oh, what has happened? My body has wasted away. What is the use of living without Hari? Who can endure this constant sorrow?' 'This grief will not end until Hari is found.

I will follow Him at once.' 'If only I could see Him one more time, I would never let Him go.' While she spoke these words, remembering Hari, says Tuka, a good omen appeared.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The mother says: oh, what has happened? My body has wasted away. What was the use of keeping it? What is the use of living now, without Hari? Who can bear this endless sorrow? This grief will not end until Hari is found. I will go straight after Him, this very time. If I could see Him just once now, I would never let Him leave my life again. While she said these words, her thought was on Hari. Tuka says: that was a good omen.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the cry of a mother (the longing devotee in a mother's voice) who feels she cannot live another moment without the Lord. Tukaram lets the grief run all the way to its edge, even to the wish to follow Him into death, and does not soften it. Then he turns it: the very fact that, in her sorrow, her whole mind has fastened on Hari is itself the good sign. The point is that longing fixed entirely on God is not a dead end but the doorway; remembrance born of separation is auspicious, because the heart that can think only of Him is already near Him.

GATHA 4525

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, Gokul's joyful welcome

मराठी मूळ

शुभ मात तिहीं आणिली गोपाळीं । चेंडू वनमाळी घेउनि आले ॥1॥
 आली दारा देखे हरुषाची गुढी । सांगितली पुढी हरुषें मात ॥2॥
 हरुषलीं माता केलें निंबलोण । गोपाळांवरून कुरवंडी ॥3॥
 गोपाळां भोवतें मिळालें गोकुळ । अवघीं सकळ लहान थोरें ॥4॥
 थोर सुख जालें ते काळीं आनंद । सांगती गोविंद वरि आला ॥5॥
 आले वरि बैसोनियां नारायण । काळया नाथून वहन केलें ॥6॥
 नगराबाहेरी निघाले आनंदें । लावूनियां वाघें नाना घोष ॥7॥
 नारायणापुढें गोपाळ चालती । आनंदें नाचती गाती गीत ॥8॥
 तंव तो देखिला वैकुंठीचा पती । लोटांगणीं जाती सकळ ही ॥9॥
 सकळ ही एका भावें आलिंगिले । अवघियां जाले अवघे हरि ॥10॥
 हरि आलिंगनें हरिरूप जालीं । आप विसरलीं आपणास ॥11॥
 सकळांसी सुख एक दिलें देवें । मायबापां भावें लोकपाळां ॥12॥
 मायबाप देवा नाहीं लोकपाळ । सारिखीं सकळ तुका ह्मणे ॥13॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The cowherds brought the joyful news. The Lord had come back with the ball.

At the door she saw the banner of joy. They told the happy news with great excitement.

The mothers were overjoyed and performed the ritual warding off the evil eye, waving offerings over the cowherds. All of Gokul gathered around the cowherds, everyone, young and old.

Great joy and celebration arose. They told how Govinda had risen from the pool.

Narayana came up from the water, seated upon the subdued Kaliya. They marched out of the village in a festive procession, with instruments and all manner of joyful sounds.

The cowherds walked ahead of Narayana, dancing and singing in ecstasy. Then they beheld the Lord of Vaikuntha.

All fell to the ground in prostration. Everyone was embraced with one feeling, and all became Hari.

Through Hari's embrace they became Hari's form, forgetting themselves entirely. God gave the same bliss to all: to parents, to the guardians of the world.

Says Tuka, God has no favorites among parents and guardians. All are the same to Him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The cowherds brought the joyful news. Vanamali came back, bringing the ball. She came to the door and saw the banner of joy. They told the happy news first of all. The mothers were overjoyed. They made the warding ritual against the evil eye and waved the offering over the cowherds. All of Gokul gathered around the boys, every one, young and old. Great happiness arose then, great joy. They told how Govinda had risen from the pool. Narayana came up from the water, seated on the subdued Kaliya. They went out of the town in a glad procession, with instruments and many sounds. The cowherds walked ahead of Narayana, dancing and singing in joy. Then they saw the Lord of Vaikuntha. They all fell flat on the ground before Him. With one feeling He embraced them all, and all of them became Hari. By Hari's embrace they took Hari's own form; they forgot themselves entirely. God gave one and the same bliss to all, to parents, to the guardians of the world. Tuka says: God keeps no favorites among parents or guardians. To Him all are the same.

WHAT IT MEANS

The whole of Gokul pours out to meet Krishna risen from the river riding the tamed Kaliya, and the homecoming becomes a festival. The heart of it is the embrace: when the Lord holds them, with one feeling toward all, they lose themselves and become His very form. That is the abhanga's claim about union, that nearness to God does not leave the self standing apart but dissolves it into Him. The closing lines name the stake plainly: this grace plays no favorites. God gives the same bliss to parent and protector alike, and before Him no rank or relation counts for more than another.

GATHA 4526

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, grace beyond caste, the debt of devotion

मराठी मूळ

नेणें वर्ण धर्म जीं आलीं सामोरीं । अवधीं च हरी आंळगिलीं ॥1॥
 हरि लोकपाळ आले नगरांत । सकळांसहित मायबाप ॥2॥
 पारणें तयांचें जालें एका वेळे । देखिलें सावळें परब्रह्म ॥3॥
 ब्रह्मानंदें लोक सकळ नाचती । गुढिया उभविती घरोघरीं ॥4॥
 घरोघरीं सुख आनंद सोहळा । सडे रंग माळा चौकदारीं ॥5॥
 दारीं वृंदावनें तुळसीचीं वनें । रामकृष्णगाणें नारायण ॥6॥
 नारायण तिहीं पूजिला बहुतीं । नाना पुष्पयाती करुनियां ॥7॥
 यांचें ऋण नाहीं फिटलें मागील । पुढें भांडवल जोडिती हीं ॥8॥
 हीं नव्हतीं कधीं या देवा वेगळीं । केला वनमाळी सेवाऋणी ॥9॥
 सेवाऋणें तुका ह्मणे रूपधारी । भक्तांचा कैवारी नारायणा ॥10॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without asking about caste or creed, Hari embraced all who came forward. Hari and the guardians of the world entered the village, together with all the parents.

The fast of all those people was broken at once: they beheld the dark, beautiful Supreme Brahman. In the bliss of Brahman, everyone danced.

Victory banners were raised in every home. In every home there was happiness, joy, and festivity.

Colored powders, garlands, and decorations adorned every doorstep. Tulsi gardens and vrindavan shrines stood at every door, with songs of Rama, Krishna, and Narayana.

They worshiped Narayana with many kinds of flowers. Yet the debt of their past merit was not repaid.

More capital was being added for the future. They had never been separate from this God.

They made the Lord of the Forest indebted through their service. Says Tuka, it is because of the debt of devotion that Narayana takes form. He is the champion of His devotees.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He did not ask about caste or creed. Whoever came forward, Hari embraced them all. Hari and the world-guardians entered the town, together with all the parents. The fast of those people was broken all at once: they saw the dark, beautiful Supreme Brahman. In the bliss of Brahman all the people danced. They raised victory-banners in house after house. In every home there was happiness, joy, and festival. Colored powders, garlands, and decorations lay at every doorstep. At every door stood tulsi groves and vrindavan shrines, with songs of Rama, Krishna, Narayana. They worshipped Narayana with many kinds of flowers. Yet their old debt was not paid off; they kept adding more capital for what was to come. These ones were never apart from this God. They made Vanamali a debtor through their service. Tuka says: it is for the debt of their service that Narayana takes a form. He is the champion of His devotees.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram opens with Krishna's refusal to ask caste or creed before He embraces anyone, and that refusal is the teaching, not a footnote: the dark beautiful boy is the Supreme Brahman, and He gives Himself to all who come without sorting them. The villagers' worship is figured as accounts, and Tukaram flips the ledger we expect: their devotion does not merely repay a debt to God, it puts God in their debt. He frames the boldest claim last, that Narayana takes a form at all because of the love His devotees pour out; the formless one consents to a body for their sake, and stands as their champion. Love, not merit owed upward, is what draws God down.

GATHA 4527

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, the world resumes its pull

मराठी मूळ

नारायण आले निजमंदिरासि । जाले या लोकांसि बहुडविते ॥1॥
 बहुडविले बहु केलें समाधान । विसरु तो क्षण नका माझा ॥2॥
 मात सांगितली सकळ वृत्तांत । केलें दंडवत सकळांनीं ॥3॥
 सकळां भातुर्के वांटिल्या साखरा । आपलाल्या घरा लोक गेले ॥4॥
 लोक गेले कामा गाईपें गोपाळ । वारली सकळ लोभापाठी ॥5॥
 लोभ दावुनियां आपला विसर । पाडितो कुमर धनआशा ॥6॥
 आशेचे बांधले तुका ह्मणे जन । काय नारायण ऐसा जाणे ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Narayana returned to His own home, bidding farewell to all the people. He comforted them and said, 'Do not forget Me, not even for a moment.' He told them everything that had happened.

Everyone bowed in reverence. Sweets and treats were distributed to all.

The people went to their homes. The people went about their work, the cowherds to their cattle.

The lure of worldly life resumed its pull. Showing the bait of desire and then vanishing from sight, youth and hope for wealth lead everyone astray.

Says Tuka, the people are bound by hope. What does Narayana know of such bondage?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Narayana came back to His own home. He took His leave of all those people. He comforted them and said: do not forget Me, not even for a moment. He told them everything that had happened. They all bowed low before Him. Sweets and treats were shared out to everyone. The people went off to their own homes. They went back to their work, the cowherds to their cattle. The old grip of worldly life took hold again. Showing the bait of desire and then slipping out of sight, the longing for sons and the hope of wealth lead people astray. Tuka says: people are bound by hope. What does Narayana know of such bondage?

WHAT IT MEANS

The festival ends, Krishna goes home, and ordinary life closes back over the villagers like water. Tukaram names the mechanism by which it happens: desire is a bait that is shown and then withdrawn, and the cravings for children and for wealth quietly pull a heart away from the God it had just held. The hook is hope itself, the endless leaning toward a next thing. The closing question is the sharp point: people are bound by this, but Narayana is not, He has no part in such bondage. The line invites self-examination, not contempt, asking the listener to notice the bait still working in their own life even after the vision has passed.

GATHA 4528

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, the divine sport that breaks rules

मराठी मूळ

जाला कवतुक करितां रोकडें । आणीक ही पुढें नारायण ॥1॥
येउनियां पुढें धरिला मारग । हरावया भाग इंद्रापाशीं ॥2॥
इंद्रा दहीं दुध तूप नेतां लोणी । घेतलें हिरोनि वाटे त्यांचें ॥3॥
हिरोनि घेतल्या कावडी सकळा । ह्मणती गोपाळा बरें नव्हे ॥4॥
नव्हे तें चि करी न भे किळकाळा । तुका ह्मणे लीळा खेळे देव ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having worked these wonders openly, Narayana planned still more. He went ahead and blocked the road, intending to take away the offerings meant for Indra.

He intercepted the loads of curds, milk, ghee, and butter meant for Indra, seizing them all on the road. When their baskets were taken, the people said, 'This is not right, O little Cowherd.' Says Tuka, what should not be done, He does. He fears no one.

God plays His divine sport.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Having openly worked these wonders, Narayana planned still more. He went ahead and held the road. He meant to take away the share owed to Indra. He snatched away the curds, milk, ghee, and butter that were being carried to Indra. He seized it all on the road. When all their loads were taken, the people said: this is not good, O cowherd boy. Tuka says: what should not be done, He does. He fears no one. God plays His sport.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga opens the Govardhana episode: Krishna deliberately intercepts the offerings the villagers carry to Indra. The point is in His freedom. He does what convention says should not be done, and He answers to no one. Where the people see a rule broken and worry, Tukaram sees lila, the divine play that is not bound by what fear and custom permit. The teaching held inside the mischief is that God is not under our notions of right procedure; His sport can overturn the very arrangements we think He must respect, and that fearlessness is itself a sign of who He is.

GATHA 4529

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, fear from not knowing Him

मराठी मूळ

खेळ नव्हे बरा इंद्र कोपलिया । देव ह्मणे तयां भेऊं नका ॥1॥
 नका धरु भय धाक कांहीं मनीं । बोले चक्रपाणि गौळ्यांसि ॥2॥
 गौळ्यांसि धीर नाहीं या वचनें । आशंकितमनें वेडावलीं ॥3॥
 वेडावलीं त्यांसि न कळतां भाव । देवआदिदेव नोळखतां ॥4॥
 नोळखतां दुःखें वाहाती शरीरीं । तुका ह्मणे वरि भारवाही ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The cowherds said, 'This game is not good if Indra becomes angry.' God told them, 'Do not be afraid.' 'Do not hold any fear or dread in your minds,' said the Lord of the Discus to the cowherds. But His words did not reassure the cowherds.

Their minds were anxious and bewildered. They were bewildered because they did not know His nature, not recognizing Him as the God of gods.

Says Tuka, those who do not recognize the Infinite One carry a needless burden of sorrow.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The cowherds said: this game is not good if Indra grows angry. God said to them: do not be afraid. Do not hold any fear or dread in your minds, said Chakrapani to the cowherds. But these words gave the cowherds no steadiness. Their minds were anxious and confused. They were confused because they did not grasp His nature. They did not recognize Him as the God of gods. Tuka says: not recognizing Him, they carry sorrow on their bodies for nothing.

WHAT IT MEANS

The cowherds are frightened that Indra will retaliate, and Krishna's plain reassurance, do not be afraid, fails to calm them. Tukaram puts His finger on why: their fear comes from not knowing who is standing in front of them. They take Him for a reckless boy and not for the God of gods, so His word cannot land. The teaching is that fear is the symptom of unrecognized presence. When you do not know that the Infinite is with you, you go on shouldering a weight of dread that has no real cause, a needless burden carried only because the eyes have not opened to Him.

