

Sthita Prajna



Guru Vandana

*Jnanasvarupam nijabhava yuktam
Anandamananda karam prasannam
Yogindramidyam bhavaroga vaidyam
Srimadgurum nityamaham namami*

I bow down to the *sadguru*, always worthy of adoration, who is the best among the yogis and the physician of worldly diseases. Ever content full of knowledge and engrossed in his own divine nature, he is bliss and the distributor of bliss, too.

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ISSUE 2

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FROM THE EDITORS :

“The beauty in life is not living for oneself; it is giving, sharing, and caring. Let us try to offer all of our goodness to others, not our sorrow and misery. Let us share our knowledge, skill, and positive thought; let us relieve others of their suffering.”

Paramahansa Prajnanananda

Year 2010 was a year of much progress and expansion. We welcome year 2011 to bring even more growth in kriya activities, spirituality, love and wisdom under the guidance of our gurus.

“Message of the Master” speaks on how divine destiny leads to liberation.

Prajnana Vani describes the happiness of true renunciation and the exalted state of wisdom. In his article on “Hard Work” Guruji also stresses the importance of hard work for a healthy life style and mind. Practical Spirituality, records the reflections of an everyday soul, who like most of our readers, is living and working in the world on ‘the art of listening’.

Rama Katha continues to bring us the story of Rama, the life at Chitrakuta and meeting with Bharata. We observed the Punyatithi of our beloved Gurudev on Dec 3. Prashnottari answers questions on Mahasamadhi and the sanctity of the Samadhi sites and the benefits of meditating at such holy places. The article on Self Knowledge stresses on Shraddha, dhyana and bhakti as the three prerequisites for self knowledge.

Excerpts from some of Paramahansa Prajnanananda’s seminal works, including “The Universe Within”, continue to bring us amazing information about the body, mind and soul.

We bring you the Christmas and New Year message of Guruji and excerpts from other messages.

Around the world covers the happenings and highlights around the world and across ashrams and the upcoming events. Featured in this issue is an article on the Mother Center USA as it completes thirteen years of coming into being.

Sthita Prajna wishes a happy and prosperous New Year and thanks all its readers and sponsors for their support. We look forward to your continued support in making this endeavor of spreading the message of the Masters fruitful in the coming years.

HOLY DAYS MESSAGE

My loving and divine soul,

I wish each of you a spiritual Christmas and a New Year of spiritual progress.

There is a proverb: "Time and tide wait for no one." Breath after breath, moment after moment, day after day, and year after year, the play of time continues. We were born in time, and we must leave in time. Within this limited frame of individual existence, it is our foremost duty to sincerely strive so that success will be at hand — not just material success, but also success in spiritual pursuit. If we examine our lives and achievements through the years, we will surely be aware of our accomplishments, but this is not enough. The beauty in life is not living for oneself; it is giving, sharing, and caring. Let us try to offer all of our goodness to others, not our sorrow and misery. Let us share our knowledge, skill, and positive thought; let us relieve others of their suffering.

We should care for each other because we belong to one family. The yogis declared that the universe is our home and every living being is part of our family. Every living being should be loved and cared for. We should care for the environment, the plants, the trees, and other beings, including all people. Through this kind of living, our hearts open with joy and divine bliss. Such a life is a bit difficult to create, but every effort brings more strength and courage.

Let there be no fear of an uncertain future; let there be no worry of insecurity; let there be no mourning over the past, which is dead. Let us live in every breath, breathing the breath of love and peace, moving like an angel, loving Mother Mary, Jesus, and all divine beings. I hope the passing year has given you enough strength to pass through all struggles and challenges and welcome year 2011. Smile and face whatever the New Year brings you in its basket.

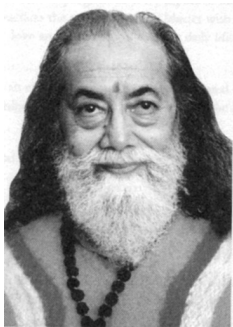
Happy New Year to all.

With love,

Prajananananda

MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

DIVINE DESTINY



Those who seek spirituality seek the formless God. They want the truth: they are divine. imperishable soul and gives love to the almighty God, one will quickly progress spiritually, and one will reach the state of God realization. Those who remain in this state and maintain this divine mood are always endowed with divine qualities and are forever free.

When the Sun rises, light spreads everywhere. The warmth of the Sun enlivens and energizes everything. Darkness disappears. When a person seeks God, his life radiates with truth, light, and knowledge. Ignorance and weakness disappear. This is liberation, being well established in truth. Liberation is called *Moksha*, which is freedom from delusion, illusion and error. Truth is God.

Keeping ones awareness above the pituitary up to the fontanel and watching the divine is the foundation of spiritual life, the way to taste Truth. Above the pituitary is the realm of good qualities and God realization. To remain in the pituitary and beyond is to be engrossed in God consciousness. In this state, if one constantly watches the feeble breath touches the

Man is born for God realization. The marvelous power of God is dormant and hidden inside His entire creation. As cloud covers the Sun, the demonic qualities cover the Soul Sun. To be absorbed in the inner light of the self and to be free from all negative qualities, everybody should nurture and protect their spiritual qualities. Spiritual food and life style and spiritual practice like Kriya meditation quickens spiritual evolution. One can be free from sorrow, worry, anxiety, fear and ups and downs of life. Dwelling above the pituitary and watching God, one can experience peace, bliss and joy. Then surely one will proceed upward to the infinite north to his presence, realizing the living presence of the formless God, godhood and liberation-victory in everything.

PRAJNANAVANI - THE VOICE OF WISDOM

THE STATE OF TRUE RENUNCIATION



*surā mandira taru
mulanivasaha sayya
bhutala ajinam vasah
sarva parigraha
bhoga tyagah kasya
sukham na karoti
viragaha*

Bhaja Govindam - 18

“One takes shelter in the temples or under the trees. Sleeps on the ground and covers oneself with animal skin or the tree bark and gives up everything including the desire for enjoyment. Is not such a person of true detachment happy?”

Here a man of true dispassion is presented. A person of true detachment is happy and content in himself. He realizes that the changing world does not give him permanent happiness. He does not care for building a house to live in. He does not care about where he lives. Since he has given up the desire for enjoyments he is happy taking shelter in a temple or under a roadside tree. He does not care for fine clothes. He covers himself with the skin of animals or the bark of a tree. Internally he is also free from all desires and passions. Nothing can take

away the happiness of such a person.

When one is really hungry one doesn't worry about what kind of plate he is eating in. when one is really sleepy he would sleep anywhere and on any type of bed.

Metaphorically *surā mandira* or the temple of God is one's own body. One can withdraw into himself and take shelter or rest in the inner divine kingdom. *Taru mula* or the root of a tree could also be applied to the body. The body has been described as an inverted tree with its root up and trunk and branches below. Taking rest at

the root of a tree could mean staying with your focus in the fontanel. Such a person is always happy.

bhutala means the ground and also the earth element. In the body Muladhara is the place of earth and this indicates discipline in the money center. *Ajinam* also means difficult to conquer- sexual urge in the *svadhishtana* or the second center is difficult to conquer. *Aparigrah* is to give up all possessions or belongings including enjoyments and desires.

Renunciation is a state of mind and not just an external show. We come across people who even having given up everything and becoming monks talk about what they were before, their status in society and their possessions and how much they have given up to become monks. When you have renounced everything why does your mind still dwell on your past glories unless you are still attached to them?

