

# Sthita Prajna



## Guru Vandana

*Gururdevo gururdharmo guroishtha param tapah  
Guroh parataram nasti nastitatvam guroh param*

This affirmation I will repeat to you three times. The Guru is God .The Guru is dharma. It is supreme austerity to have firm faith in the guru. There is nothing superior to the guru and no greater truth than the guru.

– Guru Gita Verse 100

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**VOLUME 12**

**ISSUE 1**

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## FROM THE EDITORS :

*“Life is a boat and love is the water. The boat of love can sail smoothly in the water of love.”*

**Paramahansa Prajnanananda**

*In this issue “Message of the Master” brings us the teaching from the Isha Upanishad. In Prajnana Vani, Paramahansa Prajnananandaji talks about the three rare blessings that are extremely difficult to attain without the grace of god.*

*Practical spirituality talks of how one is a teacher and a student at the same time.*

*With the completion of the Ramayana in the last issue, we are happy to introduce a new series under the “Myths and Metaphor” - episodes from Baba Prajnananandaji’s “Devi Mahatmya”.*

*Kaivalya Upanishad, our series on Self Knowledge talks of experiencing pain and pleasure in sleep and dream states.*

*We bring you a special article on the “Tradition of Lord Jagannatha” excerpted from a talk of the King of Puri – Gajapathi Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb.*

*Relevant excerpts from some of Paramahansa Prajnanananda’s seminal works, “The Universe Within” and the “Mysticism of Religious symbols” continue with interesting and informative excerpts.*

*Yoga Sutra of Patanjali has an interesting discussion on the five varieties of thought waves.*

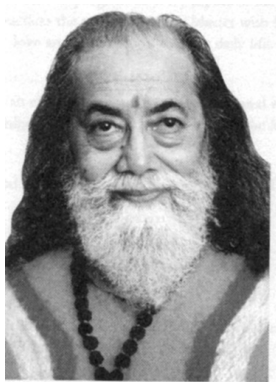
*We bring you news of the Gurupurnima celebrations, Birthday celebrations of Baba Prajnananandaji, the many special events at Hariharananda Gurukulam and Balashram and of the news of ashrams worldwide.*

*Sthita prajna thanks all its readers for their support and wishes them a happy and spiritual New Year.*

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# MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

## TEACHING OF ISHA UPANISHAD



*tad ejati tan naijati tad dure tad vadantike  
tad antarasya sarvasya tadu sarvasyasya bhyatah*

“It moves and it moves not; it is far and it is near; it is within all this and it is also outside all this.”

### **Metaphorical Interpretation**

The Isha Upanishad is given to us only for God-realization. What is God? How does God remain in the material world as both animate and inanimate objects? Why are there so many forms in the universe? How is Isha, in the form of matter, merging in a human being and giving energy, life, and oneness? How do human beings evolve after having experienced good meditation? How will they be highly realized and feel God is

in the front, God is in the back, God is on the left, God is on the right, God is above, God is below? Having perceived this, people will feel both savikalpa and nirvikalpa states of samadhi. So this Upanishad is one of the most beautiful Upanishads.

In this mantra, the rishi says, *tad ejati tan naijati*, which means the soul, God, is formless, static, and perceptive, constantly abiding everywhere. Again in a different form, we see God is restless, active, constantly in motion, and perceptive. God is nearer than the near and still remains very far. God abides in every human being as the indwelling self, taking inhalation.

In the external forms we experience God as people, beasts, plants, trees, and the five gross elements (sky, or vacuum, air, fire, water, and earth). Undoubtedly, it is perceived as a combination of opposites. In the whole external world God is the soul abiding in every human being, and enjoys the world.

As a power, you are the divine current in the body; as a soul, you are static. As a power, you are very far; as a soul, you are very near. Without the soul there is nothing, and after the soul there is nothing. The soul is the source of all dispositions and all perceptions. Every perception comes from the soul.