GATHA 4530

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, the greedy mind cannot steady

मराठी मूळ

भारवाही नोळखती या अनंता । जवळी असतां अंगसंगें ॥१॥
 अंगसंगें तया न कळे हा देव । कळोनि संदेह मागुताला ॥२॥
 मागुती पडती चिंतेचिये डोहीं । जयाची हे नाहीं बुद्धि स्थिर ॥३॥
 बुद्धि स्थिर होउं नेदी नारायण । आशबद्ध जन लोभिकांची ॥४॥
 लोभिकां न साहे देवाचें करणें । तुका ह्मणे तेणें दुःखी होती ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

They are burden-bearers who do not recognize this Infinite One, even though He walks beside them. Even in His intimate company, they do not see that He is God.

Doubt returns again and again for those whose intellect is unsteady. Narayana does not let the intellect of the greedy become steady.

The greedy cannot bear what God does. Says Tuka, that is why they remain in sorrow.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They are burden-bearers who do not know this Infinite One, though He is right beside them, touching them. Even in His close company they do not see that He is God. Doubt comes back to them again and again, for their intellect is not steady. Narayana does not let the intellect of the greedy grow steady. The greedy cannot bear what God does. Tuka says: that is why they stay in sorrow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pushes the previous abhanga deeper, into why some hearts cannot rest even when God is at arm's length. The trouble is greed, the grasping that keeps the mind unsettled and full of returning doubt. He makes the striking claim that Narayana Himself does not let the greedy mind become steady, because a mind clutching at gain cannot bear what God actually does, His rule-breaking, unpredictable play. The intimacy is real (He touches them) yet wasted on them. The lesson, aimed at self-examination, is that craving is what keeps God unrecognized at close range, and unrecognized presence leaves a person in sorrow.

GATHA 4531

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, anger at God forfeits the feast

मराठी मूळ

दुःखी होती लोभें करावें तें काई । उडतील गाई म्हैसी आतां ॥1॥
 आणीकही कांहीं होईल अरिष्ट । नायिके हा धीट सांगितलें ॥2॥
 सांगों चला याच्या मायबापांपाशीं । निघाले घरासि देवा रागें ॥3॥
 रागें काला देतां न घेती कवळ । टोकवी गोपाळ क्रोधियांसि ॥4॥
 क्रोध देवावरि धरियेला राग । तुका ह्मणे भाग न लभती ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When people suffer through their own greed, what can be done? 'Our cows and buffaloes will be swept away now. Some other disaster will surely come.

This bold one will not listen to what he is told.' They said, 'Let us go and tell His parents.' They left for home, angry at God. In their anger, they refused to eat the feast He had prepared.

He tried to coax the angry ones, but they refused every morsel. Says Tuka, those who are angry at God forfeit their share of bliss.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They suffer through their own greed; what can be done with it? They said: our cows and buffaloes will be carried off now. Some other disaster will come too. This bold boy will not listen to what we tell him. Come, let us go and tell His parents. They set off home, angry at God. In their anger, when He offered the feast, they would not take a mouthful. He coaxed the angry ones. They refused every morsel. Tuka says: those who hold anger against God do not get their share.

WHAT IT MEANS

The frightened villagers turn from fear to resentment: they blame the boy, threaten to report Him to His parents, and storm off. The sharp moment is the food. Krishna has made the kala, the shared feast, and offers it, even coaxing them, but in their anger they refuse to eat a single bite. Tukaram reads this as the plain consequence of being angry at God: the grace is held out, and the resentful hand pushes it away. They do not get their share, not because it was withheld, but because anger closed them to it. The mirror is for the listener: resentment toward God locks the door from the inside on the very bliss being offered.

GATHA 4532

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, the feast belongs to the trusting

मराठी मूळ

भाग त्या सुखाचे वांकड्यां बोंबड्यां । आपलिया गड्यां भाविकांसि ॥1॥

भारवाही गेले टाकुनि कावडी । नवनीतगोडी भाविकांसि ॥2॥

काला करुनियां वांटिलां सकळां । आनंदें गोपाळांमाजी खेळे ॥3॥

खेळेंमेळें दहीं दुध तूप खाती । भय नाहीं चितीं कवणाचें ॥4॥

कवणाचें चाले तुका झणे बळ । जयासी गोपाळ साहए जाला ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The share of that joy belongs to the stammering, the lisping, the simple, and the faithful. The burden-bearers who left their baskets behind missed out.**The faithful cowherds feasted on the butter's sweetness. He prepared the feast and distributed it among all.**He played joyfully among the cowherds. They ate curds, milk, and ghee without a care.**No one's chitta held any fear. Says Tuka, whose strength can prevail when the Cowherd-Boy is your ally?.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

That share of joy belongs to the stammering, the lisping, the simple, His own faithful playmates. The burden-bearers who left their baskets behind lost it. He made the feast and shared it out among them all. He played joyfully among the cowherd boys. In play and company they ate curds and milk and ghee. In their hearts there was no fear of anyone. Tuka says: whose strength can prevail, when the Cowherd-Boy himself is your ally?

WHAT IT MEANS

Set against the angry ones who refused, this abhanga gives the feast to the simple and trusting playmates, the stammering and the lisping, the ones with no cleverness and no suspicion. Their reward is exactly what the proud and fearful forfeited: they eat freely, with no fear of anyone in their hearts. Tukaram draws the line between the two kinds of devotee not by knowledge or status but by trust. The closing question carries the whole assurance: when the Cowherd-Boy himself stands with you, no power anywhere can prevail against you, so fear in His company was always misplaced.

GATHA 4533

Krishna Leela

Krishna-lila, pride keeps God far

मराठी मूळ

जाणवलें इंद्रा चरित्र सकळ । वांकुल्या गोपाळ दाविताती ॥1॥
 तातडिया मेघां आज्ञा करी राव । गोकुळींचा ठाव उरें नेदा ॥2॥
 नेदाविया काई म्हसी वांचों लोक । पुरा सकिळक सिळाधारीं ॥3॥
 धाक नाहीं माझा गोविळ्यां पोरं । सकिळक मारा ह्मणे मेघां ॥4॥
 ह्मणविती देव आपणां तोंवरी । जंव नाहीं वरी कोपलों मी ॥5॥
 मीपणें हा देव न कळे चि त्यांसी । अभिमानें रासि गर्वाचिया ॥6॥
 अभिमानरासि जयाचिये ठायीं । तुका ह्मणे तई देव दुरी ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Indra learned of the whole affair. The cowherds were mocking him openly.

Indra commanded the clouds of deluge: 'Do not leave a single survivor in Gokul.' 'Do not let cattle or people live. Bury them all under a hail of boulders.' 'These little cowherds and their children have no fear of me.

Kill them all,' he told the clouds. 'They call themselves gods only until I am roused.' In his arrogance, God remained unknown to him.

Mountains of pride had piled up. Says Tuka, wherever there is a mountain of pride, God remains far away.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Indra came to know the whole affair: the cowherds were openly mocking him. The king commanded the storm-clouds in haste: do not leave a single place standing in Gokul. Do not let cattle or people live; bury them all under a hail of stones. These little cowherd boys have no dread of me. Kill them all, he told the clouds. They call themselves gods, he said, only until I am roused. In his I-ness this God stayed unknown to him; his arrogance was a heap of pride. Tuka says: wherever there is a heap of pride, there God stays far away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Stung that the cowherds have stopped honoring him, Indra orders the deluge to wipe out Gokul, all from wounded pride. Tukaram uses Indra as the pattern to examine, not a person to despise: the very God who could undo him stays hidden from his eyes precisely because he is so full of himself. His mipana, his I-ness, is a wall. The closing line states the law of the heart that the whole episode illustrates: where pride piles up, God keeps His distance, not as a punishment imposed from outside but because a swollen self leaves no room to recognize Him. The warning is turned toward us, to watch for the same heap forming within.

GATHA 4534

Krishna Leela

Trust over pride, God hides

मराठी मूळ

देव त्यां फावला गोपाळां । नाहीं तेथें कळा अभिमान ॥१॥
 नाडलीं आपल्या आपण चि एके । संदेहदायके बहुफारें ॥२॥
 फारें चाळविलीं नेदी कळों माव । देवाआदिदेव विश्वंभर ॥३॥
 विश्वासावांचुनि कळों नये खरा । अभक्तां अधीरा जैसा तैसा ॥४॥
 जैसा भाव तैसा जविळ त्या दुरि । तुका ह्याने हरि देतो घेतो ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God was won by the cowherds because there was no pride in them. Those who deceived themselves through doubt and conjecture were many.

Many were deluded and could not perceive the truth. The God of gods, the Sustainer of the universe, concealed His identity.

Without trust, the real God cannot be known. To the faithless and the impatient, He appears as they expect.

Says Tuka, as is the devotion, so is the nearness or distance. Hari gives and takes accordingly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God let himself be won by the cowherds, because there was no pride in them. Many others tricked themselves with their own doubts and guesses. They were led astray and could not see through the veil. He is the God of gods, the one who holds the world, and he keeps his real form hidden. Without trust you cannot know the true one. To the faithless and the impatient, he appears just as they expect. Tuka says: as your love is, so he is near or far. Hari gives and takes to match it.

WHAT IT MEANS

The poem reads the Govardhan story as a lesson in how God is known. The cowherds had no learning and no pride, so God let himself be caught by them; the clever, full of doubt and conjecture, missed him entirely. Tukaram names the rule under it: the real God stays veiled, and trust, not cleverness, is the only door. The closing line makes it exact. Your nearness to him is the exact measure of your faith, and Hari simply gives back what you bring.

GATHA 4535

Krishna Leela

Pride punished, fear turns to memory

मराठी मूळ

तो या साच भावें न कळे चि इंद्रा । ह्मणउनि धारा घाली सिळा ॥1॥
 घाली धारा मेघ कडाडिला माथा । वरि अवचिता देखियेला ॥2॥
 देखती पाऊस वोळला गोपाळ । भ्याले हे सकळ विचारिती ॥3॥
 विचार पडला विसरले खेळ । अन्याय गोपाळ ह्मणती केला ॥4॥
 लागलेंसे गोड न कळे ते काळीं । भेणें वनमाळी आठविती ॥5॥
 आतां कायकैसा करावा विचार । गोधनासि थार आपणिया ॥6॥
 यांचिया विचारें होणार ते काई । तुका ह्मणे ठायीं वेडावलीं ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*This truth was not grasped by Indra, blinded by pride. Therefore he sent the deluge of stones.**The clouds thundered and crashed overhead, and a sudden storm broke upon them. The cowherds saw the rain bearing down and were afraid.**They considered their plight. Worry overtook them, and they forgot their play.**'The cowherd-boy has done wrong,' they said. 'It tasted sweet at the time, and we did not think.' In their fear they now remembered the Lord.**'What shall we do now? Where can we and our cattle find shelter?' But their deliberation could not prevent what was coming. Says Tuka, they were bewildered and did not know what to do.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Indra, blinded by pride, could not grasp this truth. So he sent down a rain of stones. The clouds thundered and crashed overhead, and a storm broke on them all at once. The cowherds saw the rain bearing down and were afraid. Worry took hold of them and they forgot their play. They said, the cowherd-boy has done wrong. It felt sweet at the time, and we did not stop to think. In their fear they now remembered the Lord. What shall we do now? Where can we and our cattle find shelter? But all their thinking could not stop what was coming. Tuka says: they were bewildered and did not know what to do.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the storm that opens the Govardhan story, and Tukaram frames it through pride and its undoing. Indra, stung in his pride, hurls down stones, and the cowherds who had cheerfully gone along now panic and blame the boy who led them. The turn is in their fear: only when their own planning fails completely do they remember the Lord. The poem watches how trouble strips a person of self-reliance and pushes the mind, finally, toward the one it had forgotten.

GATHA 4536

Krishna Leela

The lifted mountain, do not fear

मराठी मूळ

वेडावलीं काय करावें या काळीं । ह्मणे वनमाळी गोपाळांसि ॥1॥
 शिरी धरुं गोवद्धनन उचलूनि । ह्मणे तुह्मी कोणी भिऊं नका ॥2॥
 नका सांडूं कोणी आपला आवांका । मारितां या हाका आरौळ्या ॥3॥
 अशंकित चित्तें न वटे त्यां खरें । धाकें च ते बरें ह्मणती चला ॥4॥
 चित्ती धाक परि जवळी अनंत । तुका ह्मणे घात होऊं नेदी ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Lord said to the bewildered cowherds, 'What should be done at such a time?' 'Let us lift Govardhan mountain and hold it overhead. Let none of you be afraid.' 'Do not lose chitta.

Shout and cheer together.' Their minds were not at ease; it did not seem possible. But out of fear they said, 'Very well, let us go.' Fear was in their chitta, yet the Infinite One was beside them.

Says Tuka, He does not let His own come to harm.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The cowherds were bewildered. What is to be done now? Vanamali said to them, we will lift Govardhan and hold it up overhead. None of you be afraid. Do not lose heart, any of you. Shout and call out together. Their minds were not at ease; it did not seem possible. But out of fear they said, very well, let us go. Fear was in their hearts, yet the Infinite One stood beside them. Tuka says: he does not let his own come to harm.

WHAT IT MEANS

Vanamali answers the panic of the last poem with a plan that sounds impossible: lift the whole mountain. He tells the cowherds not to lose heart and to shout together, drawing them into the act. They do not really believe it can be done, but their fear pushes them to obey anyway. Tukaram lets that gap stand. They go forward on shaky trust, and the line that holds them up is not their confidence but the simple fact that the Infinite One is beside them and will not let his own be harmed.

GATHA 4537

Krishna Leela

The hidden doer, grace to the humble

मराठी मूळ

नेदी दुःख देखों दासा नारायण । ठेवी निवारून आल्या आधीं ॥1॥
 आधीं पुढें शुद्ध करावा मारग । दासांमागें मग सुखरूप ॥2॥
 पर्वतासि हात लाविला अनंतें । तो जाय वरतें आपेंआप ॥3॥
 आपल्याआपण उचलिला गिरी । गोपाळ हे करी निमित्यासि ॥4॥
 निमित्य करुनि करावें कारण । करितां आपण कळों नेदी ॥5॥
 दिनाचा कृपाळु पतितपावन । हें करी वचन सांच खरें ॥6॥
 सांगणें न लगे सुखदुःख दासा । तुका ह्मणे ऐसा कृपावंत ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Narayana does not let His servants see suffering. He clears the obstacles before they arrive.

He cleans the path ahead and then follows behind His servants, keeping them safe. The Infinite One put His hand to the mountain, and it rose upward of its own accord.