A king turned monk Bhartrihari wrote a book of hundred verses known as the *vairagya satakam* in which he says,

*Sarva vastu bhayanvitam
vairagyam eva abhayam.*

Every person in the world lives with some fear or another- of losing riches, beauty or health. Freedom from fear is possible only for a true renunciate. *vairagya* or non attachment is the source of all happiness.

Everyday during sleep we experience some uninterrupted happiness. The reason is in deep sleep you are not attached to anything and are free from desires. How could we practice such detachment? If you accept everything in life as a gift of God and know it is all temporary and live with an attitude of a care taker you will enjoy real bliss. The Upanishad says,

*tyage naike amritatva
manasu*-Renunciation gives immortality.

A *virági* is one who is unaffected by the agitations of the physical world and is also free from all mental conflicts and dwells in the contemplation of the divine and is always happy.

*yoga ratova bhogarato
sanga ratova sangavihinah
yasya brahmani ramate cittam
nandati nandati nandtyeva*

‘Following the disciplines of yoga or enjoying pleasures,

living among others or alone, he rejoices, rejoices, and rejoices.’

One who has reached an exalted state of mind is happy in any given situation. Such a person transcends the physical and mental planes and merges in the all pervading Brahman.

Here four types of situations are described - when one is in meditation, enjoying the pleasures of life, in the midst of people or by oneself. People differ in the conditions under which they could be happy or unhappy. Some are happy during their meditation and following disciplines. some others can be happy only when they are enjoying material pleasures, some like to be alone and some others may be miserable when alone and happy in the midst of others. This is conditional happiness. But when one’s mind is absorbed in and roaming in the supreme Brahman one

would be only rejoicing irrespective of what situation he is in. The word *nanadati* or rejoices is used thrice to emphasize the truth of the statement.

If your mind is in God you would be happy in any of the above conditions. Shankara could have said ‘only during meditation’. The only condition is that your mind should be in God. Whatever you are doing bring god into your life. Mind is the cause of liberation and bondage. The glory of realization is to be in truth all the time.

In the Mundaka Upanishad 3:1:4 we hear of *atma krida*- playing in the soul and *atma rati*- the bliss of soul .The Upanishad says,

A kriyavan or an intelligent person is one who is playing in the soul and deriving bliss in the self. ***

DATES TO REMEMBER

Birthday of Yogananda	: January 5th
IIKYS	: Jan. 14th–20th
Mahasamadhi of Bhupendranath Sanyal	: January 18th
Birthday of Bhupendranath Sanyal	: January 20th
Saraswati Puja	: February 08
Maha Shivaratri	: March 3
Mahasamadhi of Yogananda	: March 7th
Mahasamadhi of Shriyukteswar	: March 9th
Holi (Festival of Colors)	: March 20

NO SUBSTITUTE FOR HARD WORK

There is no substitute for hard work. In course of human evolution and especially during last 200, 250 years, the nature of work has changed. The nature of work instead of being physical it became more intellectual. As a result, what happened? It has contributed to the great disaster humanity is facing now.

Let us look at the food situation for example. Where does our food come from? You may say it does not matter where it is grown as long as you have money you can purchase it. But we are told that it is not so any more and the whole world is facing a food crisis. We have become so dependent on getting food imported from one country to another that if one bans the export of its produce the others would be affected. Even if you have money in the pocket but there may not be food in the store. Why is each country not growing its own food? The problem is we're not working.

You may say we are working day and night but you are not working in a productive

way. Sitting at the desk in front of the computer might help you to order food from the store but the store may not have the item you need.

What is this work and why is it necessary I'm from India. I grew up in village. We did not have electricity, and most of the work we did manually. Simple example, when my mother used to cook, she had to grind rice to make rice flour, she had to split the mung beans to make a dal, and had to grind her own spices on a grinding stone.

Years later I asked my mother "why did you put on so much of weight?" She laughed, and said "do you know, when my daughters-in-law came, they did not allow me to work". Previously she had worked very hard but now the work load diminished.

When Mahatma Gandhi was alive he had a very strict rule in his ashram that everyone had to work manually at least for an hour to be entitled to get food in the ashram.

Our manual work, our physical work is reduced and

to make matters worse we sit in front of the computer all day at work. I agree this work is necessary in the modern world but it does not give the same joy and satisfaction as the physical work. We should find some time to do some work like gardening in the yard or do some cooking.

When I came to USA, for the first time I saw readymade *chapatti*, (a type of flat bread like tortilla, wrapped in a plastic packet that had a strange taste. When it was made and how long it was kept on the shelf in the store we do not know. It is unfortunate that people come home tired from work not wanting to cook, they just heat food in a microwave and sit in front of the television. No time to talk, no time to interact and no time for physical work. This modern life style is not healthy.

When I'm talking of physical work I remember a person who was traveling with me from central India few years ago. When we started conversing I realized that he is a genius. He could do elaborate mathematical computations in his head in a very short time. I was really curious and asked,

“What type of work do you do?”

He said, “I have a Ph.D in Philosophy and Mathematics and I teach in a school”.

Then I asked him “How did you learn all these?”

He said, “I play with numbers. I have developed a system by myself.”

This gentle man lived in an apartment in Kolkata with his wife. He said he gets up at 3 in the morning everyday to do thirty minutes of meditation. After his meditation he would clean the whole house including scrubbing the floors before he goes to work. While he cleaned he thinks of his numbers. When he returned home he did some yoga. He was always busy.

Modern human beings have gone away so much from natural lifestyle; they no longer know what natural lifestyle is. I have to admit that I have also fallen victim to this unnatural way of living, to a good extent. Before I came to the West I had a completely different life style doing some manual work everyday and working in the garden which gave me so much joy.

I remember in the Ramayana when Mother Sita

was left in the ashram of Sage Valmiki by Lakshmana. Mother Sita who was pregnant at the time lived in the ashram of sage Valmiki. Sage Valmiki told her if you want to enjoy life look at the plants and seeds. Plant some seeds, water them and watch them grow. You will see what life is about before you have your baby. This experience will help you in taking care of your baby and will give you great joy while doing it. Notice that he had not said to her, "Sit and meditate." Yes, meditation is good but along with meditation there should be other activities, besides our work which include physical activities to keep us healthy and happy."

In Rishikesh on the other side of Ganga there are some large ashrams. One of the ashrams is known as "Svarga ashram" or the ashram of the heavens. It is also known as Kali Kamliwala which means "a person with a black blanket." After the founder of the ashram, a monk who is said to have worn a black blanket tied at his waist.

In those days over hundred years ago there were no communication and monks

did not have comfortable places to stay when they travelled. So he took it upon himself to construct some huts and to provide free food and lodging for them. He used to carry water on top of his head from Ganga to his kitchen for cooking.

There was another monk known as Lal Baba in Gomukh. Many people travel to Gomukh to see the Gangotri glacier in the Himalayas. Those days were no cafes or restaurants there except the ashram of this monk. He would feed about two hundred people everyday and provide them blankets each night when it was cold.

The point of the story is we should take care of ourselves. This is what St. Francis taught and lived by throughout his life. In this modern world it is important to adopt this teaching and incorporate some physical work in our routine. When we perform manual labor with love we will find that we will have energy to accomplish a great deal of work. Let us think about the ways we can include some physical work into our life to

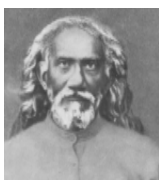
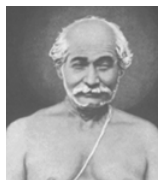


“The door of Kriya Yoga is open only to earnest seekers and sadhakas.”