Ocean of Divine Bliss,  
volume 9; pg 471- 472



Guru Purnima at Gurukulam

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# PRAJNANAVANI - THE VOICE OF WISDOM

## THE THREE RARE THINGS



*Durlabham trayamevaitad devanugraha hetukam  
Manushyatvam, mumukshatvam mahapurusha samshrayah*

“Manhood, burning desire for liberation, the capacity to surrender to a man of wisdom- these three things are rare indeed, and whenever they are found, they are due to Lord’s Grace.”

*Viveka chudamani –verse 3*

Sri Adi Shankara is considered a Divine incarnation who deeply transformed the spiritual, social, and philosophical life in India. In a life time of only thirty two years, his accomplishments are so vast that they are incomprehensible. He authored numerous texts, including ‘Viveka Chudamani.’ It is a beautiful spiritual handbook for

spiritual seekers. It consists of 580 verses, written in Sanskrit. The teachings are very clear and precise.

**Beautiful verse 3 says:**

Three things are extremely difficult to attain: *m a n u s h y a t v a m* , *mumukshutvam*, and *mahapurusha samshrayam*. These are attained from the grace of God.

## **Manushyatvam - Attaining Human Qualities.**

What are the human qualities? It is not that we just should walk with two feet and eat with our hands. If we do not cultivate values in life, we may appear human, but we are not. Although many values are described by the scriptures, spiritual Masters, and social thinkers, Gurudev only mentioned three values: love, kindness and compassion. To me these three can all be represented as one, and that is love. Ordinary people think of love in a very limited and restricted way, but love is as vast as God. Grudev said, "God is love." In the Bible (1:John4:8), it says: Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."

Love is the expression of relationship. It begins from within, such as, I love my body, my ideas, my dreams, my creativity and ultimately it ends with God. When love is properly directed it expands from limited things to the unlimited. In spirituality we do not just love God in an abstract manner; we love the entire creation, perceiving the creator in creation, and experiencing

the creator and creation as one. It is said in the Taittiriya Upanishad (2:6), *yadidam kincha tat shritva tadeva anupravishat*: "Having created everything the creator permeated everything." Love is the highest goal: Every human being should keep it at the forefront of life.

Where there is love, there is kindness, compassion and forgiveness. Love is all inclusive. Love is the fire that burns all evil, and the light that brightens all virtues and values. If love is restricted, limited to an object or specific individual, it is not real love; it is animal love. We should be human beings. Through God's grace we have human birth, but with our own efforts we must live as human beings. Otherwise, in the language of Jesus, we are wolves covered by Sheep's clothing. Our effort to evolve into real human beings should be pursued not only every day but with every breath.

## **Mumukshutvam - The Desire for Freedom or Emancipation.**

What is *mumukshutvam*? The last century witnessed freedom of many countries from colonial

rites. This century has already seen a few countries tasting freedom from authoritarian and tyrannical rule. But Shri Adi Shankara is not speaking of that freedom: he is referring to the freedom from ignorance, attachment, wrong attitudes and the tyrannical and dictatorial rule of the senses, mind and ego.

Every person is a victim of unnecessary will and woe, temptation, desires and extreme busyness in less important activities. This pattern increases worry, frustration, false ego, and false identification. It adds to human misery through ill health and mental tension that also leads to anger and aggressiveness.

We are all seekers. We want to live inwardly and outwardly in a better environment. But who is going to create this environment? We should not blame others; rather we must make a positive contribution to improving the environment.

Mumukshutvam is an attitude that improves our thinking, our outlook, and our behavior. We live in a world that is constantly changing. Our stay in this world is temporary. We arrive empty handed, and

we must leave this world in the same way. We should fill our lives with knowledge, love, simplicity, and compassion, so that our lives will be more beautiful. Ultimately this practice will pave the way so that our lives may taste freedom from all vices.

Shri Adi Shankara said, each of us is blessed with a desire for freedom. Knowingly or unknowingly we want to be free from all mental limitations, ignorance, body consciousness, ego, and arrogance. As travelers on the path of spirituality, we already experience this burning desire for freedom, but many times we forget it. The great Masters remind us to burn the flame of *mumukshutvam* brighter and brighter so that we will reach the goal sooner.

