

Sthita Prajna



Guru Vandana

*gurur madhye sthita vishva
vishva madhye sthito guru
gurur vishva namastubhyam
vishva guru namamyaham*

*na guroradhikam, na guroradhikam, tantram mantram puja
japam na guroradhikam*

In the whole universe the spiritual master is abiding and in the spiritual master the whole creation is abiding. I bow to the macrocosm and the microcosm, to the guru in the universe and the universe in the guru. There is nothing greater than the guru. Even spiritual practices like chanting and worship are not superior to the guru. I bow to such a guru.

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EDITORIAL

"The deepest knowledge is to know the divine in one's Self. All traditions uphold the teaching, "Know Thyself."

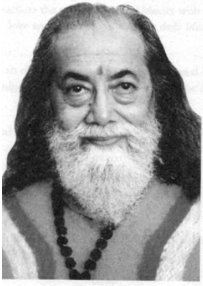
Paramahansa Hariharananda

The New Year message is to share what we have to support God's work and make our life fruitful. "Message of the Master" speaks of inner and outer purification through the practice of Kriya Yoga. Prajnanavani emphasizes compassionate detachment and reminds us of the real goal of life. In "Purity of Heart" the Master proclaims it as the ultimate goal of all sadhana.

Our feature column on Sadhana "The Goddess within", reminds us to tap into our ever present inner power to transform our lives. Atmavidya discusses Prakriti and Purusha. Rama Katha continues with the beautiful episode of the garden encounter and Dhanush yajna.

Our beloved Gurudev's Mahasamadhi day was observed with special seminars, worship and meditations at the Guru Mandir and in all our Ashrams around the world. Feb 5th marks the first anniversary of the mahasamadhi of Swami Gurupremanandaji and brings fond memories of the Divine Mother.

We bring you news of the Residential Brahmachari Training Course, many other inspiring messages, dates to remember, upcoming events, and news of the activities of Prajnana Mission and of other ashrams around the world. We thank our readers and sponsors for their great support in 2009 and look forward to the same in the New Year.



Message from the Master

The Royal Road

By the practice of Kriya Yoga, inner and outer purification naturally occurs. Whoever is God-conscious is always pure. God is abiding in every human being. If we search for Him within our whole system, our mind cannot be attracted to external pomp and grandeur.

There are three channels inside the spinal cord, named in the Sanskrit *Shastras* as *ida*, *pingala*, and *sushumna*. By the practice of this precious technique, *ida* and *pingala* separate themselves from *sushumna* and the passage in *sushumna* is clearly opened. This is said to be the awakening of the *kundalini shakti*. This spinal channel is the royal road through which the indwelling Self, God, is constantly functioning in the human being, going up and coming down the spine and giving various dispositions and inspirations. We can say that our soul is hidden in the jungle of matter and with the Kriya Yoga technique we can free the soul from bondage. We can then cultivate the fallow land in the *sushumna* by Kriya breathing and continually live in cosmic consciousness. The regular practice of this technique will automatically take us to the third circuit in the brain wherein lies the pituitary, which is the real abode of God.

A True Emperor –Short Story

There is a story from the life of a great philosopher, Confucius. One day he was sitting alone in the forest, and the then emperor was passing by. He looked at Confucius, an old man sitting in a joyful mood and asked, “Who are you?” Confucius replied, “I am the emperor.”

The emperor was shocked and said, “You are the emperor? You don’t look like that. You have no attendants; you have no guards around you. You look like a poor man, a beggar and you don’t have any money and you are claiming to be an emperor.”

Then Confucius looked at the emperor, and said, “Yes, I am the emperor. You need some attendants and servants because you are weak. You cannot do your own work. I can do whatever I need to do myself. So I don’t need anybody’s service. You need military guards around you because you are afraid of your enemies. I have no enemies, so I don’t need any military power behind me. You have money; you need money because you are poor. I am not poor, I don’t need any money.” This was the wise man’s conversation with the emperor.

Message : When one feels he is a child of God, the source of all power, wealth and strength and happiness one feels like a true emperor.

Christmas and New Year, 2010

Loving and Divine Soul

At the outset of Christmas and New Year, 2010, I am expressing my love and best wishes to you. I am offering my devotion and prayers to God for the wellbeing of the entire creation.

Time is a continuous flow. It provides an opportunity to everyone in creation to make God's beautiful creation more attractive and creative. Look at the butterfly; it does its tremendous work supporting God's work by manifesting its beauty and joy to many. It is born an unattractive caterpillar and is transformed into a beautiful butterfly. It serves its life purpose with a fruitful and productive life.

We are human beings. We have talent and skill, no lack of wealth and prosperity. But what are we doing with all this?

There is a beautiful verse in Sanskrit:

*vidya vivadaya dhanam madaya
shaktih paresham paripidanaya
khalasya sadhoh viparitam etat
jnanaya danaya ca rakshanaya*

– Gunaratna of Bhavabhuti

“For the wicked, knowledge is used for conflict or war, wealth is for pride and vanity, and strength and power are used to oppress or torture others. For a noble person, it is completely different: Education is for knowledge to make everything better, wealth is for charity, and strength or power is solely for protection.”