Mahavatara Babaji

“Forget your past suffering and troubles. If you set your mind on selfrealization and work towards your spiritual upliftment, you will receive immense benefits.”

Lahiri Mahasaya



“Every day do regular swadhyaya coupled with meditation and study of spiritual books and scriptures.”

Swami Shriyukteshwar

“One who is blessed with the eye of wisdom is free from all doubts, confusion and duality.”

Sanyal Mahasaya

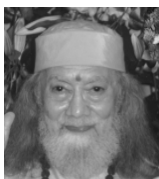
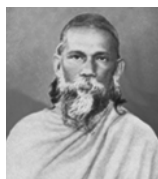


“By drawing and observing the graph of your mind, you can see whether everyday you are making any progress in your life or not.”

Paramahansa Yogananda”

“Make an effort to study the scriptures related to self-knowledge and to discuss the teachings of the Masters.”

Swami Satyananda



“When your breath becomes very feeble, then you are really practising Kriya. You are established in truth.”

Paramahansa Hariharananda

“One must constantly endeavour to be perfect in every thought, word and action.”

Paramahansa Prajnanananda



MYTHS AND METAPHORS

RAMA KATHA



*Sri raghavam dasaradhatmajamaprameyam
sitapatim raghukulanvaya ratna dipam.
ajanu bahum aravindadalayataksham
ramam nishachara vinashakaram namami*
Salutations to Sri Rama, the son of Dasharatha,
the jewel of the Raghu lineage, of long arms
and beautiful eyes like the lotus petals, the
husband of Sita, and the destroyer of the
rakshasas.

At Chitrakuta

During their travels they were in the company of holy men like Bharadwaja. Guha followed them up to Bhrardwaja's ashram. The ashram of Bharadwaja was at the meeting point of Ganga and the Yamuna Rivers. Lord Rama went to the ashram of Bhradwaja and introduced himself along with Sita and Lakshmana. God goes in search of a true devotee like Bharadwaja. The sage was overjoyed at the darshan of Sri Rama. He knew that the Lord incarnated as Lord Rama and was playing the role of an ordinary mortal. Taking the advice of the sage Bharadwaja

They traveled to a place known as Chitrakuta to live there. At Chitrakuta they met

sage Valmiki. Hearing of their approach the sage came to receive them. Rama bowed to the sage's feet and Valmiki blessed him. He hosted them offering delicious fruits, bulbs and roots. Lord Rama extolled the sage as one who could perceive the past, present and the future and that it was his good fortune that he could see the sage. Then Rama asked him to show them a place where they could live.

Here Sant Tulasi Das gives a beautiful reply of sage Valmiki. Filled with devotion and knowing the omniscience of the Lord the sage said to Lord Rama, "You are asking me advice for a place to live. First tell me where you are not. Then I can show you a place to live. But since you asked, live in the

hearts of those who are constantly immersed in the joy of listening to your stories, in the hearts of those whose eyes long to see your beauty, in the hearts of those who offer everything to you, in the hearts of those who constantly delight in the *rama mantra*, who follow the conduct of righteousness. There you live with your divine consort Sita and your brother Lakshmana.” Then the sage continued, “Live on the Chitrakuta hill which has a beautiful forest and is comfortable and has the holy river Mandakini flowing through. Great sages like Atri reside in that place.”

Taking Valmiki’s advice Lord Rama asked Lakshmana to build a cottage. Lakshmana built a beautiful cottage with branches of the trees and leaves and they started living there.

Meeting with Bharata

In the meantime unable to bear the separation from Lord Rama, King Dasharatha left his body. It is said that Dasaratha uttered the name of Rama six times in his last moments. Different authors give different explanations as to why he repeated the name of Lord Rama six times. Some say that

it is because it was six days after Lord Rama left for the forests and some others say it is to overcome the six inner enemies of *kama*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada* and *matsarya*, and some others say it is because of Lord Rama being the personification of the six darshanas. Whatever may be the reason Dasharatha was extremely fortunate to have the name of Lord Rama on his tongue and the form Lord Rama in his heart at the time of his departure.

Ayodhya was without a king and the ministers on the advice of Vasishta sent message for Bharata. Bharata returned to Ayodhya and knowing what happened was weighed down with grief for his father and the guilt that his mother did this terrible mistake for his sake. After performing the final rites for the king Dasharatha, Bharata left Ayodhya with the ministers and the army, in search of Lord Rama to bring him back to Ayodhya. Bharata wanted to take Lord Rama back or stay along with him in the forest. Bharata went to Chitrakuta with Shatrughna and the three mothers and Vashishta. On the way they stopped at the ashram of

Bharadwaja. Bharata pleaded with Rama to come back and accept the throne and that he would do the *Vanavasa* in his place. But Lord Rama refused to come back and advised Bharata that their father's word should be honored. After much persuasion Bharata returned with the sandals of Rama. He enthroned the sandals as the symbol of Lord Rama in Ayodhya and he stayed in the outskirts in a place known as Nandigram shunning all royal comforts. He lived the life of an ascetic like Lord Rama and looked after the kingdom as Lord Rama's representative with the advice of the ministers. Different authors describe the meeting of the brothers beautifully. Bharata's sacrifice is without comparison. Bharata was a great devotee of Lord Rama and Rama loved him dearly.

Atri and Anasuya

When Lord Rama, Lakshmana and Sita were in the forest they were in good company of many sages and saints. After the meeting with Bharata, Lord Rama decided to move from Chitrakuta to another forest. On the way they met the sage Atri and his

wife Anasuya. Atri means to be beyond the three bodies – the gross, the subtle and the causal. Atri means not to be in the three qualities of nature. Atri is one who has the right vision to experience the truth. In ancient times the rishis were married and the wives were also equally spiritual. Atri's wife was Anasuya. Anasuya is one who does not have jealousy, hatred or intolerance. We should be free from the triple qualities, the play of nature and all the negative qualities.

In the Bhagavad Gita in the *Rajavidya Rajaguhya Yoga*, the Lord says to Arjuna,
*idamtute guhyatamam
 pravakshyam anasuyave*

“I am giving you the secret of knowledge and experience required for liberation, as you are free from jealousy.”

Again in the Karma Yoga it is said, *shraddhavanto
 anasuyanto mucyante tepi
 karmabhih*

“Those who follow my teachings with faith and are devoid of jealousy, they are liberated from the bondage of Karma.” Anasuya is the daughter of Devahuti and sage Kardama. She was a known for

her chastity and at onetime could make the trinity into babies when they came to test her. She received Sita with love and they had a beautiful and meaning full conversation. Anasuya blessed Sita with gifts of clothes and garlands. Lord Rama, Sita and Lakshmana spent the night at the ashram of Atri and Anasuya and next morning after the morning oblations they took leave from them. With the blessings of Atri and Anasuya, Lord Rama, Sita and Lakshmana continued their journey to the forest called Dandakaranya.

Vanavasa

What is the significance of going to the forest? In the Maha Bharata the pandavas were born in the forest and also spent twelve years in exile in the forest and one year in incognito in a city. Lord Rama went to the forest in his twenties.

Another name for forest is *aranya*. *aranya* comes from the word *arani*.

ātmanam aranim kritva
.....Mundaka Upanishad

What is the meaning of going to the forest? In the Vedic period much before the Ramayana, there were gurukulas established in the forests in the lap of nature.