He lifted the mountain by Himself, using the cowherds only as a pretense. He uses instruments while doing the work Himself, never revealing that He alone is the doer.

He is gracious to the humble, the Purifier of the Fallen. He makes these words come true.

A servant need not tell God his joys and sorrows. Says Tuka, such is the Compassionate One.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Narayana does not let his servants see suffering. He sets the danger aside before it ever arrives. First he makes the road ahead clean, then walks behind his servants to keep them safe. The Infinite One laid his hand on the mountain, and it rose up of its own accord. He lifted the hill himself, using the cowherds only for show. He does the work himself and uses others as the instrument, never letting it be known that he alone is the doer. He is kind to the lowly, the one who purifies the fallen. He makes these words come true. A servant need not tell God his joys and sorrows. Tuka says: such is the Compassionate One.

WHAT IT MEANS

The poem looks behind the spectacle and names who is really doing the lifting. The cowherds seem to hold the mountain, but it rises on its own under his hand; they are only the instruments he uses to keep himself hidden. Tukaram draws out the pattern. God clears the danger before it lands, walks behind his own to guard them, and works in secret so the credit never falls to him. The last lines land the comfort: you do not even have to recite your troubles to him, because such is his compassion that he has already acted.

GATHA 4538

Krishna Leela

Imaginary burden, pride exposed

मराठी मूळ

कृपावंतें हाक दिली सकिळकां । माजिया रे नका राहों कोणी ॥1॥
 निघाले या भेणे पाउसाच्या जन । देखे गोवद्धनन उचलिला ॥2॥
 लाविले गोपाळ फेरीं चहूंकडे । हांसे कुंपदे रडे कोणी धाकें ॥3॥
 धाकें हीं सकळ निघालीं भीतरी । उचलिला गिरी तयाखालीं ॥4॥
 तयाखालीं गाई वत्सें आलीं लोक । पक्षी सकिळक जीवजाति ॥5॥
 जिहीं ह्मणविलें हरीचे अंकित । जातीचे ते होत कोणी तरी ॥6॥
 जाति कुळ नाहीं तयासि प्रमाण । अनन्या अनन्य तुका ह्मणे ॥7॥
 त्यांसि राखे बळें आपुले जे दास । किळकाळासि वास पाहों नेदी ॥1॥
 पाउस न येतां केली यांची थार । लागला तुषार येऊं मग ॥2॥
 येउनि दगड बैसतील गिरी । वरुषला धारीं शिळांचिये ॥3॥
 शिळांचिये धारीं वरुषला आकांत । होता दिवस सात एक सरें ॥4॥
 एक सरें गिरि धरिला गोपाळीं । होतो भाव बळी आह्मी ऐसे ॥5॥
 ऐसें कळों आलें देवाचिया चित्ता । ह्मणे तुह्मीं आतां हात सोडा ॥6॥
 हांसती गोपाळ करुनि नवल । आइकोनि बोल गोविंदाचे ॥7॥
 दावितील डोया गुडघे कोपर । फुटले ते भार उचलितां ॥8॥
 भार आह्मांवरि घालुनि निराळा । राहिलासी डोळा चुकवुनि ॥9॥
 निमित्य अंगुळी लावियेली बरी । पाहों कैसा गिरी धरितोसि ॥10॥
 सिणले हे होते ठायींच्या त्या भारें । लटिकें चि खरें मानुनियां ॥11॥
 बळें हुंवरती सत्य त्यां न कळे । नुघडती डोळे अंधळ्यांचे ॥2॥
 आसुडिल्या माना हात पाय नेटें । तंव भार बोटें उचलिला ॥3॥
 लटिका चि आह्मीं सीण केला देवा । कळों आलें तेव्हां सकळांसि ॥4॥
 आलें कळों तुका ह्मणे अनुभवें । मग अहंभावे सांडवलीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Compassionate One called out to everyone: 'Come under the mountain, all of you. Let no one remain outside.' The people, terrified of the rain, emerged and saw the mountain lifted.

The cowherds were stationed all around the rim. Some laughed, some cried, some trembled with fear.

All of them came beneath the mountain: the people, the cows, the calves, the birds, all living creatures. All who called themselves Hari's own, of whatever kind.

Says Tuka, God recognizes no caste or clan. He embraces whatever is surrendered.

He protects His own with all His might. He does not let even Death look their way.

The rain did not reach them; instead hail and boulders began to fall. Stones rained down upon the mountain for seven days without end.

The cowherds held up the mountain for that time, believing themselves truly strong. Then God sensed their growing pride and said, 'You may let go now.' The cowherds laughed at the absurdity.

'Show us your blistered knees and elbows from carrying the load,' they said. 'You put the burden on us and stood aside, out of sight.' 'You barely touched it with a fingertip.

Let us see how you hold this mountain.' They had been straining under an imaginary weight, believing the illusion to be real. They bragged in their pride, unable to see the truth.

When they finally shook out their arms and legs, they found the mountain resting on a single finger. 'We labored for nothing, O God.' Then, at last, everyone understood.

Says Tuka, they understood through direct experience, and their pride was laid aside.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Compassionate One called out to everyone: come under the mountain, all of you, let no one stay outside. The people, terrified of the rain, came out and saw the mountain lifted. The cowherds were set all around the rim. Some laughed, some wept, some shook with fear. All of them came in beneath the mountain, the hill held up over their heads. Under it came the people, the cows, the calves, the birds, every living kind. All who called themselves Hari's own, of whatever sort they were. Caste and clan are no measure to him; to the wholly surrendered he is wholly given. Tuka says. He guards his servants with all his strength and will not let even Death look their way. The rain did not reach them; then hail and boulders began to fall. Stones came down and struck the mountain, raining in sheets of rock. The downpour of stones was a terror, and it went on seven days without a break. All that time the cowherds held the hill, sure they themselves were strong. God saw this pride rising in their minds and said, you may let go now. The cowherds laughed and thought it strange to hear Govinda's words. Show us, they said, your knees and elbows blistered from carrying the load. You put the weight on us and stood apart, slipping out of sight. You barely set a fingertip to it. Let us see how you hold this mountain. They had been straining under a weight that was never there, taking the false for the real. They boasted in their strength, blind to the truth, their eyes would not open. When at last they shook out their necks, arms and legs and looked, the mountain was resting on a single finger. We labored for nothing, O God, they said, and then it dawned on every one of them. Tuka says: they understood it by direct experience, and their pride was laid down.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the heart of the Govardhan story told as a parable about the ego. God shelters every creature under the hill without asking caste or clan, requiring only surrender, and he guards them so completely that even Death cannot look their way. But the cowherds, holding the mountain for seven days, come to believe their own arms are bearing it. When God tells them to let go, they mock him, sure he never carried his share. Then they look: the whole weight was resting on one finger, and their straining had been against a burden that was never theirs. Tukaram points the lesson at our own self-importance. What we are sure we are carrying by our own strength, God has been holding all along, and only direct experience, not argument, finally lays the pride down.

GATHA 4539

Krishna Leela

Surrender after pride, You alone are strong

मराठी मूळ

सांडवले सकळांचे अभिमान । आणिले शरण लोटांगणीं ॥1॥
 लोटांगणीं आले होऊनियां दीन । मग नारायण ह्मणे भलें ॥2॥
 भला आजि तुह्मी केला साच पण । गिरि गोवर्धन उचलिला ॥3॥
 लागती चरणा सकळ ते काळीं । आह्मांमध्ये बळी तूं चि एक ॥4॥
 एका तुजविण न यों आह्मी कामा । कळों कृष्णा रामा आलें आजी ॥5॥
 आजिवरि आह्मां होता अभिमान । नेणतां चरणमहिमा तुझा ॥6॥
 तुझा पार आह्मी नेणों नारायणा । नखीं गोवर्धनना राखियेलें ॥7॥
 राखियेलें गोकुळ आह्मां सकळांसि । दगडाच्या राशी वरुषतां ॥8॥
 वर्णावें तें काय तुझें महिमान । धरिती चरण सकळक ॥9॥
 सकळ ही तान विसरलीं भूक । सकळ ही सुख दिलें त्यांसि ॥10॥
 त्यासि कळों आला वैकुंठनायका । तुका ह्मणे लोक निर्भर ते ॥11॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The pride of all was dissolved, and they fell prostrate in surrender. They came as humble supplicants, and Narayana said, 'Well done.' 'Today you have truly kept your pledge.

You have lifted the Govardhan mountain.' They all fell at His feet. 'Among us, You alone are the strong One.' 'Without You, we are of no use.

Today we have understood, O Krishna, O Rama.' 'Until now we were full of pride, not knowing the greatness of Your feet.' 'We do not know Your depths, O Narayana. You held Govardhan upon Your fingertip.' 'You saved Gokul and all of us when boulders rained from the sky.' 'How can we describe Your greatness?' Everyone held His feet.

They all forgot hunger and thirst. They were given complete happiness.

Says Tuka, they recognized the Lord of Vaikuntha, and the people were filled with perfect peace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The pride of all of them was broken, and they were brought low in surrender. They came and fell flat on the ground as humble ones, and then Narayana said, well done. You have truly kept your word today; you have lifted up Govardhan. They all fell at his feet then. Among us, you alone are the strong one. Without you we are good for nothing. Today we have understood, O Krishna, O Rama. Until today we carried our pride, not knowing the greatness of your feet. We do not know your limits, O Narayana; on your nail you held up Govardhan. You saved Gokul and all of us when heaps of stones rained down. How can we put your greatness into words? Every one of them held his feet. They all forgot their thirst and hunger; he gave them every joy. They came to know the Lord of Vaikuntha. Tuka says: the people were filled to the brim.

WHAT IT MEANS

This poem is the answer to the cowherds' boasting: now that the trick is exposed, their pride collapses into worship. They fall flat, confess that they alone are nothing, and that he alone is the strong one who held the hill on a fingernail. Tukaram catches the exact moment of waking. Up to today we carried our pride, not knowing the greatness of your feet. The recognition is not grim; it overflows into joy, hunger and thirst forgotten, the whole crowd filled to the brim once they truly know who has been with them.

GATHA 4540

Krishna Leela

God among them, the world forgotten

मराठी मूळ

लोकां कळों आला देव आह्वांमधीं । टाकिली उपाधि तिहीं शंका ॥1॥
 शंका नाही थोरां लाहानां जीवांसि । कळला हा हृषीकेशी मग ॥2॥
 मग मनीं जाले निर्भर सकळ । संगें लोकपाळ कृष्णाचिया ॥3॥
 कृष्णाचिया ओंव्या गाणें गाती गीत । कृष्णमय चित्त जालें त्यांचें ॥4॥
 त्यांसि ठावा नाही बाहेरिल भाव । अंतरीं च वाव सुख जालें ॥6॥
 सुखें तया दीस न कळे हे राती । अखंड या ज्योती गोविंदाची ॥6॥
 चिंतनें चि धालीं न लगे अन्नपाणी । तुका ह्मणे मनीं समाधान ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The people realized that God was among them. They cast aside all doubt and suspicion.

Neither the great nor the small nor any creature harbored any uncertainty. They recognized Hrishiksha.

Then all chittas became filled with peace, dwelling in the company of Krishna. They sang ovis and songs about Krishna.

Their minds became entirely absorbed in Krishna. They had no awareness of the outside world; within, the space was all joy.

In that joy, they could not distinguish day from night, for the light of Govinda shone unbroken. Through contemplation alone they were satisfied; food and water were no longer needed.

Says Tuka, contentment filled their minds.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The people came to know that God was among them, and they threw off the load of all their doubt. Great souls and small, every living thing, had no more uncertainty: they had recognized Hrishiksha. Then all of them were filled with peace, in the company of Krishna. They sang verses about Krishna and sang their songs, and their minds turned entirely into Krishna. They had no awareness left of any outer thing; within, the empty space had become joy. In that joy they could not tell day from night, for the light of Govinda never went out. Through remembrance alone they were full; they needed no food or water. Tuka says: their minds were at rest.

WHAT IT MEANS

Once the cowherds know who is among them, doubt simply drops away, in the great and the small alike, and the whole village settles into Krishna. Tukaram describes a mind so absorbed that the outer world falls silent and the inner space fills with joy. The marks he names are old signs of deep absorption: day and night blur, hunger and thirst fade, and remembrance alone keeps them full. What began as a storm has ended in steady inner peace.

GATHA 4541

Krishna Leela

Senses at peace, no mine or yours

मराठी मूळ

समाधान त्यांचीं इंद्रियें सकळ । जयां तो गोपाळ समागमें ॥1॥
 गोविंदाचा जाला प्रकाश भीतरी । मग त्यां बाहेरी काय काज ॥2॥
 काज काम त्यांचें सरले व्यापार । नाहीं आप पर माझें तुझें ॥3॥
 माया सकळांची सकळां ही वरी । विषय तें हरि दिसों नेदी ॥4॥
 दिसे तया आप परावें सारिखें । तुका ह्मणे सुखें कृष्णाचिया ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All their senses were at peace, for the Cowherd was with them. The light of Govinda blazed within.

What need then for anything outside? All their needs and occupations ceased. There was no mine or yours, no self or other.

The illusion that veils everyone could not make them see anything other than Hari. Says Tuka, to them, one's own and another's were the same, through the joy of Krishna.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All their senses were at peace, for the Cowherd was in their company. The light of Govinda had risen within them, so what work was left outside? Their tasks and their dealings were finished; there was no mine, no yours, no self, no other. The illusion that covers everyone, that covers all, could not let them see anything but Hari. Tuka says: to them their own and the stranger looked the same, in the joy of Krishna.

WHAT IT MEANS

This poem describes what is left after the world has fallen away: senses quiet, the inner light steady, all ordinary business done. Tukaram names the deepest mark of it, the dropping of mine and yours, self and other. The same Maya that keeps everyone divided cannot work on them now, because they see only Hari wherever they look. In the joy of Krishna the line between one's own people and strangers simply dissolves.