### **Mahapurusha Samsraya – Association with a Great soul**

The third one is Mahapurusha samsraya, the association with a great soul, the company of noble and divine people. In life we need a role model and a good deal of inspiration. Those who have progressed along the path of sadhana provide inspiration for others.



A seeker wishing for freedom from weaknesses and bondage and for emancipation and real freedom search for a guide and a preceptor .In other words sincere seekers desire to find a guru who can help them walk the path of sadhana.

For a seeker to associate with a great personality by the grace of the Divine requires a lot of preparation. If we think about our lives, the goal is final and we have found a path and a guide in our great lineage of Masters, are we not fortunate and blessed. Are we not given this divine opportunity through the boundless love of God?

We must follow the Masters with love and devotion and follow the methods taught by them. With sincere practice we will achieve success and there is no doubt about it. Since Adi Shankara himself was blessed by his own Guru,

meditating on the bank of River Narmada, after patiently waiting for a good period of time. Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu while speaking on good company, said:

*S a d h u s a n g a  
sadhusanga sarvashastre  
kaya*

*Lava matra sadhu  
sanga sarva siddhi haya*

*Sri Chaitanya  
Charitamritam*

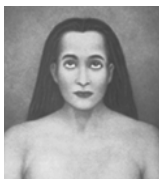
“All the scriptures describe the importance of sadhu sanga or fellowship with good people. A moment’s good company will cause fulfillment of everything.”

The good company is a rare opportunity. Gurudev said, “Good company will make you good and bad company will make you bad.”

Feel blessed for this god given opportunities and make the best use of it.

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## Teachings of the Masters

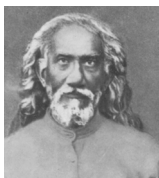
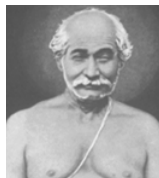


*“The door of Kriya Yoga is open only to earnest seekers and sadhakas.”*

**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**

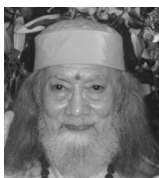


*“By drawing and observing the graph of your mind, you can see whether everyday you are making any progress in your life or not.”*

**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**



# **PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY**

## **TEACHERS AND STUDENTS AND KNOW IT ALLS**

**Jyothi Bathina**

I came home furious the other day after class. It infuriates me when student teachers, who have barely entered a classroom, profess to already know everything there is to know about reaching and teaching their students. I never lecture to my students, encouraging instead a sharing of ideas and a willingness to be open to new ways of thinking. But there are those who resist even that kind of interaction, who are completely closed off to learning. I've been teaching for over a decade now, first as a high school teacher, then as a university professor and I still barely know what I'm doing. How can these college students assume they know it all? How will they deal with the reality of teaching students who could care less what they know? But then, after a cup of tea, I calm down and remember how long it took me to realize I didn't know much. When I first started out teaching high school, I thought I was the one with

the knowledge and that I would distribute that precious knowledge to my eager students. Little did I know what lessons I had yet to learn from those very students.

I muddled through my first years of teaching, confident that I was the expert and that my students needed to just listen to me and they would succeed. After all, I had a Ph.D. in English. I was baffled by their resistance but kept plowing ahead on my own. It was in the South Bronx, in one of the worst schools in terms of violence, poverty and drug use among students, that I finally realized what I was doing wrong. One day out of sheer frustration I asked them what they did care about, because it certainly wasn't Greek mythology. They responded with a litany of their troubles, their challenges, the incredible hardship in their own lives. I told them to forget about writing an essay on the Odyssey. I asked them to write about their

own lives and their own stories. The results were miraculous.

Once I stepped off my pedestal and allowed them a voice, my students blossomed. They wrote and filled volumes with their writing. They responded to each other's stories with profound discussions and deep reflections. They read authors who spoke to their own experience. Every day was a chance to learn from each other. I believe I learned more than anyone else in that room. No longer was I the expert. No longer was I the sole holder of knowledge. Once I recognized their funds of knowledge, their street literacy's and their rich experience, we became co-learners in the truest sense.