People desirous of spiritual growth and true education lived in the natural surroundings of the forest where one can really feel the expansion of the heart and mind and understand the play of God better. In the Vedic tradition students during their *brahmacharya* period were in the gurukulas in the forest for their growth and education and in their old age they were again in the forests for *vanaprastha*. The four stages of life were *brahmacharya*, *gruhastha*, *vanaprastha* and *sannyasa*. *Vanaprastha* means returning to the forest. To live in the forests in the company of holy people helps spiritual growth. In the modern days monks have left the forests and started living in the cities. Students do not go to the forest anymore but in the name of sight seeing they go for trekking to forest. True spiritual life is going away from us. Symbolically going to the forest means to live in a holy company.

Ravana is the symbol of *Kama* or desire. This *Kama* lives in us in fourteen places. The fourteen places are the ten sense organs and the four inner instruments - *dasa indriya* and the *antah karana catustaya*. To eliminate this one has to go to the forest for fourteen years.

PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY

LISTENING FOR UNDERSTANDING

I heard something the other day that really got me thinking. There is a difference between listening and listening for understanding. Most of us would argue that there really is no difference. After all, isn't that what listening is about? Isn't that the ostensible purpose of listening in the first place? Just recently it was pointed out to me by a very wise friend that the two are not the same at all. She said most people, especially if they are on opposite sides of an issue, are busy preparing their argument throughout the other person's conversation. They are too busy picking holes in the logic, preparing a defense and pouncing on inconsistencies to really hear what the other person is saying.

Once she explained it to me, I realized how guilty I was of doing this. How many times have I, in the heat of an argument, refused to listen properly to what was being said? Even as I hear the other side, I am ready to interrupt to show how much superior my own argument is.

The other day, for example, my husband and I

were deciding whether or not to go to India together. I thought we should and he thought it was too expensive. Even as he explained to me that since this was more of a business trip for me funded by my university, that I should go finish my work and come home, I began reading into his motives. What about all the times I had accompanied him on business trips? Why couldn't he do the same for me? What about spending time together? Was he no longer interested in doing that? As he tried telling me we should wait and go to Australia together instead after I returned, I was preparing my arsenal. Guilt, blackmail, accusations, all were at my disposal and I was planning how to counteract each of his arguments. Busy with my preparation, I failed to hear his concern for finances, his idea for a more enjoyable trip, his willingness to take care of the home front while I was gone. I wasn't listening for understanding, only for counterargument.

It makes me wonder how different the world would be if we did listen for understanding. What does that even look like?

If we listened for understanding, then we would be fully present, in the moment, attentive to the one who is speaking. We would be fully engaged, eyes, ears, heart and mind devoted to the other's point of view. In that moment, we would have no agenda, no bias, no argument and no defense. We would seek to visualize, empathize and allow the other to be. If we were that open we may even become convinced of the truth of their argument. If we continued to disagree, we would have at least have acknowledged the other side. This is no simple matter, but an incredible gift we can give to each other.

At heart, every human being wants to be heard. Every person wants a voice. If, as Paulo Freire writes, human beings cannot exist in silence, but only in words, work and action-reflection, then by listening for understanding we are truly allowing the other to exist fully in that moment. If we can remember that each of us carries that divine spark, then perhaps this task will be easier. Aren't we obliged to acknowledge that spark in each other in order for it to flourish and become a steady flame?

I believe that if we all practiced listening for

understanding, the world be a much more peaceful and loving place. Often, when we are angry or upset or off balance, all we need is for someone to listen, truly listen to how we are feeling. The act of speaking and being heard is a healing process in itself, and we feel the burden lighten and our emotions dissipate. Too often, this simple and effective process is interrupted by those who listen without seeking to understand. Those who disagree will interrupt with their own arguments, while those who care for us will seek to mend the situation by interrupting, telling us we are imagining things, or that we are completely off base in our assumptions. Well meaning as this may be, it doesn't help. If instead, they listened and allowed us to feel heard, we would probably find resolution much more easily.

Of course, not all dilemmas are solved merely by listening, but without listening we would never know what really is required. Whether it is a listening, ear, a shoulder to cry on or a call to immediate action, we can only determine it best if we listen first.

Jyothi Bathina

PARI PRASHNA

How can we distinguish who is a truly realized teacher?

Realization is not an external certificate. You can only know if one is realized by their quality. If you stay near realized people you will easily know their qualities. When you are near them your mind will be peaceful and your life will be filled with divine spirit. A realized person always directs students towards God and not towards the world. The real spiritual teacher, the realized Master gives you evidence of his divine power just as Jesus and his apostles did Jesus said, "You will know them by their fruits." Divine power is the real fruit. If you come to the touch of a true guru you very quickly come to know that he is advanced and motivated and feel calmness love and joy within. You feel very inspired. The true guru is a person who immediately infuses power into a disciple even at the time of initiation. That person is a real guru.

When a monk leaves the body, why is it called

***Mahasamadhi?* What is *Mahasamadhi*?**

Samadhi is a state of realization of enlightenment. *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* is the deathless state. *Mahasamadhi* is the ultimate state of a holy person leaving his mortal body. Even during the time of their departure some spiritual seekers get enlightened.

They are two types of enlightened people. Some enlightened or realized people continue to serve humanity after their realization. Some meditate and serve humanity, and get realization at the time after their death. For holy persons especially the renunciatic monk, the death is known as *Mahasamadhi*. *Maha* means great, *Samadhi* means liberation.

What happens to the body of the monk after his *mahasamadhi*? Can the body of the monk be cremated?

It depends on the monastic order. In the monastic tradition of Shri Adi Shankara, the body is already cremated

at the time of the monk initiation and so they bury the body. But in many other ashrams they also cremate the body of monk of Adi Shankara's order. Sometime the body is cremated and sometimes it is buried.

Why do they usually bury the body of a monk?

The body of a monk has spent a lot of time in meditation and prayer, so it is charged with spiritual energy. There are two types of *Samadhi* or burial. One is to bury it under the soil and the other is to submerge it in water. These are known as *bhusamadhi* and *jalasamadhi*

respectively. *Jalasamadhi* is done by leaving the body in deep sea or a river bed in a special prescribed way. The place where the body is buried under the earth becomes a holy place for spiritual seekers to meditate. Since the buried body was used to so much of meditation and prayer it contains a lot of spiritual vibration and energy. People go and meditate at such burial places. Many get deep spiritual experience, vibration and energy. It is very beautiful to meditate at such places. The place also becomes holy because of many people meditating there.



Baba Paramahansa Prajnananandaji with children at the inauguration of Sunday School, Kriya Vedanta Gurukulam, Joliet, IL

VALUABLE VOLUMES



IN THIS ISSUE WE HAVE EXCERPTS FROM
THE UNIVERSE WITHIN AND *THE CHANGING
NATURE OF RELATIONSHIPS* BY
PARAMAHAMSA PRAJNANANDA

THE MONKEY MIND IN THE BODY FOREST (From *THE UNIVERSE WITHIN*)

A forest in the wild is full of beauty. There are high mountains, gurgling rivers filled with life-giving waters, fresh green grass and sheltering trees. At the same time, the forest is full of menace, with ferocious beasts roaming free, hunting for prey. In the same way, the body forest contains good and bad, our positive qualities as well as our negative ones.

In *Genesis*, God asked Man to rule over the wilds of the earth, the birds in the air and the fish in the water. Essentially, we have to rule over this body forest with our minds. The mind, however, tends to be like a monkey, and needs to be trained carefully.