Thousands of years ago, thinkers, rishis, and seers expressed practical solutions to the troubles of human life — never think that you don't have enough; instead, always think that you not only have enough, but you have something to give to others.

If you have knowledge and ideas, let it be used for the benefit of all.

If you have wealth and treasure, let a part of it be used in service of the needy.

If you have physical ability, let this strength be used to help others.

Let us begin a new life during this special time. If we live this way, not only will the quality of our own lives change, but we can create a better world.

Again, on the occasion of the holy days of Christmas and New Year, I am praying for you all. I am meditating for all.

*May you all be happy, healthy, peaceful, and prosperous.
Again, I am praying for you all.*

With Love

Prajnanananda

The Rhythm of God's Creation

God is infinite. His song is infinite.

His song existed long before creation. His song is eternal. When we meditate, we can hear his song. When we listen intently to God's song in deep meditation, we forget our own existence.

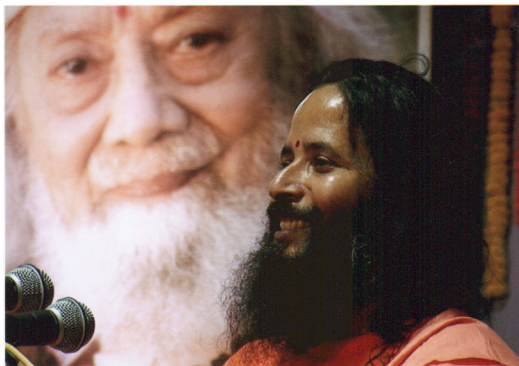
As we enter into deeper silence with a rhythmic breath the body itself becomes a musical instrument, and our breath produces music.

Creation manifests its beauty in a rhythm, bringing joy and happiness to every season and in every sound, be it the roar of a lion or the humming of an insect.

If we listen with renewed insight, we will gain experience.

(From Daily Reflections)

Prajnanavani - The Voice of Wisdom **Compassionate Detachment**



*bālastāvat krīdāsaktah tarunastāvat tarunīsaktah
vṛddhastāvat cintāsaktah pare brahmani ko pi na saktah*

Bhaja Govindam

‘In boyhood one is absorbed in play, in youth in the charm of the beloved, in old age in worry and anxieties, but there is none who is deeply attached to the supreme *Brahman*’

This verse describes objects of attachments in the three stages of life - childhood, youth and old age. The object of attachment changes and this is universal irrespective of where one lives. When a child one is attached to the toys, when young to a beloved and old age is full of worries. When one is young full of vigor, thoughts give rise to emotions desires grow and one tries to find happiness in sense enjoyment and physical pleasure. Old age is usually full of worries about family and children and fear of disease and death and not being taken care.

It is interesting to note the shift in attachment. The object of attachment changed from an inert object in childhood to one with life in youth and finally ends with one’s own thoughts. Worries are nothing but thoughts.

Why are we attached and how could one change these attachments to give better life? Old age depends on how the childhood and youth are spent. If there had been no spiritual exposure and life was spent in material enjoyments, worries and insecurity will be the result. If there is an element of spirituality even in play it helps inner growth.

A child was playing with the idol of Krishna and developed an attachment to Krishna and was attending to the toy as though it was live. The love grew and as she blossomed into a young girl she found divinity and Lord Krishna became her everything. Saturated with the love of Krishna, Meera later became a great lady saint of India.

Let there be play but let it be god oriented. When we tell children stories do we tell them something spiritual? Do these stories contain some moral and ethical values? Do they contain something of real value that would be useful in life later on? Most of the stories that I tell you are what I heard from my parents in childhood. Even the body we are attached to is not permanent. So how can you justify your attachment to all these things? God is the only permanent thing in this world that we should be attached to.

This verse speaks of human nature. Mind is constantly changing. Mind is not attached to a particular thing or person for a long time. This change happens through inner growth. The real object of attachment should be to the supreme Brahman who is behind this whole play even while playing. But we are only busy with the superficial play and forget the supreme.

Shankara examines life and is surprised that man ignores the very purpose of life and no one really wants to know about the Supreme spirit.

We should live in the world with love but we should be compassionately detached.

‘Who is our wife or your husband? We live in a world of relationships. We have established a relationship with the material world, language, country, animals, pets and humans.’

We are born into a family of father, mother, brothers and sisters. Then we established relationship with friends and even enemies. This world is a life of relationships. We created them. Others are not responsible. Relationship is not permanent. It was not there before. It is there now but it will not be forever. One has to leave the others. Relationships have to end in time. Even if you maintain your relationship throughout the life when you leave the world you have to leave it behind. When you live a life of relationships to what degree should you be attached? Is this relationship with proper understanding or out of emotion, attachment and possessiveness? If it is with understanding it helps you to live better. Two things we have to remember – whatever we see in this world it is not permanent. I should accept the changing world and also remember that behind all these changing things there is a changeless one.