GATHA 4542

Krishna Leela

No hunger, no count of days

मराठी मूळ

कृष्णाचिया सुखें भुक नाहीं तान । सदा समाधान सकळांचें ॥१॥
 कळलें चि नाहीं जाले किती दिस । बाहेरिल वास विसरलीं ॥२॥
 विसरु कामाचा तुका ह्मणे जाला । उद्वेग राहिला जावें यावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*In the bliss of Krishna there was no hunger or thirst. All were perfectly content.**They did not notice how many days had passed. They had forgotten the world outside.**Says Tuka, desire itself had been forgotten. The restless urge to come and go had ceased.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the joy of Krishna there was no hunger, no thirst; all of them were always at peace. They did not even notice how many days had gone by; they had forgotten the world outside. Tuka says: desire itself had been forgotten. The restless urge of coming and going had stopped.

WHAT IT MEANS

A short poem holding the state at its quietest. Lost in the joy of Krishna, the cowherds lose track of hunger, thirst, and time alike. Tukaram puts his finger on the root of it: not just the world but desire itself is forgotten. With wanting gone, the constant restless motion of coming and going, of chasing one thing after another, simply comes to a stop.

GATHA 4543

Krishna Leela

God known through devotees, shun the slanderer

मराठी मूळ

जावें बाहेरी हा नाठवे विचार । नाहीं समाचार ठावा कांहीं ॥1॥
 कांहीं न कळे तें कळों आलें देवा । मांडिला रिघावा कवतुक ॥2॥
 कवतुकासाठीं भक्त देहावरि । आणिताहे हरि बोलावया ॥3॥
 यासि नांव रूप नाहीं हा आकार । कळला साचार भक्ता मुखें ॥4॥
 मुखें भक्तांचिया बोलतो आपण । अंगसंगें भिन्न नाहीं दोघां ॥5॥
 दोघे वेगळाले लेखिल जो कोणी । तयाचा मेदिनी बहु भार ॥6॥
 तयासी घडलीं सकळ ही पापें । भक्तांचिया कोपें निंदा द्वेषें ॥7॥
 द्वेषियाचा संग न घडावा कोणा । विष जेंवी प्राणां नाश करी ॥8॥
 करितां आइके निंदा या संतांची । तया होती ते चि अधःपात ॥9॥
 पतन उद्धार संगाचा महिमा । त्यजावें अधमा संत सेवीं ॥10॥
 संतसेवीं जोडे महालाभरासी । तुका ह्मणे यासि नाश नाहीं ॥11॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The thought of going outside did not occur to them. They had no awareness of what was happening in the world.

What they did not know became known to God, and He began to stir them with a new wonder. For the sake of wonder, God brings His devotees back into bodily awareness, calling them to speak.

He who has no name, form, or shape is truly known through the mouths of His devotees. God speaks through the mouths of His devotees.

He and they are never separate. Whoever considers the two as distinct, that one is a heavy burden upon the earth.

All sins accumulate for such a person, who through slander and hatred offends the devotees. One should never keep the company of the envious; it is like poison that destroys life.

Those who hear or participate in the slander of saints suffer the same downfall. The company one keeps determines one's rise or fall.

Abandon the wicked and serve the saints. In the service of saints, great treasures are gathered.

Says Tuka, this treasure knows no decay.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The thought of going outside never crossed their minds; they had no news of anything. What they did not know became known to God, and he set up a new wonder to draw them out. For the sake of that wonder, Hari brings his devotees back into the body and calls them to speak. He who has no name, no form, no shape is truly known through the mouths of his devotees. He speaks through his devotees' mouths himself; in being joined to them, the two are not separate. Whoever counts the two as distinct is a heavy weight on the earth. Every sin gathers on such a one, who through slander and hatred offends the devotees. Keep no one company with the hateful man; he is like poison that destroys your life. Those who speak or even listen to the slander of saints fall the same way down. Rise and fall hang on the company you keep. Leave the base ones, serve the saints. Tuka says: in serving the saints a great gain is gathered, and this gain never decays.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here Tukaram turns from the absorbed cowherds to a hard teaching about the devotees themselves. God, who has no name or form, becomes known in the world through the mouths of his saints, and he is so joined to them that to treat God and his devotee as two separate things is a grave error. From this he draws a sharp warning, aimed not at any person but at a pattern: slander and hatred of saints heap up sin, and merely keeping company with such talk or even listening to it pulls a person down the same way. The remedy is plain. Watch the company you keep, leave the corrupting kind, and serve the saints, where the one gain that never rots is found.

GATHA 4544

Krishna Leela

Remembrance fills, rain stops unnoticed

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं नाश हरि आठवितां मुखें । जोडतील सुखें सकळ ही ॥1॥
 सकळी ही सुखें वोळलीं अंतरीं । मग त्याबाहेरी काय काज ॥2॥
 येऊं विसरलीं बाहेरी गोपाळें । तल्लीन सकळें कृष्णसुखें ॥3॥
 सुख तें योगियां नाहीं समाधीस । दिलें गाई वत्स पशु जीवां ॥4॥
 वारला पाऊस केव्हां नाहीं ठावा । तुका ह्मणे देवावांचूनियां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no decay when Hari is remembered with the lips. All joys come flooding in.

When all joys have gathered within, what need is there for anything outside? The cowherds forgot to go outside, absorbed entirely in the bliss of Krishna. The bliss that yogis cannot find even in deep samadhi was given to cows, calves, and all creatures.

Says Tuka, when the rain stopped, no one knew, except God Himself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no decay when Hari is remembered with the lips; every joy will be gained. When all joys have gathered within, what work is left outside? The cowherds forgot to step outside, wholly sunk in the joy of Krishna. The joy that yogis do not find even in their deepest samadhi was given here to cows, calves, and all the creatures. When the rain stopped, no one knew. Tuka says: no one but God himself.

WHAT IT MEANS

The poem holds two things side by side. First, simply remembering Hari with the lips brings every joy and nothing fades, so that once joy gathers within there is no reason to look outside. Second, and more startling, the bliss that yogis cannot reach even in deep samadhi was here handed freely to ordinary cows and calves. Tukaram lets the contrast make his point: grace does not wait on spiritual achievement. They were so absorbed that the rain ended without anyone noticing, no one but God, who had ordered the whole thing.

GATHA 4545

Krishna Leela

The danger lifted, time to go home

मराठी मूळ

यांसि समाचार सांगतों सकळा । चलावें गोकुळा ह्याने देव ॥1॥
 देव राखे तया आडलिया काळें । देव सुखफळें देतो दासां ॥2॥
 दासां दुःख देखों नेदी आपुलिया । निवारी आलिया न कळतां ॥3॥
 नाहीं मेघ येतां जातां देखियेला । धारीं वरुषला शिळांचिये ॥4॥
 एवढें भक्तांचें सांकडें अनंता । होय निवारिता तुका ह्याने ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God told them the news. 'Let us go to Gokul,' He said.

God protects His own when danger comes and gives the fruit of happiness to His servants. He does not let His servants see suffering; He removes it before it arrives, without their knowing.

The clouds were not seen coming or going. The rain of boulders had fallen in torrents.

Says Tuka, the Infinite One removes such great calamities from the path of His devotees.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God told them all the news: let us go to Gokul, he said. God guards his own when the time turns against them, and gives his servants the fruit of joy. He does not let his servants see suffering; he removes the trouble before it comes, without their knowing. No one saw the clouds come or go, yet the rain of stones had poured down in sheets. So great was the danger to his devotees, Tuka says, and the Infinite One lifted it away.

WHAT IT MEANS

The cycle closes with the storm gone and God calling everyone home to Gokul. Tukaram gathers the whole episode into one steady claim about how God treats his own: he stands guard when the times turn hostile and clears away the trouble before it can touch them, often without their even noticing. The clouds came and went unseen, yet a rain of boulders had fallen; the danger was real and enormous. The point is that the Infinite One quietly carried it, and his servants were kept safe through it without ever having to bear the weight.

GATHA 4546

Krishna Leela

Govardhan lifted, the rain of joy

मराठी मूळ

काकुलती एकें पाहाती बाहेरी । तया ह्मणे हरि वोसरला ॥1॥
 वोसरला मेघ आला होता काळ । बाहेरी सकळ आले लोक ॥2॥
 कवतुक जालें ते काळीं आनंद । कळला गोविंद साच भावें ॥3॥
 भावें तयापुढें नाचती सकळें । गातील मंगळें ओंव्या गीत ॥4॥
 गीत गाती ओंव्या रामकृष्णावरी । गोपाळ मोहोरी वाती पांवे ॥5॥
 वत्सें गाई पशू नाचती आनंदें । वेधलिया छंदें गोविंदाच्या ॥6॥
 चित्त वेधियेलें गोविंदें जयाचें । कोण तें दैवाचें तयाहुनि ॥7॥
 तयाहुनि कोणी नाहीं भाग्यवंत । अखंड सांगात गोविंदाचा ॥8॥
 गोविंदाचा संग तुका ह्मणे ध्यान । गोविंद ते जन गोकुळींचे ॥9॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A few of them peeked outside and saw the storm had passed. Hari said it had cleared.

The dark clouds that had gathered were gone. Everyone came out.

Wonder and joy arose at that moment. Govinda was known in His true form.

They danced and sang before Him, chanting auspicious ovis and songs. They sang ovis and songs about Rama and Krishna.

The cowherds blew their flutes and horns. Calves, cows, and all creatures danced in delight, captivated by the spell of Govinda.

One whose chitta has been captured by Govinda, who is more fortunate than that one? Says Tuka, no one is more blessed than the one who has the constant company of Govinda.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A few of them peeked outside and saw the storm had passed. Hari said it had cleared. The dark clouds that had gathered were gone. Everyone came out. Wonder and joy rose in that moment. Govinda was known in his true form. They danced and sang before him, chanting auspicious ovis and songs. They sang ovis and songs about Rama and Krishna. The cowherds blew their flutes and horns. The calves, the cows, all the creatures danced in delight, caught in the spell of Govinda. Whose mind has been caught by Govinda: who is more fortunate than that one? Tuka says: no one is more blessed than the one who has the constant company of Govinda.

WHAT IT MEANS

This opens the aftermath of the Govardhan rescue: the storm is over, the people step out, and they recognize who Krishna truly is. The whole village erupts into song and dance, and even the animals are swept into it. Tukaram then turns the scene into a single claim about fortune. The most blessed person alive is not the powerful or the rich one, but the one whose attention has been captured by Govinda. He names the prize plainly: unbroken company with God is the highest luck a soul can have.

GATHA 4547

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, the boasting clouds

मराठी मूळ

गोकुळींची गती कोण जाणे परि । पाहों आला वरी इंद्राव ॥1॥
 इंद्रापाशीं मेघ बोलती बडिवार । सकळ संहार करुनि आलों ॥2॥
 आतां जीव नाहीं सांगाया ते रानीं । पुरिलें पाषाणीं शिळाधारीं ॥3॥
 रिता कोठें नाहीं राहों दिला ठाव । जल्पती तो भाव न कळतां ॥4॥
 न कळतां देव बळें हुंवरती । साच ते पावती अपमान ॥5॥
 माव न कळतां केली तोंडपिटी । इंद्र आला दृष्टी पाहावया ॥6॥
 पाहतां तें आहे जैसें होतें तैसें । नाचती विशेषें तुका ह्मणे ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Indra came from above to see the state of Gokul for himself. The clouds boasted to Indra, 'We have destroyed everything.'

'We have come back from a total annihilation.' 'There is not a jiva left to tell the tale in that forest. We buried them all under boulders.' 'Not a spot was left uncovered.' They bragged, not knowing the truth.

Those who boast without knowing God suffer humiliation. The clouds had boasted and beaten their chests in vain.

Indra came down to see for himself. Says Tuka, everything was exactly as it had been. The people danced with even greater joy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who can know the ways of Gokul? Indra came down from above to see for himself. The clouds boasted before Indra: we have destroyed everything. We have come back from a total annihilation. There is not a single living thing left in that forest to tell the tale. We buried them all under boulders. We left no spot uncovered. They bragged, not knowing the truth. Not knowing God, they bellowed loudly, and so they truly earned their disgrace. Not knowing the trick, they beat their own mouths in vain. Indra came down to look with his own eyes. He looked, and everything was just as it had been. Tuka says: they were dancing, more joyfully than ever.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells the comic turn that follows Govardhan. The storm-clouds, sent to drown Gokul, report back to Indra that they have wiped the place out, certain of their success. But their boast is empty, because they did not know that God himself was sheltering the village. When Indra comes to verify, he finds Gokul untouched and the people dancing harder than before. The lesson sits in line five: those who brag without knowing God earn their own humiliation, and the boaster who cannot see the larger hand at work beats his own mouth for nothing.

GATHA 4548

Krishna Leela

Indra's awe, division dissolved

मराठी मूळ

नाचतां देखिलीं गाई वत्सं जन । विस्मित होऊन इंद्र ठेला ॥1॥
 लागला पाऊस शिळांचिये धारीं । वांचलीं हीं परीं कैसीं येथें ॥2॥
 येथें आहे नारायण संदेह नाही । विघ्न केलें ठायीं निविनघ्न तें ॥3॥
 विचारितां उचलिला गोवद्धनन । अवतार पूर्ण कळों आला ॥4॥
 आला गौळ्यांच्या घरा नारायण । करितो स्तवन इंद्र त्यांचें ॥5॥
 त्यांच्या पुण्या पार कोण करी लेखा । न कळे चतुर्मुखा ब्रह्मयासि ॥6॥
 सीणतां जो ध्याना न ये एकवेळा । तो तया गोपाळां समागमें ॥7॥
 समागमें गाई वत्स पुण्यवंता । देह कुर्विळतां अंगसंग ॥8॥
 संग जाला मायबापां लोकपाळां । आंळगिती गळा कंठाकंठ ॥9॥
 करिते हे जाले स्तुती सकिळक । देव इंद्रादिक गोविंदाची ॥10॥
 करितील वृष्टी पुष्पवरुषाव । देवआदिदेव पूजियेला ॥11॥
 पुष्पांजुळी मंत्र घोष जयजयकार । दुमदुमी अंबर नेणें नादें ॥12॥
 नामाचे गजर गंधर्वाचीं गाणीं । आनंद भुवनीं न माये तो ॥13॥
 तो सुखसोहळा अनुपम्य रासी । गोकुळीं देवासी दोहीं ठायीं ॥14॥
 दोहीं ठायीं सुख दिलें नारायणें । गेला दुरुषणें वैरभाव ॥15॥
 भावना भेदाची जाय उठाउठी । तुका ह्मणे भेटी गोविंदाचे ॥16॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When Indra saw the cows, the calves, and the people dancing, he was struck with wonder. 'A rain of boulders fell upon them.