The body is a beautiful thing, much like the bamboo

flute that the cowherd Krishna carries. When we look at the bamboo flute, there are a total of seven holes, six holes can be played upon by the fingers and the seventh hole remains close to the lips of Krishna. God has given us this flute - this spine with six holes, the centers of money, sex, food, emotion, religion and spirituality. All these are needed, but they should be skillfully played upon. All centers are useful and should be closed and opened with moderation. Krishna is blowing the breath into the human body through the seventh hole. Each human life is a *Bhagavad Gita*. Read it, sing it, enjoy this life and make it beautiful. Each tune is different and each is hauntingly

beautiful, but only when all seven centers of this human flute are in harmony, does the divine song of God emerge, the one song which leads us to absolute bliss. All other tunes are merely entertaining, little melodies which seem all-pervading, but which when reexamined turn out to be nothing but fragments, beautiful, melodious, captivating, yet unfinished and incomplete. Sankara in *Vivekachoodamani*, gives examples from nature, where certain species meet their death due to extreme attachment to one or the other of the five senses. The deer is fascinated by melodious sound and has no awareness of the danger it is in when the deer hunter uses music to make it his target. We, like the deer that become entranced by the hunter's song, are captured by these fragments, "all sound and fury, signifying nothing." Most of us are extremely attached to our bodies. The body's pleasure, the body's pain, the body's comfort or discomfort, hunger, thirst, sexual fulfillment, these are the driving factors in our lives. Our work, play, our emotions and our

intellects are spent catering to the needs of this human body. Although we focus so intensely on the body's physical needs, most of us are unaware of the body's potential and how to use it.

Three Bodies

Very few people realize that rather than one body, we actually have three. These are the gross body, to which we are so inordinately attached, the astral body, which can be defined as a person's mental makeup or personality, and the causal body, which is comprised of our ignorance. The gross body changes constantly and whether we want to face it or not, is perishable. The body changes every day, with old cells dying and new cells forming continuously. What does not change is the formless aspect, that which constitutes the self. Ask a person his name. Irrespective of what stage of life he may be in, whether as a child, an adult or an elderly person, the answer would be the same "I am__." The body changes, the child become a youth and the youth becomes old, but the 'I'

remains the same. There is a changeless and changing aspect to life. Unfortunately people cling to the changing aspect and are disappointed.

The City of Many Doors

In the *Vedas*, the human body is described as a city of many doors. We live in this city of doors for a short period of time. We need to gain the maximum benefit from this human birth. The body is the temple of God, in which the soul resides temporarily.

There are nine doors in the body. These are the two eyes, two nostrils, two ears and the mouth. Seven of the nine doors are present in the face. The other two are the genital organ and the anus. Thus we have five organs of perception. These are the eyes, ears, nose, mouth and skin, which are responsible for sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. We also have five organs of action: mouth, hands, feet, genital organ and anus, which give us the capacity to speak, work, walk, procreate and excrete waste.

The elements in the body vibrate in two ways and have two functions. Space is

active in the ears to hear and in the throat to talk. The air is active in the skin to touch and in the hands for work. Fire is active in the eyes to see and the feet to walk. Water is active in the mouth to taste and the genitals for procreation. Earth is active in the nose to smell and in the anus for excretion. When these organs of perception and action come in contact with external objects, we perceive the opposites of heat and cold, unhappiness and happiness, pleasure and pain. Since the human body is so prone to disease and degeneration, it is imperative that we take good care of the gross body. Although most people are aware of this need, eating healthy food and exercising to keep in shape, they ignore the other two bodies completely.

The Gross Body

The gross body is composed of the five elements. The question arises therefore as to why all of us are different, despite being created out of the same elements. The answer lies in the makeup of our subtle or astral bodies. The subtle body

of each person contains the various tendencies, formed from repeated experiences, thoughts and deeds in previous lives. Hence the distinction in forms, the variety of natures among different people. This gross body is the physical body, which can be perceived through the five sense organs of sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing. At the same time it is prone to the six modifications of birth, existence, growth, maturity, decay and death. The gross body is the medium for the fulfillment of many ambitions.

The Subtle Body

The subtle body, also known as the astral body, can be thought of as the combination of senses, vital breath, and experiences through the mind and intellect, which constitutes our own unique personality. The subtle body is much larger than the gross body, since it encompasses the mind. While the gross body is limited, it is possible to travel anywhere at lightning speed with the mind. Most of us are not capable of utilizing the astral body to its full capacity. The

astral body is most effective and healthy when the mind is pure, clean and concentrated. The immense spiritual energy which lies hidden and untapped in the subtle body, if properly used will enable us to experience inexplicable joy and bliss.

The Causal Body

Finally, the causal body can be defined as the body of ignorance which we carry with us. It is that state in which we have neither the knowledge of the physical body nor of the underlying self. It is the state of complete self-absorption and ignorance. It is this ignorance which covers our other two bodies and which is the primary cause for our birth, death and suffering. Once ignorance is eliminated we are free and liberated. Ordinary worldly knowledge, no matter how extensive, cannot remove this body of ignorance. It is only self-knowledge born of deep analysis and perception, which leads to true liberation. The *Vedas* teach that only when we transcend all three of these bodies, can we realize the Absolute.

THE SUPREME SOURCE

(From The Changing Nature of Relationships)

All names and forms come from the Supreme Source. When we sit by the sea shore and contemplate the waves we are transported by their rhythm. They come and go. If we offer a coconut the ocean will return it. Inscribed is a beautiful message whatever we do will come back to us.

The source of the objective world is all-pervading energy of God. God is the supreme subject, the ultimate reality under different names and forms. The presence of God is imminent in His entire creation. Whatever object we perceive in the exterior or the interior world is nothing but the omnipresence of God.

When a person becomes realized, the experience of the objective world is completely different. There is no longer any division between the subject and the object, only an awareness that the Supreme subject, God, is everywhere and in every object.

One who sees me everywhere and sees everything in me is a realized person.

Bhagavad Gita

A realized person experiences divinity at every turn, in smiles or tears. The incandescent presence of the one is everywhere and imbued in every happening. This fact is difficult to grasp but it is true. Out of the worst chaos comes a phase of reconstruction, in the ever permanent quest to seek perfection.

Whilst everything around us is ever changing in a perennial cycle of birth, death and rebirth, underlying this transition is the living power of god that is changeless.

God alone holds everything together. He creates, dissolves and recreates. Even in the midst of darkness light persists.

God is the ultimate relationship. Once we build this utmost form of relationship, our life becomes fulfilled. God is all things to men: He is in every name and form, in every subject and object. He alone is real and everything else is unreal.

LIGHTING THE LAMP

(From Mysticism of Religious Symbols)

Light is an essential aspect of daily life. We use light or lamps in homes, temples, churches and synagogues. People light lamps or candles while praying and meditating. What is the significance of lighting the lamps?

A Vedic prayer says, *Deepam jyoti param brahma, deepam jyotir janardhana, deepam jyothi harate papam deepam jyoti namostute. Subham karotu kalyanam arogyam dhana sampadam Shatru vridhhi vinashaya deepam jyoti namostute*

“Light of the lamp symbolizes God; this light of the lamp removes misery from life. The light of the lamp removes sins, mistakes and makes life more beautiful. I bow down to the lamp. Let this light bring auspiciousness, health, prosperity and success and eliminate enemies in life. I bow to the light of the lamp.”