Each one comes to the world with one's own past impressions and memories. Do not impose your taste on others. You may expect them to be something but each one grows differently. You can advise but not impose. Accept the reality of life.

Shankara says this world is strange. Samsara- the word defines itself *sam sūyate iti*- one that is always changing. This world is strange for one who does not know and is wonderful for one who knows.

Shankara is asking really to whom you belong. You as a soul belong to none.

Kutah āyātah- From where and why have you come to this world? If we are clear about the source and cause then life is more enjoyable. All waves big or small belong to and merge in the ocean.

Adi Shankara says think and contemplate about the source from where you have come and live a life of love. Play your role nicely with prayerful attitude. Ponder over it here and now.

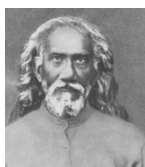
Teachings of the Masters



"To serve a saint is sacred and brings great spiritual gain."

Mahavatara Babaji

"Those who remain merged in Brahman, worship Brahman and whether they are aware of it or not, they constantly realize the atom point within the kutastha." Lahiri Mahasaya



"Men of wisdom are neither deluded nor haunted by the spectre of birth and death. One should, without being inordinately confused by the words of wise men, follow strictly their methods of Kriya."

Swami Shriyukteshwar

"Remember, one day or another you will leave this world, do not run madly after material things."

Sanyal Mahasaya



"The first rule in prayer is to approach God only with legitimate desires. Pray for their fulfillment, not as a beggar but as His child"

Paramahansa Yogananda

"Scholarship of the scriptures is of little significance. Was Ramakrishna Paramahansa a great scholar? Yet every word from his mouth was a scripture." Swami Satyananda



"Watch Him day and night in your every thought, word and action. Constant alertness is necessary, if you do this you will have positive and quick results."

Paramahansa Hariharananda

"Your own breath is God. Use breath in a scientific way.."

Paramahansa Prajnanananda



Atma Vidya –Self Knowledge

Prakriti and Purusha

Having said there is only one absolute Brahman – who is the Purusha and who is Prakriti? The creator, creation and creature are a great triangle where the will of Purusha is executed by the Prakriti. Purusha is defined as *Puryam shete iti purusha* - one who is sleeping in the city is Purusha. While Purusha the existence of God pervades everywhere in subtle form as gold in the ornament, Prakriti through its laws of Maya evolves the varieties of the objects both organic and inorganic. Purusha can be likened to the divine potential energy which is dormant while Prakriti is the kinetic energy material and dynamic. Prakriti can be defined as *Prakrashtena kriyate iti prakriti* - that which is clearly acting is Prakriti.

In the Gita 7:4 the Lord says,

*bhumirapo'nalo vayuh kham mano buddhireva cha
ahamkaram itiyam me bhinna prakrutirashtadha.*

My (God's) Prakriti (nature) is eight fold consisting of earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and ego.

Again he goes on to say (*Bhagavadgita* 9:10)

Mayadhyakshena prakriti suyate sa characharam

Under my principal supervision nature brings forth the creation.

This clearly indicates that Brahman is the presiding force under whose supervision the nature brings into forms the various aspects of the world as per great divine cosmic plan. Further it can be stated that Prakriti cannot function independent of will force and sanction of Brahman.

As per Samkhya Philosophy, Prakriti - means that which is primary, which precedes what is made. It comes from - Pra - (before) and - Kri - (to make). It is the one root of the universe.

It is called Pradhana or the chief, because all effects are founded on it and it is the root of the universe and of all objects.

Characteristics of Prakriti

Pradhana or Prakriti is eternal, all-pervading, and immovable. It is one. It has no cause, but is the cause of all effects. Prakriti is independent and uncaused, while the products are caused and dependent. Prakriti depends only on the activity of its own constituent Gunas (metaphysical properties). Prakriti is destitute of intelligence. It is like a string of three strands. The three Gunas form the three strands. Prakriti is mere dead matter which is equipped with certain potentialities due to the Gunas.

The Modifications of Prakriti

Crude matter is without form. Mahat or the Cosmic Intelligence is its first form. Intellect is the matter for egoism. Egoism is a form of intellect. It is the matter from which the senses and the rudimental elements are formed. The senses and the rudimental elements are forms of egoism. The gross elements are forms of the rudimental elements. Intellect, egoism and the five subtle rudiments also called *tanmatras* are the effects of Prakriti. This creation, from intellect down to the elements, is brought about by the modifications of Prakriti. Having observed the effects, the cause (Prakriti) is inferred. It is imperceptible from its subtlety. It must, therefore, be inferred from its effects.

The Function of Prakriti

Prakriti is the basis of all objective existence. Prakriti does not create for itself. All objects are for the enjoyment of the spirit or soul. Prakriti creates only when it comes into union with Purusha, like a crystal vase with a flower. This work is done for the emancipation of each soul. As it is the function of milk to nourish the calf, so it is the function of Prakriti to liberate the soul.