How have they survived?' 'Narayana must be here. There is no doubt.

The obstacle was turned into no obstacle at all.' Upon reflection, the lifting of Govardhan made it clear: a full incarnation had arrived. Narayana had come to the home of the cowherds.

Indra now praised their merit. 'Who can count their store of virtue? Not even Brahma with his four faces.' 'He who cannot be reached even once through the exhaustion of meditation is with these cowherds always.' 'With the cows, the calves, and these blessed ones, He touches their bodies and caresses them.' Their parents and guardians embraced Him, throat to throat.

All beings, including the gods led by Indra, began to praise Govinda. The gods showered a rain of flowers.

The God of gods was worshiped. Handfuls of flowers, sacred chants, and cries of 'Victory!' rang out.

The sky thundered with the sound. The chanting of the Name, the songs of the celestial musicians, the joy that could not be contained in all the worlds.

That unmatched festival of happiness took place in Gokul, for both God and the people. In both domains, Narayana gave the same joy.

Through His darshan, all enmity dissolved. Says Tuka, at the meeting with Govinda, the sense of division is instantly destroyed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When Indra saw the cows, the calves, and the people dancing, he stood struck with wonder. A rain of boulders fell on them; how have they survived here? Narayana is here, there is no doubt. The obstacle was made into no obstacle at all. As he thought it over, the lifting of Govardhan made it clear: a full incarnation had come. Narayana had come to the home of the cowherds. Indra now praised their merit. Who can reckon their store of virtue? Not even four-faced Brahma can. He who cannot be reached even once through the exhaustion of meditation is with these cowherds always. With the cows, the calves, and these blessed ones, he touches their bodies and caresses them. Their parents and guardians embraced him, throat to throat. All beings, the gods led by Indra among them, began to praise Govinda. The gods showered down a rain of flowers. The God of gods was worshiped. Handfuls of flowers, sacred chants, cries of victory rang out. The sky thundered with the sound. The chanting of the Name, the songs of the celestial musicians, a joy too great to fit in all the worlds. That unmatched festival of happiness took place in Gokul, for both God and the people. In both places Narayana gave the same joy. Through his darshan, all enmity dissolved. Tuka says: at the meeting with Govinda, the sense of division is destroyed at once.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here Indra, who sent the flood, becomes the witness who understands. Seeing Gokul whole after a rain of boulders, he reasons his way to the truth: only a full incarnation of Narayana could have turned that disaster into nothing. His pride collapses into praise, and he marvels that the God whom even Brahma and the hardest meditation cannot reach is here, casually touching and caressing simple cowherds. The poem then widens into a festival of flowers, chant, and song shared by gods and villagers alike. Tukaram lands the point at the end: the very darshan of Govinda burns off enmity, and at the true meeting the feeling of being separate from God is destroyed in an instant.

GATHA 4549

Krishna Leela

The sweet Name, ecstasy unrestrained

मराठी मूळ

गोविंदाचें नाम गोड घेतां वाचे । तेथें हे कडुंचे वैरभाव ॥1॥
 भावें नमस्कार घातले सकळीं । लोटांगणें तळीं महीवरि ॥2॥
 वरि हातबाहे उभारिली देवें । कळलीया भावें सकळांच्या ॥3॥
 सकळ ही वरि बहुडविले स्थळा । चलावें गोपाळा ह्मणे घरा ॥4॥
 राहिलीं हीं नाचों गोविंदाच्या बोलें । पडिलीया डोलें छंदें हो तीं ॥5॥
 छंद तो नावरे आपणा आपला । आनंदाचा आला होता त्यांसि ॥6॥
 त्यांच्या तुका ह्मणे आनंदें सकळ । ठेंगणें गोपाळ समागमें ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Govinda's Name is sweet upon the lips. Where it is spoken, how can enmity remain? All bowed in devotion, prostrating on the ground.

God raised His hands and arms, seeing the true feelings of all. He sent everyone back to their own places.

'Come, cowherds, let us go home,' He said. They would not stop dancing at Govinda's words, swaying and reeling in the grip of ecstasy.

That ecstasy could not be restrained. The tide of bliss had overtaken them.

Says Tuka, in their joy, everything seemed small beside the company of the Cowherd-Boy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Govinda's Name is sweet on the lips. Where it is spoken, how can enmity remain? In devotion they all bowed, prostrating flat on the ground. God raised his hands and arms, seeing the true feeling in all of them. He sent everyone back to their own places. Come, cowherds, let us go home, he said. But they would not stop dancing at Govinda's words, swaying and reeling in the grip of joy. The ecstasy could not be held back by anyone, not even by themselves. The tide of bliss had taken them over. Tuka says: in their joy, everything seemed small beside the company of the Cowherd-Boy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram dwells on what the sweetness of the Name does to a heart. Where Govinda's Name is spoken, enmity cannot stand, so the people fall in worship before him. Even when Krishna gently tells them to go home, they cannot stop dancing, because the bliss has overflowed their own control. The closing line names the measure of that bliss: once you have tasted the company of the Cowherd-Boy, everything else in the world looks small.

GATHA 4550

Krishna Leela

God with his own, no fear in the village

मराठी मूळ

समागमें असे हरि नेणतियां । नेदी जाऊं वांयां अंकितांसि ॥1॥
 अंकितां सावध केलें नारायणें । गोपाळ गोधर्नें सकळकां ॥2॥
 सकळही जन आले गोकुळासि । आनंद मानसीं सकळांच्या ॥3॥
 सकळांचा केला अंगीकार देवें । न कळतां भावें वांचवी त्यां ॥4॥
 त्यां जाला निर्धार हरि आह्मांपासीं । निवांत मानसीं निर्भर तीं ॥5॥
 निर्भर हे जन गोकुळींचे लोक । केले सकळक नारायणें ॥6॥
 नारायण भय येऊं नेदी गांवा । तुका ह्मणे नांवा अनुसरे त्या ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Hari is with the unknowing, in their very company. He does not let His own ones come to grief.

Narayana awakened them: the cowherds, the cattle, everyone. All the people returned to Gokul.

Joy filled every heart. God embraced every one of them, saving them by their devotion even when they did not understand it.

Now they were certain: Hari is with us. Their minds rested in perfect peace.

The people of Gokul were made whole by Narayana. Says Tuka, Narayana does not let fear enter the village. He comes to all who call upon His Name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Hari is with the unknowing, right there in their company. He will not let his own ones come to ruin. Narayana woke them up: the cowherds, the cattle, every one of them. All the people returned to Gokul. Joy was in every heart. God took up the cause of them all, saving them through their devotion even when they did not understand it. Now they were certain: Hari is with us. Their minds rested, calm and full. The people of Gokul, all of them, were made whole by Narayana. Tuka says: Narayana lets no fear come into the village; he comes to all who turn to his Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga states the protective heart of the Govardhan story. God stays beside even those who do not yet understand who he is, and he will not let his own people be destroyed. The villagers, saved without fully grasping how, come away with one settled conviction: Hari is with us, and so their minds rest. Tukaram makes the closing promise general: God keeps fear out of the village, and he comes to anyone who turns to him by his Name.

GATHA 4551

Krishna Leela

The lila as a stage, dharma to be set up

मराठी मूळ

ये दशे चरित्र केलें नारायणें । रांगतां गोधनें राखिताहे॥१॥
हें सोंग सारिलें या रूपें अनंतें । पुढें हि बहु तें करणें आहे ॥२॥
आहे तुका ह्याने धर्म संस्थापणें । केला नारायणें अवतार॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Such were the deeds Narayana performed while still crawling and herding cattle. This chapter of His play was concluded in this form, but much more remained ahead.

Says Tuka, the incarnation was taken for the establishment of dharma.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In this stage of life Narayana did his deeds, guarding the cattle while still crawling as a child. This act of the play was finished in this form, but much more was still to be done ahead. Tuka says: the incarnation was taken by Narayana to establish dharma.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pauses the narrative to mark a scene change. The childhood deeds, done even as the infant crawled and herded, were only one act of a larger play, and more remains to come. He names the purpose behind it all in his signature line: Narayana took this incarnation to set dharma back on its feet. The verse frames Krishna's whole life as a single drama with a stated aim.

GATHA 4552

Krishna Leela

Krishna lila, even hatred becomes the Name

मराठी मूळ

अवतार केला संहारावे दुष्ट । करिती हे नष्ट परपीडा ॥1॥
 परपीडा करी दैत्य कंसराव । पुढें तो ही भाव आरंभिला ॥2॥
 लाविलें लाघव पाहोनियां संधी । सकळांही वधी दुष्टजना ॥3॥
 दुष्टजन परपीडक जे कोणी । ते या चक्रपाणी न साहति ॥4॥
 न साहवे दुःख भक्तांचें या देवा । अवतार घ्यावा लागे रूप ॥5॥
 रूप हें चांगलें रामकृष्ण नाम । हरे भवश्रम उच्चारितां ॥6॥
 उच्चारितां नाम कंस वैरभावें । हरोनियां जीवें कृष्ण केला ॥7॥
 कृष्णरूप त्यासि दिसे अवघें जन । पाहे तों आपण कृष्ण जाला ॥8॥
 पाहिलें दर्पणीं आधील मुखासि । चतुर्भुज त्यासि तो चि जाला ॥9॥
 जालीं कृष्णरूप कन्या पुत्र भाज । तुका ह्मणे राज्य सैन्य जन ॥10॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The incarnation was taken to destroy the wicked who tormented others. The demon-king Kamsa inflicted suffering on the innocent, and the next chapter of that divine play began.

Watching for the right moment, God applied His skill and destroyed every evildoer. Those who cause suffering to others cannot be endured by the Lord of the Discus.

God cannot bear to see His devotees in pain; He must take form to relieve them. His form is beautiful; the Name is Rama Krishna.

Merely uttering it destroys the weariness of worldly existence. By uttering the Name in enmity, Kamsa was absorbed into Krishna.

Consumed by hatred, everything appeared as Krishna to him: his children, his wife, his army, his kingdom. He looked in the mirror and saw a four-armed form.

He himself had become Krishna. Says Tuka, his kingdom, his army, and all his people had turned into Krishna before his eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The incarnation was taken to destroy the wicked who torment others. The demon-king Kamsa kept inflicting suffering on the innocent, and now that next part began. Watching for the right moment, God used his skill and struck down every evildoer. Those who cause others pain cannot be borne by the Lord of the Discus. God cannot bear to see his devotees in pain; he must take form to relieve them. The form is beautiful; the Name is Rama Krishna. Merely uttering it destroys the weariness of worldly life. Uttering the Name in enmity, Kamsa was absorbed into Krishna. Consumed by hatred, everything looked like Krishna to him: his children, his wife, his army, his kingdom. He looked in the mirror and saw a four-armed form. He himself had become Krishna. Tuka says: his kingdom, his army, and all his people had turned into Krishna before his eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here Tukaram moves to Kamsa and makes his strangest, sharpest point about the Name. God takes form to relieve his devotees and to destroy the wicked, and Kamsa is the chief tormentor. But Kamsa thinks about Krishna constantly, even though only in hatred and fear. Because his whole mind is fixed on Krishna, he begins to see Krishna everywhere, in his family, his army, even his own reflection. The claim Tukaram refuses to soften is that even attention given in pure enmity, if it is total, draws a soul into God; the Name does its work regardless of the mood that carries it.

GATHA 4553

Krishna Leela

Each sees by their own faith

मराठी मूळ

सैन्य जन हांसे राया जालें काई । वासपे तो ठायीं आपणासि ॥1॥
 आपणा आपण जयास तीं तैसीं । वैरभाव ज्यांसि भक्ति नाही ॥2॥
 नाही याचा त्याचा भाव एकविध । ह्मणउनि छंद वेगळाले ॥3॥
 वेगळाल्या भावें ती तया हांसती । तयास दिसती अवधीं हरि ॥4॥
 हरिला कंसाचा जीव भाव देवें । द्वेषाचिया भावें तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The army and the people laughed. 'What has happened to the king?' He could not recognize himself.

To each and to all, everything appeared as it did according to their faith. Those without devotion held enmity, and so their experience was different.

With different feelings, they laughed at him, while to him everything appeared as Hari. Says Tuka, through the vision of enmity, Kamsa's soul was absorbed by God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The army and the people laughed: what has happened to the king? He could no longer recognize himself. To each and to all, everything appeared as their own faith made it appear. Those without devotion held only enmity, so what they saw was different. Their feeling was not single-pointed like his, so their experience went its separate way. With those scattered feelings they laughed at him, while to him everything appeared as Hari. Tuka says: through the vision of enmity, Kamsa's soul was absorbed by God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram explains why the same scene looks different to different people. Kamsa, whose whole mind is fixed on Krishna, sees Krishna in everything, while the courtiers around him, scattered and without devotion, see only a king gone mad and laugh. The teaching is that we each meet the world according to the faith we bring to it; what fills the mind shapes what the eyes find. The unsettling conclusion stands: because Kamsa's attention was undivided, even his hatred carried him into God, while the mockers, having no single focus, gained nothing.

GATHA 4554

Krishna Leela

Single-pointed mind, even in hatred

मराठी मूळ

द्वेषाचिया ध्यानं हरिरूप जाले । भाव हारपले देहादिक ॥१॥
 देहादिक कर्म अभिमान वाढे । तया कंसा जोडे नारायण ॥२॥
 नारायण जोडे एकविध भावं । तुका ह्मणे जीवं जाणें लागे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Through the meditation of hatred, he became Hari's form. All sense of body, deeds, and ego dissolved.**By deeds and ego, one only accumulates more. But through single-pointed focus, even in hatred, Kamsa attained Narayana.**Says Tuka, Narayana is attained through single-minded devotion alone. One must give one's entire being.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Through the meditation of hatred, he took on Hari's form. The sense of body and the rest dissolved. By bodily deeds and ego, one only piles up more. But to that Kamsa, Narayana was joined. Narayana is joined through a single-pointed feeling. Tuka says: one must come to know it with one's whole being.