The light is a symbol of life. When a candle or lamp is burning, it requires oxygen. Similarly in this body, the light of God is shining because of the oxygen drawn in as breath. A burning lamp represents life. This *jivana jyoti* or the lamp of life burns continuously from the

moment of birth. The oil in the lamp decreases as the light continues to burn, in the same way with every breath our life span is continuously decreasing. We should be conscious of this and use our valuable time in every moment. This lamp is also compared with the mind. The Bhgavad Gita (6:19) says, “Just like the lighted lamp remains steady and does not flicker in a still place where there is no wind, similarly let your mind and life be still.”

Through regulating your breath you can make your mind and life beautiful. Light dispels darkness. A beautiful prayer in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (1:3:28) says, “Lead me Oh God, from false hood to truth, from darkness to light from death to immortality.”

Light dispels darkness. It symbolizes knowledge which dispels ignorance. A burning lamp also gives warmth and light. The warmth represents love and the light represents knowledge.

A candle or lamp is lit to invoke the presence of God and when we light a candle at the altar it is a prayer to say, “*Let my life be a dedicated life*”

STORIES TO LIVE BY

EQUANIMITY

Maintain a state of equanimity. Winter or spring does not last forever. Any problem gets solved in time. If it does not, accept it and try to overcome it. Remember that the purpose of life is to love God and manifest that love. Be free from the dualities of nature -the pairs of opposites like good and bad, pleasure and pain, heat and cold. Do not be affected by blame or praise. People blamed Jesus and Krishna during their lives. If someone says something bad let them pollute their tongue but do not pollute your ear. Mahatma Gandhi was shot to death in the prayer hall and as he was dying the words that came out of Gandhiji's mouth were "Hey Ram" This is a life of love and God consciousness. God gives many examples. History keeps repeating itself but people do not learn. Let your life be full of love.

Once Buddha was standing in front of a rich man's house and begging. The lady of the house was accusing him with many words calling him a parasite on others. Buddha was neither replying nor was leaving. Finally she came out to give him something to get rid of him. Then he talked. With a smile he asked her, "What would you do if I refuse your gift?" Surprised she said, "I will take it back." Then he said, "If I refuse to take all the things that you have said will they also not go back to you?" The lady realized her fault and was transformed.

Think about how much strength Lord Buddha had within him. When someone is doing an injustice to you at the very moment we should pray, "O God, give me the strength not to react."

By your love and behavior you can bring transformation in others.

MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

A BLAMELESS LIFE

LIVE AS FREE MEN
BUT DO NOT USE YOUR FREEDOM AS A COVERUP
FOR EVIL
LIVE AS SERVANTS OF GODSHOW PROPER RESPECT
FOR EVERYONE
LOVE THE BROTHER HOOD OF BELIEVERS
FEAR GOD, HONOR THE KING

I peter 2:16-17

BE HUMBLER THAN THE GRASS. BE TOLERANT LIKE
THE TREES.
GIVE HONOR AND LOVE TO THE LOWLIEST AND BE
CONSTANTLY UNITED
WITH GOD

Sri Chaitanya Sishtashtakam- 3

DO NOT IMITATE WHAT IS EVIL BAY WHAT IS GOOD
ANY ONE WHO DOES WHAT IS GOOD IS FROM GOD

3 John 11

LET MAN LIFT HIMSELF. LET HIM NOT DEGRADE
HIMSELF

FOR THE SELF ALONE IS THE FRIEND OF THE SELF
AND SELF ALONE IS THE ENEMY OF SELF.

Bhagavad Gita6:5

DO EVERYTHING WITHOUT COMPLAINING AND
ARGUING

SO THAT YOU MAY BECOME BLAMELESS AND PURE
CHILDREN OF GOD WITHOUT FAULT IN A CROOKED
AND DEPRIVED GENERATION, IN WHICH YOU SHINE
LIKE STARS IN THE UNIVERSE

AS YOU HOLD OUT THE WORD OF LIFE

Philippians 2:14-16

ATMA-VIDYA

PURSuing SELF KNOWLEDGE

KAIVALYOPANISHAD

In the 1st mantra of the Upanishad Asvalayana requested the Guru to teach him the highest knowledge of Self. Now the Guru begins to answer.

“To him the creator said, if you have faith, devotion, meditation and discipline you know it. You cannot achieve it by effort or through the help of others or by wealth. Only through renunciation immortality is obtained. (mantra 2, Kaivalya Up)”

Commentary

These are the three conditions the teacher cited for getting Self Knowledge.

Shraddha, Bhakti and Dhyana

Shraddha is faith. In the scriptures it is said you should have *atma vishvas* - have faith in yourself. To have the confidence that you can do it and you can achieve it. Do not think that you are weak. Assert to yourself that you are the child of God. Next is *Guru vedanta vakyeshu shraddha*- Secondly you should have faith in the

words of the teacher. The teacher should teach based on the scriptural truth. When you go to a doctor for example you should have faith in the doctor. So also have faith in the scriptures and the teacher. *Shraddhavan labhate jnanam* says the Gita-one who has faith will get the wisdom

Bhakti is love and devotion to the guru, to the scriptural truth and to God. *Sa tasmin parama premarupa*- Love directed towards God is bhakti. Another meaning of bhakti is the attitude to serve. In the modern times everything is obtained by paying a fee. People have come to think that paying money is enough. That is not true. We should have the attitude to love and serve. Love transforms and purifies the heart.

Dhyana—is meditation and yoga is discipline. *Dhyana* gives steadiness and calms the mind.

So faith, devotion and meditation are the foundation or the stepping stones to achieve the wisdom that liberates.

It is said *na karmana* ,
na prajaya, *dhanena*

Na karmana-With self-effort you can achieve a lot in the outside world. But through ego and the senses you cannot achieve self knowledge, as they are extrovert and cannot go within. Jesus said you clean the outside but not the inside of the cup. Outside is visible and we clean it but we do not clean the inside. Anything that is other than you, is away from you in *desa* or *kala*- away in space or time and can be achieved through self effort. Effort is needed for what you do not already have. The self although it appears to be away or unknown is not away in space or time. It is *nihitam* –hidden, *guhaya*- in the cave of the heart as the light of the awareness and is not known because of the ignorance.

na prajaya- with help of progeny or others you cannot get it. With the help of family members you can get help only in the outside world.

dhanena- With money you cannot obtain it. You can buy material things but knowledge cannot be purchased. With money you can get admission into a school but you cannot buy knowledge. You

may ask, “Are we not getting knowledge by listening to you?” No. You are getting some direction but knowledge is within and it should be revealed.

So through your own effort using the body, mind and the senses or through the help of the others or with money you cannot achieve it. Then how? The second half of the verse gives the answer.