The Gunas

According to the Sankhya philosophy, Prakriti is composed of three Gunas or forces, called Sattva (purity, light, and harmony), Rajas (passion, activity, motion) and Tamas (inertia, darkness, inertness, inactivity).

Guna means a cord. The Gunas bind the soul with a triple bond. They make up the whole world evolved out of Prakriti. They are not conjoined in equal quantities, but in varying proportions, one or the other being in excess. Just as Sat-Chit-Ananda is the Vedantic trinity, so also the Gunas are the Sankhyan trinity.

Interaction between the Gunas Leads to Evolution

The three Gunas are never separate. They form the very substance of Prakriti. All objects are composed of the three Gunas. The Gunas act on one another. Then there is evolution or manifestation.

How Man Is Affected by the Three Gunas

There are three Gunas in every one. Sometimes, Sattva prevails in him. Then he is calm and tranquil. He reflects and meditates. At other times, Rajas prevails in him and he does various sorts of worldly activities. He is passionate and active. Sometimes, Tamas prevails. He becomes lazy, dull, inactive and careless. Tamas generates delusion.

(From a lecture series of Swami Atmavidyananda Giri)

DATES TO REMEMBER

Jan –Mar 2010

Birthday of Yoganandaji	Jan 5 th
Mahasamadhi of Yoganandaji	Mar 7
Makara Sankranti	Jan 14
11 th IIKYS	Jan. 14 th –20 th
Saraswati Puja	Jan 20
Birthday of Bhupendranath Sanyal	Jan20
Mahasamadhi of Bhupendranath Sanyal	Jan 18
Maha Samadhi of Swami Guru Premanandaji	Feb 5
Maha Sivaratri	Feb 12
Mahasamadhi of Shriyukteswar	Mar 9
Holi	Mar 1
Ramanavami	Mar 24

Gurudev's Punyatithi

Message of Baba Prajnananandaji

Loving and Divine Soul

On this special day I not only remember my beloved master, but also his love, kindness, compassion, and practical instructions. I bow to my master and pray that each one of you acquires all-round development.

Time is passing. Everything is changing. In our memories, impressions of the past survive. Good impressions motivate us to move forward. When I think of this day, already seven years have passed; still, the indelible impression of my master's life and teaching throbs in my heart and mind. It fills my life with love and gratitude. How beautiful was his presence in our lives! His smile, kind gestures, sweet and melodious voice, and practical advice still flash through my mind. The more I think of him, the more I am humbled. His presence in my life brought completeness in me. He always said that human life is extremely temporarily. Troubles are many. Diseases are constantly waiting to attack and snatch away strength and beauty. He also explained how to use this transitory but precious life to develop God consciousness. A beautiful verse corroborates his teachings:

*shariram ca navachidram vyadhi grastam kalevaram
aushadham janhavi toyam vaidyo narayano harih.*

– Prapanna Gita

“The body has nine holes and is prone to disease. Medicine is the water of Ganga, and the doctor is God alone.”

Every human body has nine doors: two ears, two eyes, two nostrils, the mouth, the genitals, and the anus. Every human body is prone to disease, decay, and death. But this body is not for misery and suffering; it is for emancipation and love. In the above verse, “water of Ganga” means love and devotion. If we

cultivate love and devotion for God during a practical spiritual life, our lives will be beautiful.

On this special day we should contemplate the life and teachings of Gurudev. We should also sincerely pray to have enough strength to follow his footprints.

Again, I am praying for you all.

With Love

Prajnanananda

Mahasamadhi Day of Gurudev
Baba Hariharanandaji
Dec 3, 2009



Paramahansa Hariharananda our revered and beloved Gurudev, attained Mahasamadhi in a very peaceful and serene way, on the 3rd of December, 2002. Though physically absent his spiritual legacy remains with us forever as long as we prove worthy disciples. A special seminar in honor of our beloved Gurudev's Mahasamadhi was held in the divine presence of Paramahansa Prajnananandaji at the Hariharananda Gurukulam. All the Ashrams and all the centers around the globe also observed the Punyatithi day with worship, prayers and special meditations.

Sadhana – Practical Spirituality

The Goddess Within

Not only Hinduism, but many cultures have had a goddess figure in their past, Venus, Isis, Ishtar, Durga. It is easy to look at those figures as belonging to the past, a primeval need for a mother figure, a worship of the primitive female energy as separate and distinct from the male energy which was deemed to be more serene and represented consciousness and intellect. After all, what do these goddess figures have to do with our lives today, when gender roles have become nearly indistinguishable and we all do everything equally well? Women are not only mothers, they are thinkers, scientists, they do battle, work alongside men in every profession and every arena. Men have become more nurturing, willing to cook and clean, to care for the children and the home along with their wives and sometimes in place of them. Is there really any reason then for a goddess figure that is strictly female? Is there a need to extol and empower the feminine principle?