WHAT IT MEANS

This short abhanga states the principle behind Kamsa's strange fate. Constant fear and hatred of Krishna worked on Kamsa like a fierce meditation, until his ordinary sense of body and ego fell away and he was joined to Narayana. Tukaram contrasts this with the usual path of busy deeds and ego, which only adds to bondage. The point he presses is about the mind's singleness: God is reached through undivided attention, and that union must finally be known with the whole being, not merely thought about.

GATHA 4555

Krishna Leela

Self dissolved, God in every being

मराठी मूळ

जीवभाव त्याचा गेला अभिमान । ह्मणऊनि जन हांसे कंसा ॥१॥
 सावध करितां नये देहावरि । देखोनियां दुरि पळे जन ॥२॥
 जन वन हरि जालासे आपण । मग हे लोचन झांकियेले ॥३॥
 झांकुनि लोचन मौन्यें चि राहिला । नाहीं आतां बोलायाचें काम ॥४॥
 बोलायासि दुजें नाहीं हें उरलें । जन कृष्ण जाले स्वयें रूप ॥५॥
 रूप पालटलें गुण नाम याति । तुका ह्मणे भूर्ती देव जाला ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

His ego and sense of self were gone. Therefore the people laughed at Kamsa.

No matter how they tried to rouse him to bodily awareness, he could not return. Seeing this, people fled from him.

Everything, people and forest alike, had become Hari to him. He closed his eyes and sat in silence.

There was nothing left to say. Nothing second remained to be spoken of.

The people had all become Krishna in his eyes, becoming that very form. Names, forms, qualities, and castes had all been transformed.

Says Tuka, God became manifest in every being.

IN PLAIN WORDS

His sense of self and his ego were gone, so the people laughed at Kamsa. However much they tried to rouse him back to bodily awareness, he would not return. Seeing this, people fled from him. Everything, people and forest alike, had become Hari to him. He closed his eyes and sat in silence. Now there was no need to speak. Nothing second was left to be spoken of. The people had all become Krishna in his eyes, become that very form. Names, forms, qualities, and castes had all been transformed. Tuka says: God became manifest in every being.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the final state into which Kamsa's obsession carries him. His ego dissolves so completely that he cannot be roused, and the onlookers, who see only a man undone, laugh and flee. But within him there is no longer any second thing to point at: people, forest, all of it has become Hari, so he falls silent because speech needs duality and duality is gone. The verse ends on the wider truth glimpsed in that extreme: when name, form, quality, and caste fall away, God is seen present in every being.

GATHA 4556

Krishna Leela

The trap of I and thou, surrender required

मराठी मूळ

जालों स्वयें कृष्ण आठव हा चितीं । भेद भयवृत्त उरली आहे ॥1॥
 उरली आहे रूप नांव दिसे भिन्न । मी आणि हा कृष्ण आठवतो ॥2॥
 तोंवरि हा देव नाहीं तयापासीं । आला दिसे त्यासि तो चि देव ॥3॥
 देवरूप त्याची दिसे वरी काया । अंतरीं तो भयाभीत भेदें ॥4॥
 भेदें तुका ह्याने अंतरे गोविंद । साचें विण छंद वांयां जाय ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

'I have become Krishna,' he thought. Yet the awareness of separateness, the fear and duality, still lingered.

Name and form still appeared distinct. The thought 'I and this Krishna' persisted.

As long as this sense of separateness remained, God was not truly with him. Though his outer body appeared divine, within he was still shaken by duality and fear.

Says Tuka, through the sense of difference, Govinda remains distant. Without genuine surrender, all longing is in vain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have myself become Krishna: this thought stayed in his mind. The sense of separateness, the fearful state, was still left. It was still left; form and name still appeared distinct. The thought I, and this Krishna, kept returning. As long as that remained, God was not truly with him; only then would the one who came appear to him as God himself. His outward body looked divine, but inside he was still afraid, shaken by the sense of difference. Tuka says: through the sense of difference, Govinda stays distant; without the real thing, all this longing goes to waste.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here Tukaram refines the lesson with great care so it cannot be misread. Even after Kamsa is filled with Krishna, a residue clings: the thought I have become Krishna still keeps an I standing apart from a Krishna, and with it come fear and a sense of two. As long as that split survives, God is not truly present, however divine the outer scene may look. The closing line is the warning to every seeker: where the feeling of difference remains, Govinda stays at a distance, and without genuine surrender even intense longing is wasted.

GATHA 4557

Krishna Leela

Face to face, the last duality struck down

मराठी मूळ

वांयां तैसे बोल हरिशीं अंतर । केले होती चार भयभेदे ॥1॥
 भेदभय गेलें नोळखे आपणा । भेटी नारायणा कंसा जाली ॥2॥
 जाली भेटी कंसा हरिशीं निकट । सन्मुख चि नीट येरयेरां ॥3॥
 येरयेरां भेटी युद्धाच्या प्रसंगीं । त्याचें शस्त्र अंगीं हाणितलें ॥4॥
 त्याचें वर्म होतें ठावें या अनंता । तुका ह्मणे सत्तानायक हा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those were empty words, keeping Hari at arm's length. Four walls of fear and duality had been built.

When fear and duality dissolved, he no longer recognized himself. Then the meeting with Narayana took place for Kamsa.

Kamsa met Hari face to face, close and direct, each standing before the other. They met in the encounter of battle, and God struck him with his own weapon.

God knew his vulnerable point. Says Tuka, He is the sovereign master of all power.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Empty as such words were, they kept Hari at a distance. Four walls of fear and difference had been raised. When that fear and difference fell, he no longer knew himself. Then the meeting with Narayana came to Kamsa. The meeting came; Kamsa stood close to Hari, the two of them straight and face to face. They met in the moment of battle, and God struck him with his own weapon. God knew his vulnerable point. Tuka says: he is the sovereign master of all power.

WHAT IT MEANS

This closes the Kamsa sequence at the moment of death, and reads it as the breaking of the last barrier. Kamsa's protesting words and his fear had built walls of separation around him; only when those collapse and his self-knowledge dissolves does the true meeting with Narayana come. That meeting takes the outward shape of combat, with God striking Kamsa down using his own vulnerable point. Tukaram ends by naming who holds the final say: God is the sovereign master of all power, and the very enemy who fought him is delivered through that fatal encounter.

GATHA 4558

Krishna Leela

Krishna's deeds, the rescuer arms himself

मराठी मूळ

नारायणें कंस चाणूर मदिला । राज्यीं बैसविला उग्रसेन ॥1॥
 उग्रसेन स्थापियेला शरणागत । पुरविला अंत अभक्ताचा॥2॥
 अवघें चि केलें कारण अनंतें । आपुलिया हातें सकळ ही ॥3॥
 सकळ ही केलीं आपुलीं अंकित । राहे गोपीनाथ मथुरेसि ॥4॥
 मथुरेसि आला वैकुंठनायक । जालें सकळक एक राज्य ॥5॥
 राज्य दिलें उग्रसेना शरणागता । सोडविलीं माता पिता दोन्ही ॥6॥
 सोडवणे धांवे भक्ताच्या कैवारें । तुका ह्मणे करें शस्त्र धरी ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Narayana slew Kamsa and Chanura. He installed Ugrasena on the throne.

Ugrasena, who had sought refuge, was established. The destruction of the faithless was complete.

The Infinite One accomplished everything by His own hand. He made all of them His own.

The Lord of the Gopis dwelt in Mathura. A single undivided rule was established.

The kingdom was given to the surrendered Ugrasena. Both parents, mother and father, were freed.

He rushes to rescue His devotees. Says Tuka, He takes up weapons in His hands for their sake.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Narayana killed Kamsa and Chanura. He set Ugrasena on the throne. Ugrasena had come for refuge, and Narayana made him secure. He brought the faithless to their end. The Infinite One did all of it. He did it all with his own hand. He made everyone his own. The Lord of the gopis stayed in Mathura. One undivided rule was set up. He gave the kingdom to Ugrasena, who had surrendered. He freed both the parents, mother and father. He runs to rescue his devotees. Tuka says: he takes up weapons in his hands for their sake.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells the Mathura story to show what God does for those who turn to him. Krishna kills the tyrant Kamsa and his wrestler, then puts the surrendered Ugrasena on the throne and frees his own imprisoned parents. The point Tukaram draws is the rhythm of it: God acts with his own hand, finishes the work of the faithless, and makes everyone his own. The closing line is the sharp one. The same Infinite One who needs no weapon will take up weapons himself when a devotee is in danger; rescue is not theory, he comes running and armed.

GATHA 4559

Krishna Leela

Krishna's two homes, the hidden heart

मराठी मूळ

धरी दोही ठायीं सारखा चि भाव । देवकी वसुदेव नंद दोघे ॥१॥
 दोन्ही एके ठायीं केल्या नारायणें । वाढविला तिणें आणि व्याली ॥२॥
 व्याला वाढला हा आपल्या आपण । निमित्या कारणें मायबापा ॥३॥
 माय हा जगाची बाप नारायणा । दुजा करी कोण यत्न यासि ॥४॥
 कोण जाणे याचे अंतरींचा भाव । कळों नेदी माव तुका ह्मणे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He held the same love for both sets of parents: Devaki and Vasudeva, Nanda and Yashoda. Narayana united them both.

One gave birth, the other raised Him. He was born and grew by His own will, using parents as the instrument.

He is the Mother and Father of the world, O Narayana. Who else can make any effort for Him? Says Tuka, who can know the feeling within His heart? He does not reveal His mystery.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He holds the same love for both. Devaki and Vasudeva, Nanda and Yashoda, both pairs. Narayana made the two into one. One gave him birth, the other raised him. He was born and he grew up by his own will. The parents were only the occasion. He is the mother of the world; he is its father, O Narayana. Who else can do anything for him? Who knows the feeling inside his heart? Tuka says: he does not let his mystery be known.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at Krishna's two sets of parents and refuses to rank them: the same love goes to both the birth-parents and the foster-parents. Then he overturns the picture. Krishna is not really a child who needs a mother and father; he is himself the mother and father of the whole world, and his birth and growing-up happen by his

own will, with the parents only as the occasion. So no one can do anything for him, and no one can read what moves inside him. The verse lands on the limit of all our knowing: God keeps his own mystery, and will not let it be measured.

GATHA 4560

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the lover who waits

मराठी मूळ

दिनाचा कृपाळु दुष्टजना काळ । एकला सकळ व्यापक हा ॥1॥
 हांसे बोले तैसा नव्हे हा अनंत । नये पराकृत ह्यणों यासि ॥2॥
 यासि कळावया एक भक्तिभाव । दुजा नाहीं ठाव धांडोळतां ॥3॥
 धांडोळतां श्रुति राहिल्या निश्चत । तो करी संकेत गोपींसर्वे ॥4॥
 गोपिकांची वाट पाहे द्रुमातळीं । मागुता न्याहाळी न देखतां ॥5॥
 न देखतां त्यांसि उठे बैसे पाहे । वेडावला राहे वेळोवेळां ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*He is gracious to the humble and Death to the wicked. He alone pervades everything.
 He smiles and speaks, yet He is not what He appears. He should not be called ordinary.
 To know Him, devotion is the only way. There is no other place to search.
 Even the Vedas, having searched, rested in silence. Yet He keeps His tryst with the gopis.
 He waits for them beneath the trees. When they do not come, He looks about restlessly.
 Not seeing them, He rises, sits, and gazes again and again, distracted at every moment.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

He is kind to the lowly and death to the wicked. He alone fills everything. He laughs and talks, but the Infinite is not what he seems. Do not call him an ordinary thing. To know him there is one way: love, the heart turned toward him. Search and you will find no other place. The Vedas searched and fell silent. Yet he keeps his meeting with the gopis. He waits for them under the tree. When they do not come, he looks around for them again. Not seeing them, he gets up, sits down, looks again. Again and again he stands there, out of his senses.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram joins two things that seem opposite: God is the all-pervading Infinite whom even the Vedas cannot reach, and God is the lover waiting under a tree, restless when the gopis are late. The point is that this vast One cannot be grasped by learning or by treating him as an ordinary object; the single road to him is bhava, the loving heart. Where the scriptures search and go quiet, love keeps its appointment. The image of Krishna rising, sitting, and looking again and again, lost in longing, says that the Infinite makes himself small and helpless for the sake of those who love him.

GATHA 4561

Krishna Leela

Krishna's care, the unworried guardian

मराठी मूळ

तो बोले कोमळ निष्ठ साहोनि । कोपतां गौळणी हास्य करी ॥1॥
 करावया दास्य भक्तांचें निर्लज्ज । कवतुकें रज माथां वंदी ॥2॥
 दिलें उग्रसेना मथुरेचें राज्य । सांगितलें काज करी त्याचें ॥3॥
 त्यासि होतां कांहीं अरिष्टनिर्माण । निवारी आपण शरणागता ॥4॥
 शरणागतां राखे सर्व भावें हरि । अवतार धरी तयांसाठीं ॥5॥
 तयांसाठीं वाहे सुदर्शन गदा । उभा आहे सदा सांभिळत ॥6॥
 तळमळ नाहीं तुका ह्मणे चित्ता । भक्तांचा अनंता भार माथां ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He endures their harsh and stern words with gentleness. When the milkmaids scold Him, He only smiles.

To serve His devotees, He is shamelessly eager, joyfully bowing to the dust at their feet. He gave Ugrasena the kingdom of Mathura, fulfilling every task that was asked.

Whenever danger threatened, He stepped in to protect the surrendered ones. Hari protects those who take refuge with all His being.

He takes incarnation for their sake. For their sake He carries the Sudarshana discus and the mace.