Thyagena eke - only by *tyaga* or renunciation immortality is attained. What is *tyaga*? Does it mean you have to renounce your family? No. *tyaga* is an attitude. In the Bhagavad Gita it is said, *tyaga ssantiranantaram* –through renunciation you get continuous peace. If you cannot exhale you cannot inhale. If you cannot give up you cannot contain. *Tyaga* means to give up attachment, to give up the likes and dislikes. Take care of the body but do not be attached to the body. Do not be attached to the mind and ego- thinking that I am always right and the others are wrong. . Take care of the family but do not be attached to the family. We are attached to the body, to our name and fame, to the family and to friends. Love them all but do not be attached. Gurudev

said, be compassionately detached. But we are passionately attached. Remember everything in life is temporary and we do not know what happens the next minute. Now the breath is there we do not know about the next minute. Gita advises to be like *padmapatra ivambhasa*- like the lotus leaf in the water. Lotus plant grows in the water; gets strength through the water and the leaf remains on the water but the water cannot touch the leaf. We should live in the world and love the family

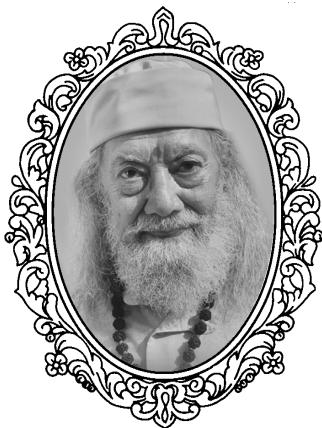
and friends and support each other but should be inwardly detached knowing everything is a play, acting our role well.

So only through this type of renunciation immortality is attained. Remember every night you renounce all your attachments. -*susuptikale sakale vilina* During deep sleep you do not remember your family, or job or even your own body. You give up everything each night but unknowingly. Cultivate that kind of an attitude.

(To be continued)

GURUDEV'S PUNYATITHI ARADHANA

Dec 3, 2010



Our beloved Gurudev, Baba Hariharanandaji's 8th *punyatithi aradhana utsav*

was observed in the divine presence of Baba Prajnananandaji at Balighai ashram with Guru *Paduka puja*, and a special fire ceremony in the Guru Mandir. A few hundred disciples attended the event to pay their respects and meditate at the sacred site.

All ashrams and centers across the globe also observed the *punyatithi* with special meditation, prayer and worship to commemorate the day.

THE CHANGING PHASE OF THE MOTHER CENTER, USA

Kriya Yoga Institute was founded by Paramahansa Hariharananda in 1997 in Homestead, Florida, USA. It serves as the Mother Center for Kriya Yoga centers and groups throughout North and South America, Australia, and New Zealand, providing support for activities and programs worldwide. It is a beautiful monastery on five acres that were transformed into lush gardens through the divine energy of Paramahansa Hariharananda.

This year, the Mother Center, USA completes thirteen years of growth and progress as a center for the practice of Kriya Yoga and carrying out the Masters' message of universal love, fraternity, and peace for humanity. With the blessings of Gurudev and the valuable teachings of Guruji over the years which brought some real changes and transformation and expansion, the center has become a birthplace of real ashram life, a life dedicated to putting into practice the divine

teachings of the Masters of the lineage as well as of other saints and sages of all religions.

Along with the activities for the daily upkeep and maintenance of the property, all done in an attitude of "work is worship" which in itself is a practical meditation, there has been an increase in the spiritual activities that go on in the ashram.

The resident staff of the brahmacharis has grown. The ashram activities are done with dedication and enthusiasm. Every month there are new devotees receiving initiations and we have a number of local disciples who regularly attend the evening meditations. On Sundays a larger number of them come for satsang and meditation.

The ashram has extended its activities to community service as well. Brahmacharis from the ashram go to the city once every two weeks to teach yoga and chanting at Sunday school to children and their

parents. Once a week, there is also service at the nearby shelters where we take food and the excess produce from the ashram.

The two retreats held annually with Baba Prajnananandaji draw a large number of devotees both nationally and internationally and are times of great joy and learning. The dedicated work of the resident staff helps in the smooth operation of these full capacity retreats.

A Day at the Ashram.

A day at the ashram begins at five in the morning with an early morning chanting and meditation in the beautiful meditation hall with the life like statue of Gurudev Baba Hariharanandaji, looking at you with his compassionate gaze. Along with the routine daily morning prayers, some Vedic hymns are also chanted and this is followed by meditation.

Stepping out from the cottage in the predawn hours at 4.30 am in the morning after an early bath and walking to the meditation hall a few yards away is an experience in itself. You get the feeling of thankfulness that you have seen

another beautiful day and are still breathing, as Gurudev said. After meditation, an early morning walk in the beautiful serene grounds of the ashram, listening to the chirping of the birds, looking at the flowers and fruits in abundance gives you a feeling of great joy, reminding you of the divine Gardner who spent his life preparing the field for that bountiful yield not only of the flowers and fruits but also of the human hearts, cultivating and pulling out the evil roots of pride and ego and supplanting them with love.

You also think of his farsighted vision of providing us Baba Prajnananandaji, a guru in his image who continues the plantation with his loving toil, supplying the waters of love and warm sunlight and nourishing soil for our spiritual growth. Every day, I thank the Lord for all that he has given.

You walk through the wooded areas of with ripe avocados hanging from the trees and ripe star fruits lying on your path. Snow white flowers bloom in plenty every morning, reminding you of the purity of the guru. The Bilva trees with their new green leaves wait to be picked to

adorn Lord Shiva, the great guru of Gurus while *tulasi* waits to get to the feet of Vishnu. The *mandara* flowers of many colors, the favorites of the divine mother, compete in their beauty all along your path. Circling a few times around the guru's abode, watching the rising Sun and picking a few flowers for the altar I return to offer them at the feet of God and gurus.

You can't help thinking of the *Shiva Aparadha Kshamapana Stotra* of Sri Shankara lamenting his forgetting to offer the early morning ablutions, bilva leaves and flowers to Lord Shiva. You thank the Lord for letting you not forget and the guru for the opportunity to do it.

At 8:30 a.m., after breakfast, which includes mostly the ashram seasonal fruits of banana, citrus, mango, papaya and avocado and homemade yogurt, we assemble in the meditation hall again to listen to one of the many series of talks by Guruji for half an hour. The collection is rich with choice of Bhagavad Gita, Bhagavatam, Yoga Sutras, Yoga Vasishtha, The path of St Francis, – you name it, the

treasure of scriptural collection of East and West – the out pouring of love and wisdom. That half an hour of concentrated listening goes very fast, leaving you thirsting for more and the subject gives you plenty to listen to, contemplate and digest till we continue the class in the evening

Then it is the time for seva – cooking, garden work, maintenance schedules, cleaning, harvesting produce, office work, working on publications, newsletter, and so on. At 11 a.m., it is time for meditation again.

At 12:15 p.m. we have our lunch. We share the work of cooking and serving and eat together as one family with prayers. The produce from our vegetable gardens comes in handy most of the time. Then a break for rest and self-study

The seva work resumes at 4 p.m. At 5:45 p.m. we meet for a satsang that Baba introduced recently - a daily satsang to be conducted by the residents, which kriyavans and the public can also attend. We all take turns with a chosen topic, each one making a presentation followed by discussion open to all. There is

good participation and we all learn together. Then it is time to listen to Baba's discourse again, a continuation of the morning talk for another half an hour.

At 7 p.m. is the evening arati, followed by meditation

until 8 p.m. This is followed by a light dinner and at 9 p.m. we meet again to chant a prayer, discuss the day's events and plan for the next day, one that is filled with study, discussion, meditation and service.



Rose Garden



Meditation Hall



Main Building

AROUND THE WORLD

INDIA

Baba Prajnananandaji was in residence at the Hariharananda Gurukulam from October 2010. The schedule was hectic through December with several engagements of talks, Inauguration of temples and participation in other spiritual events.

Several Intensive Kriya yoga camps and initiation programs were held during the months of Nov and Dec in Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and several other places in Odisha. Initiation programs were also held at Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra with Swami Samrpananandaji and other acharyas and brahmacharis.