In our quest to transform our daily lives through sadhana or discipline, the goddess actually can play a tremendously important role. While it is true that men and women now work together rather than separately and often transcend gender boundaries in their roles and responsibilities, it is also true that what was so significant about the goddess was and is her sheer power to transform. If we think of the goddess not as a stone statue or a bronze idol but as our inner energy, then we realize how important she continues to be. Even as our roles shift and reverse at times, our source of strength continues to be this inner power. We draw on it incessantly, sometimes subconsciously and sometimes with urgent pleas for help. Whether male or female, we derive our sustenance from the goddess within.

I was reminded of this during Dasara, when on the ninth day or Navami, I finally took the time from my daily frenetic

activity and got around to performing a formal puja. I lit the lamp, guiltily dusted off the neglected deity, and began chanting the Lalita Sahasranama mantras. Before me in the framed painting sat the image of Lalita, delicate and smiling prettily in a pink saree. But when I closed my eyes in concentration, I saw something very different in my mind's eye. There before me, sitting slightly to the right and across from me, staring straight ahead was a very different goddess. She was quivering with energy, her nostrils flaring and her hair tumbling in wild ringlets around her forehead. Out of consideration for me, she did not look directly at me, nor did she reveal herself fully. I knew this at once, that she sat half hidden because I would not be able to handle the full force of her presence. I sat in awe, chanting the mantras more carefully than I ever had before, knowing with every fiber of my being that I was chanting them directly to her. It was an intense experience, and one that reminded me very clearly of just who the Goddess is.

The Goddess who lies within me is not the pretty Lalita, or the powerful Durga, or the generous Lakshmi, or even the wise Saraswati. The goddess within is a mixture of all these things and most importantly she is me. Yes, that's right. The goddess within each of us is our most powerful self, quivering with unspent energy, sitting just out of reach, concentrating intensely on the present moment and ready to reshape our future. And how do we reach this goddess? How do we tap into this fountain of power? By acknowledging that we have much to give, and much to do. By allowing her to rise up and take charge, by unleashing the untapped energy within each of us. I know that I have yet to fulfill my own potential. There is so much I want to do. So many people I want to help, voices I want to empower, lives I want to transform. Yet I often get bogged down in the details, feel overwhelmed by circumstance, or just plain lose my way and forget where it is I am going. We all do. And that is when we need to turn our gaze within, and take an unflinching look at the neglected goddess. She is waiting and she is ready, kept silent only through our lack of introspection.

In the present day, when men and women alike are being called on to do more and be more and to challenge every preconceived notion about both masculinity and femininity, we need a powerful ally who can aid us in that transformation. We need the strength to fight the many battles we must wage, and to shower those around us with love and encouragement. We need the passion to aim high and to break down barriers. We need the power to attain peace. For all this, we need look no further than the goddess within. She is not only female but male as well, she is energy and consciousness combined an unwavering, illimitable force that waits for our permission to lift us to our highest selves.

Jyothi Bathina



*Ya devi sarva bhuteshu shakti rupena samsthitia
Namatasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo namah*

To that goddess who resides as the energy in every being
I offer my salutations again and again and again.

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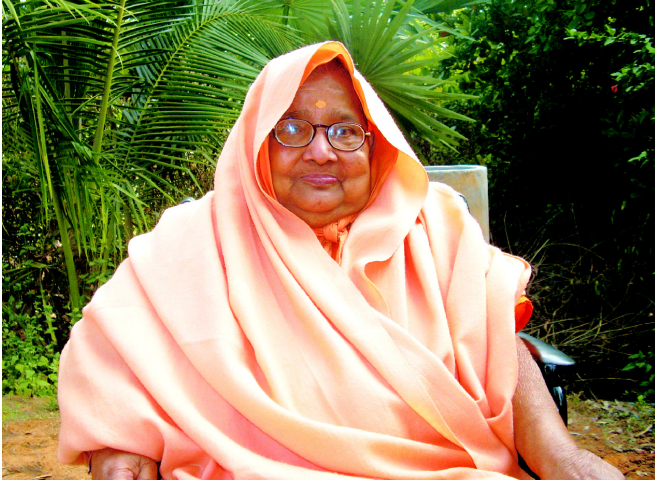
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Swami Gurupremanandaji

The First Anniversary of Mahasamadhi

Feb 5, 2010



“In my child hood my mother offered me to God and later she offered me to gurudev. Whatever I have, I owe everything to them. Nothing is mine. I am proud to be the child of such a humble, loving and caring mother, who at the same time was simple and disciplined”

“From the time of my childhood until the last part of her life my mother encompassed the spirit of training her children based on knowledge, love and devotion.”

Paramahansa Prajnanananda

February 5th 2010, is the first anniversary of the Mahasamadhi of our Swami Gurupremanandaji. We pay our tribute to her in deep gratitude for blessing our lives with a special divine gift of motherly love. She lived an exemplary life and gifted us with a beautiful holy son.

Purity of Heart

The heart is said to be the altar of God. It is the temple of God and also the play ground of God.