He stands ever watchful, guarding them. Says Tuka, there is no worry in the chitta when the burden of the devotees rests upon Ananta's head.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He speaks gently and bears their harsh words. When the milkmaids scold him, he only laughs. To serve his devotees he is shameless. For sport he bows his head to the dust of their feet. He gave Ugrasena the kingdom of Mathura. He did whatever task was asked of him. When any danger arose for them, he himself turned it away from those who had surrendered. Hari guards those who take refuge, with all his being. He takes birth for their sake. For their sake he carries the Sudarshana disc and the mace. He stands always, watching over them. Tuka says: there is no anxiety in his mind. The weight of his devotees rests on Ananta's head.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram paints God as a guardian who lowers himself without shame for those who are his. Krishna takes the gopis' scolding with a laugh, bows to the dust of their feet, and does whatever his devotees ask, from giving Ugrasena a kingdom to turning away every danger that comes near them. He even takes birth and bears weapons only for their sake. The last lines are the consolation: because the burden of protecting his devotees rests on the Infinite's own head, the devotee can be free of worry; the watching is his work, not ours.

GATHA 4562

Krishna Leela

Krishna's justice, the cost of refusing the Name

मराठी मूळ

मारिले असुर दाटले मेदिनी । होते कोणाकोणी पीडित ते ॥१॥
 ते हा नारायण पाठवी अघोरा । संतांच्या मत्सरा घातावरी ॥२॥
 वरिले ते दूर्ती यमाचिया दंडीं । नुच्चरितां तोंडीं नारायण ॥३॥
 नारायण नाम नावडे जयासि । ते जाले मिरासी कुंभपाकीं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The demons who had oppressed the earth were slain. They had tormented everyone in sight.

Narayana sent them to the terrible realms, striking down those who persecuted the saints. Those who did not utter the Name of Narayana were seized by the messengers of Yama.

Says Tuka, those to whom the Name of Narayana was hateful have become permanent residents of the boiling hells.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He killed the demons who had crowded the earth. They had been tormenting people everywhere. Narayana sent them to the dreadful realms, those who struck at the saints out of malice. The messengers of Yama took them under the rod, because they did not speak Narayana's name with their mouths. Tuka says: those to whom the name of Narayana was hateful have become settled tenants of the boiling hell.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reads the slaying of the demons as a plain moral fact, not just a story. Those who oppress others and attack the saints out of spite are brought to their end, and after death Yama's officers seize them. The deciding mark is the mouth: they never uttered the Name. The harsh closing image of the boiling hell is aimed at a pattern, not a person, the refusal to let God's name even cross the lips. The warning turns back on the listener: examine whether the Name has any place in your own speech and heart, since that is what the verse says hangs in the balance.

GATHA 4563

Krishna Leela

Krishna in Mathura, the past forgotten in his face

मराठी मूळ

वास नारायणें केला मथुरेसि । वधूनि दुष्टांसि तये ठायीं ॥१॥
 ठायीं पितियाचे मानी उग्रसेना । प्रतिपाळ जनांसहित लोकां ॥२॥
 लोकां दुःख नाही मागील आठव । देखियेला देव दृष्टी त्यांणीं ॥३॥
 देखोनियां देवा विसरलीं कंसा । ठावा नाही ऐसा होता येथें ॥४॥
 ध्यान गोविंदाचें लागलें या लोकां । निर्भर हे तुका ह्मणे चित्तीं ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Narayana settled in Mathura, having destroyed the wicked of that place. He honored Ugrasena as a father and cared for the people and their welfare.

The people felt no sorrow, no memory of the past. They had seen God with their own eyes.

Seeing God, they forgot Kamsa entirely. It was as if he had never existed.

Says Tuka, the meditation on Govinda captivated these people. They were at perfect peace within.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Narayana made his home in Mathura, after he had killed the wicked of that place. There he honored Ugrasena as a father. He cared for the people and all the folk. The people had no sorrow, no memory of what was past. They had seen God with their own eyes. Having seen God, they forgot Kamsa. It was as if he had never been here at all. The meditation on Govinda took hold of these people. Tuka says: they were full and at peace within.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes Mathura after Krishna settles there: he honors the freed Ugrasena like a father and looks after the whole city. The change in the people is the heart of it. Once they have seen God directly, their old grief and even the memory of the tyrant Kamsa simply drop away, as if the years of fear never happened. The verse names what does this: their minds become fixed on Govinda, and that meditation leaves them full and at peace. Seeing God, Tukaram suggests, does not argue the past away; it makes the past lose its grip.

GATHA 4564

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, only Krishna ends the round of births

मराठी मूळ

चिंतले पावलीं जयां कृष्णभेटी । एरवीं ते आटी वांयांविण ॥1॥
 वासना धरिती कृष्णाविणें कांहीं । सीण केला तिहीं साधनांचा ॥2॥
 चाळविले डंबें एक अहंकारें । भोग जन्मांतरें न चुकती ॥3॥
 न चुकती भोग तपें दानें व्रतें । एका त्या अनंतेंवांचूनियां ॥4॥
 चुकवुनि जन्म देईल आपणा । भजा नारायणा तुका ह्याणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who longed for Krishna's meeting attained what they desired. All other efforts without Him were struggles in vain.

Those who harbored any desire apart from Krishna wearied themselves with futile practices. Those deluded by ego and pretense must continue experiencing the fruits of birth after birth.

Austerities, gifts, and vows cannot end the cycle without the One Infinite Lord. Says Tuka, He alone can break the cycle of birth and grant you Himself. Worship Narayana.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who longed for it reached the meeting with Krishna. For everyone else the effort was wasted. Those who hold any desire apart from Krishna wear themselves out with their practices. Some are fooled by show, some by pride. They do not escape the suffering of birth after birth. Penance, gifts, and vows do not let you escape that suffering. Nothing does, except the one Infinite. Tuka says: he can end your births and give you himself. So worship Narayana.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram weighs two paths against each other. Those who truly long for Krishna meet him and reach their goal; those who keep some other desire, or are caught in display and ego, only tire themselves and stay bound to one birth after another. He goes further and says even the respected works, austerity, charity, and vows, cannot by themselves break the cycle. The one thing that can is the Infinite Lord himself, and what he gives is not a reward but his own self. The verse ends as a direct instruction: drop the side-desires and worship Narayana, because he alone both ends the round and is the prize.

GATHA 4565

Krishna Leela

Krishna and the gopis, single-hearted love

मराठी मूळ

भजल्या गोपिका सर्व भावें देवा । नाहीं चितीं हेवा दुजा कांहीं ॥1॥
 दुजा छंदु नाहीं तयांचिये मनीं । जागृति सपनीं कृष्णध्यान ॥2॥
 ध्यान ज्यां हरीचें हरीसि तयांचें । चित्त ग्वाही ज्यांचें तैशा भावें ॥3॥
 भाग्यें पूर्वपुण्यें आठविती लोक । अवघे सकळक मथुरेचे ॥4॥
 मथुरेचे लोक सुखी केले जन । तेथें नारायण राज्य करी ॥5॥
 राज्य करी गोपीयादवांसहित । कमिनलें बहुतकाळ तेथें ॥6॥
 तेथें दैत्यां उपसर्ग केला लोकां । रचिली द्वारका तुका ह्मणे ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The gopis worshiped God with their whole being, harboring no second desire in their chitta. No other longing existed in their minds.

Waking or sleeping, they contemplated Krishna. Those whose meditation is on Hari, Hari's meditation is on them.

Their chittas are their own witness, sealed by mutual devotion. Through the merit of past lives, all the people of Mathura remembered God.

The people of Mathura were made happy. There Narayana ruled.

He ruled alongside the gopis and Yadavas for a long time. Then the demons troubled the people, and so, says Tuka, Dwaraka was built.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The gopis worshiped God with their whole being. There was no envy, no second thing, in their hearts. No other longing was in their minds. Awake or in sleep, they meditated on Krishna. Those whose meditation is on Hari, on them Hari meditates. Their own hearts are the witness of such love. By the merit of past lives, the people remembered God, all the people of Mathura. The people of Mathura were made happy. There Narayana ruled. He ruled along with the gopis and the Yadavas. He stayed there a long time. Then the demons troubled the people. Tuka says: and so Dwaraka was built.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram holds up the gopis as the measure of devotion: they want nothing besides Krishna, waking or sleeping, with no rival desire and no envy. He states the reciprocity plainly, that the one who meditates on Hari is meditated on by Hari in turn, and the only proof needed is the lover's own heart. From this he widens out to Mathura, where past merit lets the whole city remember God and live in happiness under Krishna's rule. The verse closes by turning the story forward: when the demons threaten the people, Krishna moves them to safety and Dwaraka is built, showing again that his rule is always bent toward sheltering those who are his.

GATHA 4566

Krishna Leela

Krishna at Dwaraka, the city of no distinctions

मराठी मूळ

रचियेला गांव सागराचे पोटी । जडोनि गोमटीं नानारत्नें ॥1॥
 रत्न खणोखणी सोनियाच्या भिंती । लागलिया ज्योति रविकळा ॥2॥
 कळा सकळ ही गोविंदाचे हातीं । मंदिरें निगुतीं उभारिलीं ॥3॥
 उभारिलीं दुर्गा दारवंठे फांजी । कोटी चर्या माजी शोभलिया ॥4॥
 शोभलें उत्तम गांव सागरांत । सकळांसहित आले हरि ॥5॥
 आला नारायण द्वारका नगरा । उदार या शूरा मुगुटमणि ॥6॥
 निवडीना याति समान चि केलीं । टणक धाकुलीं नारायणें ॥7॥
 नारायणें दिलीं अक्षई मंदिरें । अभंग साचारें सकळांसि ॥8॥
 सकळ ही धर्मशीळ पुण्यवंत । पवित्र विरक्त नारीनर ॥9॥
 रचिलें तें देवें न मोडे कवणा । बिळयांचा राणा नारायण ॥10॥
 बळबुद्धीनें तीं देवा च सारिखीं । तुका ह्मणे मुखीं गाती ओंव्या ॥11॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A city was built in the belly of the ocean, studded with every kind of gem. Gems adorned every corner.

The walls were of gold, catching the sun's rays. All art and craft lay in Govinda's hands.

The mansions were raised with care. Fortresses, gates, and galleries were erected, beautified with ramparts and watchtowers.

The city shone, splendid in the ocean. Narayana came there with all His people.

Narayana, the generous and valiant, the crowning jewel among warriors, came to the city of Dwaraka. He made no distinctions of caste; He treated all as equal.

The strong and the small were the same to Narayana. He gave imperishable dwellings to all, real and unbreakable.

All were virtuous, pious, pure, and devoted, men and women alike. What God has built, no one can destroy.

The Lord of strength is Narayana. In might and wisdom, they were like God Himself.

Says Tuka, they sang ovis with their lips.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A city was built in the belly of the ocean, set with all kinds of fine gems. Gems in every corner, walls of gold, catching the light of the sun. All the craft was in Govinda's hands. The mansions were raised with care. Forts, gateways, and walkways were put up, fine with ramparts and towers. The city stood splendid in the ocean. Hari came there with all his people. Narayana came to the city of Dwaraka, the generous, the brave, the crown-jewel of warriors. He made no choice of caste; he made all equal. The strong and the small were the same to Narayana. He gave everyone undying homes, real and unbreakable. All were righteous and full of merit, pure and devoted, women and men alike. What God has built, no one can break. Narayana is the lord of the strong. In strength and wisdom they were like God himself. Tuka says: they sang ovis with their mouths.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes Dwaraka, the city Krishna raises in the sea, jeweled and golden and made entirely by his own craft. But the splendor is not the point he dwells on. The thing he marks is that Krishna makes no distinction of caste there: high and low, strong and weak, all are treated as equal and all are given lasting homes. Under his rule the whole population becomes righteous and pure, men and women alike, and even comes to resemble God in strength and wisdom. The closing note, that they sang ovis as they lived, says the city's true wealth was a life of constant praise, not its gold.

GATHA 4567

Krishna Leela

Krishna's company, God makes them into God

मराठी मूळ

गाती ओंव्या कामें करितां सकळें । हालवितां बाळें देवावरि ॥1॥
 त्रिद्वसिद्धी दासी दारीं ओळंगती । सकळ संपत्ति सर्वा घरीं ॥2॥
 घरीं बैसलिया जोडलें निधान । करिती कीर्तन नरनारी ॥3॥
 नारीनर लोक धन्य त्यांची याति । जयांसि संगति गोविंदाची ॥4॥
 गोविंदें गोविंद केले लोकपाळ । चिंतनें सकळ तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

They sang ovis while doing all their work, while rocking their children, singing of God. The powers of prosperity and accomplishment served as handmaids at their doors.

Every home was blessed with abundance. Sitting at home, they found treasures.

Men and women performed kirtan. Blessed was the lineage of those who had the company of Govinda.

Govinda made the people into Govindas themselves. Says Tuka, through contemplation, all were transformed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They sang ovis while doing all their work, rocking their children, singing of God. The powers and the perfections waited at their doors like servant-girls. There was every kind of wealth in every house. Sitting at home, they had found the treasure. Men and women did kirtan. Blessed were the people, blessed their birth, who had the company of Govinda. Govinda made the people into Govindas. Tuka says: through that remembrance, all of them were changed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram shows what the company of God does to ordinary life. The people of Dwaraka sing of God while they work and rock their children, and the very powers and attainments that others chase through hard practice wait on them like maids at the door. The real wealth, he says, was found just by sitting at home in remembrance. The last line is the boldest claim: by keeping his company and holding him in mind, the people are not merely blessed but made into Govinda themselves. Constant remembrance, in this telling, does not only bring God near; it remakes the one who remembers into his likeness.

GATHA 4568

Krishna Leela

Krishna's rule, the king who keeps no pride

मराठी मूळ

काहीं चिंता कोणा नाही कोणेविशीं । करी द्वारकेसि राज्य देव ॥1॥
 द्वारकेसि राज्य करी नारायण । दुष्ट संहारून धर्म पाळी ॥2॥
 पाळी वेदआज्ञा ब्राह्मणांचा मान । अतीतपूजन वैष्णवांचें ॥3॥
 अतीत अलिप्त अवधियां वेगळा । नाही हा गोपाळा अभिमान ॥4॥
 अभिमान नाही तुका ह्याने त्यासि । नेदी आणिकांसि धरुं देव ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No one had any worry about anything. God ruled Dwaraka.

Narayana ruled Dwaraka, having destroyed the wicked and upheld dharma. He honored the commands of the Vedas, the dignity of brahmins, and the worship of Vaishnavas and holy guests.