Dec 1-3 Mahasamadhi Seminar

Baba Hariharanandaji's 8th *punyatithi* was observed in the divine presence of Baba Prajnananandaji at Balighai ashram with Guru Paduka puja, and a special fire ceremony in the Guru Mandir. A few hundred disciples attended the event to pay their respects and meditate at the sacred site.

Balashram News

Balashram is progressing

well with the children studying well and learning many skills. During the puja holidays in October Balashram students had study tours and excursions to nearby sites in Orissa. They also spent a few days at our Hariharananda Gurukulam to do voluntary work and learn some kitchen and garden work.

Upcoming Events

Jan 7-9 The Annual Gita Jnana Yajna and initiation program at Bhubaneswar

Jan 10-12 The Annual Gita Jnana yajna and initiation program at Cuttack.

Jan 14-20 12th Intensive International Kriya Yoga Seminar

Feb 23-26 -Dubai Retreat

AMERICAS

Lecture at Harvard Divinity School, Sept 15

Harvard Divinity School hosted a free public lecture of Paramahansa Prajnananandaji. The topic was **“Integrating Study & Spiritual Practice: Kriya Yoga and its Fulfillment of the Desire for Knowledge.”**

The lecture was well attended by the students and staff of Harvard University and many local kriyavans.

Kriya Yoga Fall Retreat at Mother Center- Sept 17-26

The Mother Center USA celebrated the Foundation Day Seminar with Paramahansa Prajnananandaji and Swami Atmavidyanandaji and several of our Yogacharyas. The ashram was packed to full capacity with disciples both national and international for the 10 day retreat. The theme for the retreat was "Niralamba Upanishad" (A Upanishad that makes you free from any dependence). Baba expounded the essence of the Upanishad with special focus on the commentary of Lahiri Mahashaya which sheds new light on this Upanishad.

Foundation Day of Homestead Ashram Sept 22

On September 22nd, the Foundation Day of the ashram was celebrated in the divine presence of Paramahansa Prajnananandaji. In his talk Baba said,

"Mother Center completed thirteen years of growth and progress as a place of practice of Kriya Yoga and carrying out the masters' message of universal love, fraternity, and peace for humanity, as well as coordinating the Kriya

movement in North and South America and other places. These thirteen years have been filled with beautiful experiences of growth and progress, along with challenges and difficulties too. Let this special day be filled with self-analysis and introspection. Take a new step forward with a renewed effort of sincerity and humility. Do not miss this divine opportunity to be a good human being and live up to the expectation of our Divine Masters."

Navaratri celebrated at the Mother Center, Oct 8-17



The nine days of worship (Navaratri) of the Divine Mother was celebrated at the Mother center. A special fire ceremony was performed on October 15th, the 8th day of worship.

In his message on Vijaya Dashami, the day of victory, invoking the blessings of the Divine Mother for each one of

us and for the entire universe, Baba Prajnananandaji said,

“This celebration should not be a mere festival; rather, we must remember that divine grace is our strength. We should celebrate victory over our lower selves and the inner vices. The spiritual masters, from time immemorial, have reminded us of the meaning of real victory. A spiritual person considers victory as overcoming inner enemies whose tempting tentacles overpower the virtues and goodness in us. Anger, passion, greed, infatuation, vanity, and jealousy are described as the six inner enemies in the scriptures, but there are countless inner enemies to overcome, the seekers sincerely employ self-effort, prayer, and conscious and careful living. Once we conquer these enemies, we can experience the joy of freedom and celebrate a life of success. We are all meditating. Day after day, time is passing. If we stop for a moment and look within, we can easily know our weaknesses and strengths. We should be cautious and true to ourselves. Only by defeating our weaknesses can

we experience love, joy, and peace.”

Intensive Kriya Yoga Retreat at Kriya Vedanta Gurukulam, Oct 1-3

A three day Kriya Yoga Intensive Retreat was held at our newly opened branch ashram in Joliet with Paramahansa Prajnananandaji, Swami Atmavidyanandaji and other yogacharyas. Guruji's talks on the Shikshashtakam of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu were highly inspiring and enlightening. Well over a hundred disciples both from the Midwest region and also other areas attended the three day retreat filled with guided meditations, talks, question and answer sessions which deepened the practice of meditation and clarified doubts in the practice.

Inauguration of “Ankur Vidyalaya” – Sunday School for Children –

A special event during the retreat was the opening of a Sunday school by Baba Prajnananandaji. The school is the first of its kind in our organization, which will focus on spiritual education, ethics and yoga exercises for the children. Resident Brahmacharis and local Kriyavans will be the teachers for the school

His Holiness Dalai Lama at Florida University



His Holiness Dalai Lama addressed a congregation on “Significance of World Religions” on 26th October in Miami. The event was hosted by the Florida International University.

Swami Atmavidyanandaji was invited to represent the Hindu faith on the platform.

SOUTH AMERICA

Sao Paulo, Brazil, Oct 7-13

Our program in Sao Paulo, with Swami Atmavidyanandaji was greeted with a lot of enthusiasm of the disciples. The initiation program had a hundred and twenty initiations. A three day retreat on the “Law of Karma” was attended by 100 people. A fund raising event was also held by the disciples for building an ashram in Sao Paulo.

Brasilia, Brazil, Oct 14-18

The program in Brasilia included initiations and guided meditations and a one day

intensive program on Stress Management.

Bogota, Colombia

Dec 10-12

An Initiation Program held in Bogota was well attended.

Armenia, Colombia

Dec 13-19

A 6 day retreat was held in Armenia

EUROPE

Tattendorf Ashram - Vienna 31st Aug-9th Sept

Mother center Europe, hosted their Fall Retreat and celebrated



the 12th anniversary on Sept 6th in the divine presence of Paramahansa Prajnananandaji and other acharyas. Disciples came from all over Europe to enjoy Baba's presence and to listen to his divine lectures on life and the question& answer classes.

The 12th Ashram Foundation Day on the 6th of September was celebrated with sacred fire ceremony conducted by Baba, and with joyous celebration in

the afternoon, guided by Beloved Baba Prajnananandaji, Rajarshi Peter Baba, Swami Mangalanandaji and many other yogacharyas. First time in the Kriya history there was live broadcast of the celebration, so Kriyavans in Europe could share the special occasion.

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Australia and New Zealand had initiation programs

in several cities – Sydney, Perth, Canberra, Brisbane, Melbourne, Auckland and Wellington. There was also an initiation program in Suva, Fiji.

Upcoming Retreats in Australia and New Zealand

Mar 29-Apr 1 2011 – Kriya Yoga Retreat in Sydney

Apr 6-Apr 10, 2011-Kriya Yoga Retreat in New Zealand.

BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

**For available Books on Yoga, Philosophy, and Spirituality,
please visit our websites.**

For **India** – www.prajnanamission.org

For **USA** – www.kriya.org

For **Europe** – www.kriyayoga-europe.org

NEW BOOKS RELEASED

- Pebbles from the Pond, Timeless Wisdom Tales
- Divine Instructions – Shikshashtakam of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu
- Shri Guru Gita
- Transformation of Heart – The path of St. Francis
- Expression of Love – Prayer and Meditation
- Paramhansa Hariharananda – A Life & Legacy in Pictures
- Each human body is Bhagavad Gita (New Edition)
- Kirya Yoga Pathway to Soul Culture (New Edition)
- Universe Within – (New Edition)

Visit our web site:

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