In the Gita the Lord says,

Eswara sarva bhutanam hriddeserjuna tishtathi – O Arjuna , God resides in the heart of every being.

Having said this in the second line of the verse He continues to say,

Bhramayan sarva bhutanam yantrarudhani mayaya – His maya deludes them into going around like one mounted on a machine.

The problem comes in understanding the second line. Why does the Lord delude us with his Maya? It is true that both the good and bad come from God from the absolute point of view.

If we look at the creation as a family, with God as the mother and the father – should the creation be one of misery or of joy? Upanishad avers,

Anandatikhalu imani bhutani jayante.....

Creation is born of bliss and it merges into bliss.

In spite of this blissful creation why is there misery in creation and why are we deluded? Misery is our own perception and confusion. Through our ignorance we have created our own misery.

Just like a mother gives the child toys to play with, the child accepts the toy and the mother lets him play - God gives us many objects. Busy with the pleasure of the objects we forget God. But when the child drops the toy and runs to the mother to hold on to the mother the child owns the mother.

Satan tried to tempt even Jesus; but Jesus could rise above the temptation as he was anchored in the Lord and god consciousness.

Heart is the play ground of God. When we are peaceful and in joy we do not make mistakes but when we are angry, upset, reactive and judgmental we make mistakes. Transformation comes from our own heart.

It is said those who are pure in heart can commune with God. The heart is the place of emotion. This emotion can be transformed into devotion or pure love for God.

Jesus said,

Blessed are the pure in heart for they can see God.

He did not use the word realize he said they can see God. You can talk to God face to face. "As you talk to a man or a friend God was talking" Exodus (Ch 35 verse 11). this is not imagination this is the declaration of the scripture. You can see God and talk to God if you have that pure love and devotion.

Now the question arises,

Can the formless God assume a human form? – Yes, that is possible.

Just like the invisible vapor can be made visible as water and it can be made tangible as ice by cooling, God becomes visible through the coolness of the love of the devotee. Through this coolness of love the devotee gets the vision of God, communion with God and can see God.

Yoga Sutra of Patanjali says,

yogah citta vritti nirodha – yoga is to control the thoughts.

This control of thought is to purify the heart and yoga is the means. If you are perfect in yoga there is nothing more to do.

All spiritual disciplines are for purifying the heart.

Look at your own thoughts and analyze your thoughts. Do not be unhappy if they are negative and restless. Be happy you have recognized them as such and God has given you the opportunity to look at yourself. How does one look at one self? It is said that the feet of the guru is the reflecting mirror. Look at the feet of the guru (surrender at the feet of the guru and you can see yourself).

How to purify ?

Sant Kabir said God is the washer man and the disciple is the cloth. Guru has to wash, why should I be worried? I have nothing to do. It is the duty off the washer man to clean me.

Now comes the most critical question. Do you really have a guru? Have you become a disciple? If you have there is nothing to do. It is the duty of the guru. With words we say, I have a guru. In reality we have not become disciples nor have the desire to become disciples. How many really follow the guru?

The vision of God is not so easy. A mind which is like a pond with a lot of ripples –how can it reflect the sky? But there is no need to be discouraged Let us try again and again. Pray to God for that purity.

(Excerpt from a talk of Baba Prajnananandaji)

SARASWATI PUJA

Jan 20, 2010



***Sarasvathi Namastubhyam, Varade Kaamaroopini
Vidyaarambham Karishyaami, Siddhir Bhavatu Mey Sada***

Saraswati is the provider of boons and the one, who grants all our desires. As I begin my studies, I bow to the Goddess to help me in making it successful



Myths and Metaphors

Rama Katha

*“Caritam raghunāthasya
śatakoti pravistaram
ekaikam akṣaram pumsām
mahāpātaka naśanam”*

The story of Rama is known far and wide. Each letter of Ramayana has the potency to alleviate the greatest of sins

The Garden Encounter

In the royal garden was a small lake and near the lake was a small temple of Parvati. Sunayana, the mother of Sita, the wife of king Janaka, sent Sita with her attendants that morning to worship Mother Parvati. Sunayana means one with beautiful eyes. Beautiful eyes are really those that seek God and find God. At the time Sita came to the garden to worship, Rama was in the garden.

In Ramacharita Manasa, Tulasidas narrates that Rama and Sita looked at each other in the garden from a distance and there was a flow of divine love between them. They knew each other from before. Tulasidas goes on to describe a conversation between Rama and Lakshmana and a similar conversation between Sita and her attendants expressing their love for each other. The difference between the incarnations and ordinary people is they know who they are and they come with a complete knowledge of the past and the purpose for which they have come. But they keep their identity hidden and it is difficult to recognize.

Dhanurbhanga- Breaking of the Bow

On the day of Dhanusha yajna elaborate arrangements were made in Mithila. There were allotted seats for the kings according to their ranks; similar arrangements were made for the saints and sages, for the Brahmins, and for the other guests and citizens. Commencements were made with appropriate prayers

for auspiciousness and Janaka the father, with folded hands announced the purpose of the congregation. He expressed his wish and his condition for the wedding of his daughter Sita. The great Bow of Shiva, the *haradhanu* was shown to all present.