He Himself remained detached and apart from all, yet this Cowherd-Boy held no pride. Says Tuka, He has no pride Himself, yet He does not let others cling to it either.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No one had any worry about anything. God ruled in Dwaraka. Narayana ruled Dwaraka. He destroyed the wicked and kept dharma. He kept the command of the Vedas and the honor of the brahmins, and the worship of holy guests and of the Vaishnavas. Detached and untouched, apart from all of it, this Cowherd holds no pride. Tuka says: he has no pride himself, and he does not let others hold on to theirs either.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram ends the Dwaraka sequence with the character of the ruler. Krishna keeps order, upholds dharma, and gives each thing its due, the Vedas, the brahmins, the holy guests, so that no one in the city carries any worry. Yet the king who does all this stands detached and untouched by it, and the Cowherd takes no pride in his own

greatness. The final turn is the teaching: he is not only free of pride himself, he does not let pride take root in those around him either. The verse points the listener at the same self-examination, that nearness to God is meant to dissolve the ego, not feed it.

GATHA 4569

*The Power of the Name**The Name, Brahman descends to carry us across*

मराठी मूळ

धरियेलें रूप कृष्ण नाम बुंधी । परब्रह्म िक्षती उतरलें॥१॥
 उत्तम हें नाम राम कृष्ण जगीं । तरावयालागीं भवनदी॥२॥
 दिनानाथिब्रदें रुळती चरणी । वंदितील मुनि देव ऋषि ॥३॥
 ऋषीं मुनीं भेटी दिली नारायणें । आणीक कारणें बहु केलीं ॥४॥
 बहु कासावीस जाला भक्तांसाठीं । तुका ह्मणे आटी सोसियेली ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He assumed a form and took the Name of Krishna, and the supreme Brahman descended to earth. This glorious Name, Rama Krishna, exists in the world for the sake of crossing the river of existence.

The pledges of the Friend of the Lowly trail at His feet. Sages, gods, and seers bow before them.

God gave audience to sages and seers and performed countless other deeds. Says Tuka, He endured great hardship for the sake of His devotees.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He took on a form and put on the name of Krishna as a cloak. The supreme Brahman came down to earth. This is the best of names in the world, Rama, Krishna, for crossing the river of becoming. The vows of the Friend of the Lowly hang at his feet. Sages, gods, and seers will bow to them. Narayana gave his meeting to the sages and the seers. He did many other things besides. He was greatly troubled for the sake of his devotees. Tuka says: he took the hardship on himself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says the form and the name of Krishna are a covering that the formless supreme Brahman puts on to come within our reach. The name itself, Rama, Krishna, is the boat for crossing the river of birth and death, and it carries the standing promise of the Friend of the Lowly. He recalls that God gave himself in audience to the sages and did countless deeds for others. The verse ends on what such a descent costs: the Infinite let himself be troubled and bore real hardship for the sake of his devotees. The Name we are given so cheaply was paid for by God's own willingness to suffer for us.

GATHA 4570

The Nature of God

God's vow, He carries His servants

मराठी मूळ

सोसियेला आटी गर्भवास फेरे । आयुधांचे भारे वागवितां ॥1॥
 वाहोनि सकळ आपुलिये माथां । भार दासां चिंता वाहों नेदी ॥2॥
 नेदी काळाचिये हातीं सेवकांसि । तुका ह्मणे ऐसी िब्रदावळी॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He endured the ordeal of entering the womb again and again, bearing the weight of weapons upon Himself. He carries everything upon His own head and does not let His servants bear the burden of worry.

He does not give His servants over to the hands of Death. Says Tuka, such is His legacy of pledges.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He endured the ordeal of the womb, born again and again. He took up the weight of His weapons and carried them. He carries everything upon His own head. He does not let His servants bear the burden of worry. He does not hand His servants over to the hands of Death. Tuka says: such are His standing pledges.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming what kind of God this is, by what He does for those who are His. The incarnations, the births into the womb, the weapons taken up: all of that weight He puts on His own head, so His servants do not have to carry it. The point of each line is the same exchange: the burden moves from the servant to God. He keeps His devotees out of the hands of Death itself. Tukaram calls this God's biruda, His standing vow, the thing He has bound Himself to do.

GATHA 4571

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, bees at the footprints

मराठी मूळ

िब्रदावळी ज्याचे रुळते चरणीं । पाउलें मेदिनी सुखावे त्या ॥1॥
 सुखावे मेदिनी कृष्णाचिये चालीं । कुंकुमें शोभलीं होय रेखा ॥2॥
 होउनि भ्रमर पाउलांचें सुख । घेती भक्त मुख लावूनियां ॥3॥
 याचसाठीं धरियेला अवतार । सुख दिलें फार निजदासां ॥4॥
 निज सुख तुका ह्मणे भक्तां ठावें । तींहीं च जाणावें भोगूं त्यासि ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

His sacred pledges trail at His feet. The earth rejoices beneath His footsteps.

The earth delights in Krishna's stride, made beautiful with the marks of vermillion. Becoming bees, His devotees press their faces to His footprints and drink the nectar there.

For this very purpose He took incarnation: to give supreme joy to His own servants. Says Tuka, that bliss of the Self is known only to the devotees. Only they may taste it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

His pledges trail at His feet. The earth grows glad wherever His feet fall. The earth delights in Krishna's walk; His steps shine like lines drawn in vermilion. His devotees become bees. They press their faces to His footprints and drink the sweetness there. For just this He took birth: to give great joy to His own servants. Tuka says: this joy of the Self is known only to the devotees. Only they can taste it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying what the incarnation is actually for, and who gets to know it. Krishna's footsteps make the very earth glad, marked bright as if with vermilion, and the devotees turn into bees at those footprints, drinking the sweetness. He names the purpose plainly: God took a body so that His servants could have this joy. But the joy is not on offer to everyone. It is the bliss of the Self, and only the devotee who loves Him can taste it; describing it from outside is not the same as drinking it.

GATHA 4572

The Necessity of Experience

Union, devotee and God are not two

मराठी मूळ

भोगिला गोपिकां यादवां सकळां । गौळणीगोपाळां गाईवत्सां ॥1॥
गाती धणीवरी केला अंगसंग । पाहिला श्रीरंग डोळेभरि ॥2॥
भक्ति नवविधा तयांसि घडली । अवर्धी च केली कृष्णरूप ॥3॥
रूप दाखविलें होतां भिन्न भाव । भक्त आणि देव भिन्न नाहीं ॥4॥
नाहीं राहों दिलें जातां निजधामा । तुका ह्मणे आह्मांसहित गेला ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

That bliss was tasted by the gopis, the Yadavas, the milkmaids, the cowherds, and the cows and calves. They sang to their full satisfaction and held Him close.

They gazed upon Shrirangam to the full. The ninefold devotion was fulfilled in them.

All were made into the form of Krishna. He revealed His form even through the appearance of separation.

Devotee and God are not two. When He departed for His eternal abode, says Tuka, He did not leave us behind.

He took us with Him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

That joy was tasted by the gopis, by all the Yadavas, by the milkmaids and the cowherds, by the cows and the calves. They sang to their heart's fill and held Him close. They gazed their fill on Shrirang. The ninefold devotion was made whole in them. All of them were turned into the form of Krishna. Even in the look of being separate, He showed His own form. Devotee and God are not two. When He left for His eternal home, Tuka says: He did not leave us behind. He took us with Him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing how complete the union with Krishna can be, using the company at Gokul as the proof. The gopis, the cowherds, even the cows and calves did not just worship from a distance; they sang, embraced Him, gazed at Him, and through that the ninefold path of devotion came to its fullness. The result he names is startling: all of them were made into the form of Krishna. So the apparent gap between worshipper and worshipped dissolves, and devotee and God turn out not to be two. The last claim seals it: when Krishna returned to His own abode, He did not abandon His people but carried them with Him.

GATHA 4573

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the all-pervading One

मराठी मूळ

गेला कोठें होता कोठुनियां आला । सहज व्यापला आहे नाही ॥1॥
 आहे साच भावें सकळव्यापक । नाही अभाविक लोकां कोठें ॥2॥
 कोठे नाही ऐसा नाही रिता ठाव । अनुभवी देव स्वयें जालें ॥3॥
 जातो येतो आह्मी देवाचे सांगांतें । तुका ह्मणे गात देवनाम ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where did He go? Where did He come from? He naturally pervades everything, present and absent at once. He is truly present for those who believe.

For the faithless, He is nowhere to be found. There is no place empty of Him; those who have experienced Him have become God themselves.

Says Tuka, we come and go in God's company, singing His Name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where did He go? Where did He come from? He simply pervades everything; He is both present and not. For those who truly believe, He is really there. For the faithless, He is nowhere to be found. There is no spot anywhere that is empty of Him. Those who have tasted Him have become God themselves. We come and go in God's company. Tuka says: singing God's Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the question that the bhakti story leaves hanging: if God came and went, where is He now? His reply is that the coming and going was never the whole truth, because God pervades all things and is everywhere at once. Whether you find Him depends on you: the believer meets a God who is truly present, the faithless person looks and finds nothing, though no place is actually empty of Him. He pushes the claim to its edge, saying those who have actually experienced Him have themselves become God. For Tukaram this is not theory but a way of walking through life, moving in God's company while singing the Name.

GATHA 4574

Autobiography

Humility, the unworthy poet's surrender

मराठी मूळ

मना वाटे तैसीं बोलिलों वचनें । केली धिटपणें सलगी देवा ॥1॥
 वाणी नाही शुद्ध याति एक ठाव । भक्ति नेणें भाव नाही मनीं ॥2॥
 नाही जालें ज्ञान पाहिलें अक्षर । मानी जैसें थोर थोरी नाही ॥3॥
 नाही मनीं लाज धरिली आशंका । नाही भ्यालों लोकां चतुरांसि ॥4॥
 चतुरांच्या राया मी तुझें अंकित । जालों शरणागत देवदेवा ॥5॥
 देवा आतां करीं सरतीं हीं वचनें । तुझ्या कृपादानें बोलिलों तीं ॥6॥
 तुझें देणें तुझ्या समर्पूनि पायीं । जालों उतरायी पांडुरंगा ॥7॥
 रंकाहुनि रंक दास मी दासांचें । सामर्थ्य हें कैचें बोलावया ॥8॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have spoken as my heart moved me, taking liberties with God out of boldness. My speech is not refined; my birth has no distinction.

I know nothing of devotion; there is no real feeling in my mind. I have not gained knowledge or studied the scriptures.

I presume to speak of greatness, though greatness is not in me. I have held no shame or hesitation.

I have not feared the judgment of the learned. O King of the wise, I am Your marked one.

I have come surrendered, O God of gods. O God, make these words bear fruit.

I spoke them through Your grace. I offer Your own gift back at Your feet.

I have thus discharged my debt, O Panduranga. I am humbler than the humblest, a servant of servants.

What power do I have to speak?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have spoken as my heart moved me. In my boldness I took liberties with God. My speech is not pure; my birth has no standing. I do not know devotion; there is no real feeling in my mind. I have gained no knowledge; I have not even looked at the letters. I act as if I were great, but greatness is not in me. I held no shame in my heart, no hesitation. I was not afraid of clever people. O King of the wise, I am Your marked servant. I have come to You for refuge, O God of gods. God, now make these words bear fruit. I spoke them by the gift of Your grace. What was Your giving, I offer back at Your feet. So my debt is cleared, O Panduranga. I am lower than the lowest, a servant of servants. What power do I have to speak?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips away every claim he might make for himself before God. He admits he wrote as he pleased, took liberties with God, has no pure speech, no high birth, no learning, no real devotion in his own mind, and no fear of the clever critics who might mock him. Having confessed all of that, he hands everything over: he is Panduranga's marked one, come for refuge, asking only that God make these words bear fruit. The turn that matters is his

account of where the words came from: they were God's own gift of grace, so he is simply offering God's giving back at God's feet. By that move he says his debt is settled, and he names himself a servant of servants, with no power of his own to speak at all.

GATHA 4575

Devotion to Vitthal

Praise, Vitthal seen with the eyes

मराठी मूळ

चारी वेद ज्याची कीर्ती वाखाणित्ती । प्रत्यक्ष ये मूतिन विठोबाची ॥1॥
 चहुंयुगांचें हें साधन साधिलें । अनुभवा आलें आपुलिया ॥2॥
 एवढें करुनि आपण निराळा । प्रत्यक्ष डोळां दाखविलें ॥3॥
 दावुनि सकळ प्रमाणाच्या युक्ति । जयजयकार करित्ती अवघे भक्त ॥4॥
 भक्ति नवविधा पावली मुळची । जनादनननामाची संख्या जाली ॥5॥
 नवसैं ओव्या आदरें वाचितां । त्याच्या मनोरथा कार्यसिद्ध ॥6॥
 सीमा न करवे आणीक ही सुखा । तुका ह्मणे देखा पांडुरंगा ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The four Vedas sing His praises. This very form of Vitthoba stands here in truth.

The spiritual practice of all four ages has been perfected and brought into one's own experience. Having done all this, He stands apart, revealed directly before the eyes.

Showing every proof and argument, all the devotees raise the cry of 'Victory!' The ninefold devotion has reached its source. The count of Janardana's Names is now complete.

Nine hundred ovis, recited with devotion, bring the fulfillment of every heart's desire. Says Tuka, there is no limit to the joy that remains. Behold, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The four Vedas sing His glory. Here Vithoba's very form stands before us in truth. The practice of all four ages has been brought to its fruit, and come into one's own experience. Having done all this, He stands apart, shown plainly to the eyes. Showing every proof and argument, all the devotees raise the cry of victory. The ninefold devotion has reached its source. The count of Janardana's Names is complete. These verses, recited with devotion, fulfill every heart's desire. Tuka says: there is no end to the joy that remains. Behold, O Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is closing a long stretch of song by pointing at what it was all for. The God whom the four Vedas only praise from afar stands here as Vithoba, a form you can see with your own eyes, and the spiritual labor of all the ages has ripened into direct experience. He notes that God does all this and yet remains apart, shown openly, while every proof and argument is answered and the devotees simply cry victory. The ninefold path of devotion has returned to its source, and the telling of God's Names is now full. He ends by promising that these verses, said with love, fulfill the heart's longing, and that the joy left over has no limit; the last word is simply an invitation to look at Panduranga.