Many mighty kings with pride and ego thought they can easily do it but failed to even move the bow.

There is a story that at that time Ravana, the king of Lanka happened to be going over Mithila in his spacecraft, *puhspaka vimana* and came down to see what was happening. When he found out the reason for the celebration and the condition for marrying Sita at first he was angry that he was not invited for the occasion. He questioned Janaka and the messenger in charge of invitations was called in. When questioned about the invitation the tactful messenger said to Ravana, “I could not reach your kingdom as it was surrounded by the sea but knowing your greatness I left the invitation in the sea to be forwarded to you by the sea. Ravana who was appeased, said he would participate in the contest of lifting the bow to win the hand of Sita. Janaka was worried of what would happen if Ravana succeeded in lifting the bow. It would be a disaster if a person with the ego of Ravana would get spiritual energy. The story goes on that when he was about to lift up the bow, Parvati the consort of Shiva asked the attendants of Shiva to make the bow heavier to stop Ravana from lifting it. In a subtle way this was done and when Ravana attempted to lift the bow, he fell down. His ego was hurt and he immediately left the place. When Ravana could not lift the bow most kings were discouraged even to try.

Janaka was worried and challenged, “Is there no able warrior here who can break the bow and win the hand of my daughter?” Rama who was waiting for the permission of Vishvamitra looked at him and Vishvamitra nodded his consent. Rama bowed to Vishvamitra and with his blessings stood up. Then he went and first bowed down to the bow of Shiva. This is the symbol of humility and not ego. With one hand he lifted the bow and when he tried to string the bow, it broke with a great crash.

What is the bow, and the meaning of breaking it? The name of the bow in Sanskrit is Dhanusha. The name of the *yajna* is *dhanusha yajna*. In Sanskrit *dhan dhatu* is the root of *dhvani*. *Dhvani* means sound. Dhanusha is the source of sound. It is also *hara dhanu*. Hara is Shiva. Shiva is the Master of song, dance and music and the source of all sound. When Rama tried to lift and string the bow it broke. Breaking of the bow indicates going to the source of the sound and being united with the sound.

With the shattering of the bow Rama shattered the doubts of those who doubted his ability to do it. He shattered the ego of many proud kings who came for the contest. He shattered the suspense of Janaka about getting a suitable groom for his daughter. He shattered the anxiety of Sita who was praying to get Rama as her husband.

MAHA SHIVARATRI

Feb 12 2010



*Naagendrahaaraaya thriloochanaaya
bhasmaangadhaaraaya maheshwaraaya
Nityaaya shudhdhaaya digambaraaya*

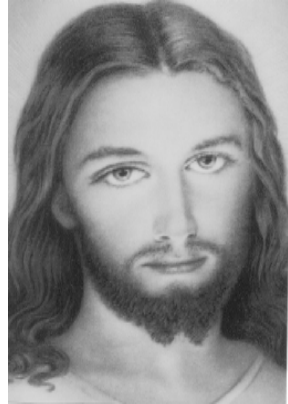
tasmai nakaaraaya namahshivaaya

Salutations to Shiva who wears a serpent as garland, who is three-eyed, whose bare body is covered with ashes, who is forever pure and the very embodiment of sacrifice.

Prayer and Meditation

Jesus encouraged his disciples to pray in groups and pray alone. Praying in groups and praying alone are the two aspects of divine communication using thoughts and feelings. Prayer with thoughts and feelings is the common art of communicating with the divine. Prayer without thought – meditation is an advanced art of divine communion.

Prayer and meditation were the subtle teachings of Jesus to help every follower to make progress along the path of spirituality and love.



The prayer of Jesus is a prayer for forgiveness, a manifestation of his love and compassion. If we wish to grow spiritually we must develop this forgiveness. Instead of reacting to insult or injury we must accept them as the love of God. Ignorant people commit mistakes, but mistakes are not for the sake of mistakes, they are for correction. When you make a mistake do not justify your mistake. When others make mistakes, due to ignorance help them to be free from them. Act intelligently. In a loving way point out their mistakes. Do not criticize others. If you look at the negatives of people more and more, your mind will be filled with negatives.

Live a life of prayer and a life of surrender, a life of constant god communion. This is the breath and soul of Christianity. Christianity in true spirit is the religion of continuous love and prayer. The Bible advises us to pray ceaselessly. We must not waste a single moment or single opportunity, because life is precious, the gift of God

Activities of Prajnana mission

Americas

Celebrating Gurudev's Mission – Midwest Ashram

Ashram life was important to Gurudev for sadhana and for attaining the ultimate goal of Self-realization. Baba Hariharanandaji created many ashrams during his lifetime, places that could be centers of Kriya activities for surrounding areas, where seekers could find spiritual inspiration and growth.

Fund raising efforts are in full swing for the first branch ashram to be established in the Midwest, which already contains eight established centers. The ashram will provide a spiritual hub for regular meditation classes, spiritual discourses, spiritual programs for children and family, interfaith activities, and residential facilities for programs and retreats. A resident swami or brahmachari would be stationed at the ashram to organize and conduct regular programs.

Fall Retreat and Foundation Day.

Navaratri and Foundation Day Celebrations were performed with Paramahamsaji in residence.

Many disciples from home and abroad attended the retreat. Baba Prajnananandaji's talks on the Beatitudes were highly inspiring. The retreat time also coincided with the Devi Navaratri – the nine days of worship of the Divine mother. There was a short fire ceremony each morning and Maha Navami the ninth day of the worship was celebrated with an elaborate fire ceremony with chanting of the 700 verses of the Chandi was a memorable and powerful spiritual experience.

Three guided meditations each day and the seva activities provided ample opportunity for the spiritual progress of the participants.

Europe

Tattendorf Ashram 11th Foundation Day

We were very blessed to have Paramahansa Prajnananandaji in residence during the Ashram Foundation seminar September 1st-6th. Along with Baba, not only our European Yogacharyas - Rajarshi Peter Baba, Swami Mangalanandaji and Yogacharyas Christine Jacobsen, Uschi

Schmidtke and Claudia Cremers were with us, but we were also blessed to have Swami Gurukrupananda Giri and Brahmacharini Dhyanamayee Ma from India. The 11th Ashram Foundation Day was celebrated in the morning with a sacred fire ceremony conducted by our Beloved Baba and it continued in the afternoon with a special program.

Swami Gurukrupanandaji and Brahmacharini Dhyanamayee Ma stayed with us from August 31st until October 30th. During their stay Satsangs, Sanskrit classes and guided meditations took place in the Ashram. They conducted Kriya programs in Germany, Hungary, and also at different places in Austria.

Visit to Vienna Ashram

B r a h m a c h a r i n i
Dhyanamayee shares her experience.

“On the last day of the program in Vienna I shared my experience about Balashram. In the month of October we were at Munich and also at Budapest. They were



also very eager to know about Balashram and I spoke to them. I had the opportunity to know how western disciples are working hard for Balashram how much love they have towards children. We celebrated the Navaratri for nine days with chanting and arati of the divine Mother. Looking at the prosperity, beauty, discipline and sincerity here one can feel the divine presence of God and Divine mother. We saw some beautiful old churches & castles. In the West I felt like we were all children of Gurudev and we belonged to one family.”

Frankfurt Retreat - The Annual International Retreat was held from Nov 4-8.

India

Balashram News

Annual Day Celebrations Aug 29

Balashram children are progressing well both academically and in other fields of sports, arts, music and dance. During the 10 day



term vacation special Activity Programs were held for children in learning skills of Stitching, Soft Toy making, Fabric painting, Scouting & Guiding, Solving Puzzle Games, Creative Art and Gardening. Some outdoor excursions were done.

Plans to Start a HCHC Wing at Balashram.

To facilitate better health care for the growing needs of the Balashram children Prajnana Mission will start a health center in an existing building of the Balashram, initially with a full time pharmacist and a nurse and a pediatrician visiting twice a week.

Health Center News

HCHCs are running smoothly with Jagatpur center working two days a week, Balighai five days a week and Bhisndipur two days a week.

New Dental Clinic at Balighai

A charitable new dental clinic was inaugurated at H.C.H.C., Balighai during December, 2009 for the poor patients.

Eye Camp by VOSH and HCHC

A mega eye camp was organized at HCHC, Balighai with a joint collaboration of HCHC and VOSH (volunteer optometrist service to humanity), USA, Canada. More than 10 doctors and optometrists from abroad participated along with the local ophthalmologists and volunteers. Large number of people were examined and eye glasses were distributed free of cost.



Balashram Trek

A total of thirty people, three teachers, and twenty seven disciples participated in the trek that started from Delhi and finished in Risikesh. On the way was a visit to Anandamayee's ashram at Hardwar and seeing the Ganga arati at dusk. Next day was the bus trip to our Uttarkashi ashram on a winding mountain road. After a night's stay at the newly built dormitory on the banks of Ganga, there was the trip to Gangotri about 5 hours by bus the next day. The trek started the next morning, after one of the temple priests did a puja to mother Ganga especially for the whole group of trekers. The trek was beautiful, the energy of the Himalayas and the source of the Ganga River was almost overwhelming! The view of Gomukh , at the source of mother Ganga was a blessing of a life time to be able to share in the divine company of the guru.

5th Brahmachari Training Course Nov 26-Feb 25

Training Course is under progress under the direction of Baba Prajnananandaji.

Annual Gita Lectures at Bhubhaneshwar and Cuttack will be held as usual.

11th IIKYS Jan 14-20

The annual IIKYS will be held at our Balighai Gurukulam under the guidance of Baba Prajnananandaji

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