Finally, by giving up some of my own power and acknowledging theirs, I became truly powerful. I was able to guide the discussions, to help them articulate what they wanted to say, to lead them to deeper reflection through questioning and challenging their thought process. It was amazing and so rewarding. Together, my students and I created our own vision of the world and how we wanted it to be. Together, we

created a space of learning and sharing and personal growth.

In all societies throughout history the teacher has been accorded a prominent place. He is bearer of wisdom, guide and mentor. But if you look closely at the most revered teachers, such as Christ, Buddha, Mohammed and Krishna, you find that they did not sit on a pedestal and hand out wisdom. They lived among their disciples, sharing thoughts, working beside them, fighting battles, experiencing pain and suffering, begging for alms. They encouraged discussion, pushed their disciples to think independently and to become powerful agents of change. If they had not, their teachings would never have survived, for their students continued to spread those teachings long after the teacher disappeared. Because they had co-learned those philosophies, adapting them to the reality of their time and place, they were able to create their own vision through the ages and keep those precepts alive.

We are all teachers to someone, whether our children, our employees, our patients, our friends, and we are also

students who continue to learn until the very end of our lives. Perhaps in my eagerness to share my hard gained experience with my student teachers, I am becoming didactic. It is important to remember in both roles that we need to be open to those around us, to never feel we know all there is to know, and to be humble enough to acknowledge the wisdom of those we seek to teach, as well as those from whom we seek to learn.

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### **DATES TO REMEMBER**

October 5-12	: Navaratri 9 days festival of Divine Mother
October 13	: Vijaya Dashami
November 13	: Deepavali – Festival of Lights
November 17	: Birthday of Swami Satyananda Giri
December 3	: Mahasamadhi Day of Gurudev
December 12	: Gita Jayanti – Birthday of Bhagavad Gita
December 24-25	: Christmas Celebration
December 31	: New Years Eve

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## **11<sup>th</sup> Mahasamadhi Anniversary of Gurudev**

**Dec 3, 2013**



The 11<sup>th</sup> Mahasamadhi day of Gurudev will be observed as a special event in all ashrams and centers across the world, with special worship, prayers and meditation.

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# THE TRADITION OF LORD JAGANNATHA

*Excerpt from a talk of*

**GAJAPATI MAHARAJA DIBYASINGHA DEB**

*Shri Purusottama-kshetra Puri* – the holy abode of *Shri Purusottama Jagannatha*- is one of the four major ‘dhamas’ of India. *Skanda Purana*, the most voluminous of the eighteen Maha-Puranas, mentions the sanctity and glory of this most ancient and sacred *kshetra* in the following words:

*“Although Lord Jagannatha is all pervading and is the source of all, and there are also other holy places which destroy all sins, yet this holy place is superior as it has become the body of this Supreme Being. He Himself is present there assuming a form and has indeed made that place known by His own name.”*

-Adhyaya 1 -8/9

Originating in Puri in the dim distant past, worship of Lord Jagannatha has gradually spread during the past few centuries to different parts of Orissa and India; and, more

recently, to several countries around the world. Over the last several decades, there has been substantial study, research and publications concerning various aspects of the tradition of Lord Jagannatha, but several ‘grey’ areas nevertheless remain. In my brief exposition of the tradition of Lord Jagannatha, I wish to focus on two aspects of the tradition, namely, (1) origin and antiquity of the tradition and (2) its esoteric and religious significance.

## **(1) Origin and antiquity**

Some scholars have opined that a verse in the Rig Veda (which is the earliest Vedic scripture dating beyond three thousand BC) refers to Lord Jagannatha in Purusottama-kshetra. The verse ‘-ado yad daru plavate sindhoh pare apurusam’ (X-155-3) has been interpreted by Sayanacharya (1315-1387 AD), one of the most well-known commentators of Rig Veda, to refer to ‘darumayam

*Purusottamakhya devata-sariram*’ “(Purusottama) floating on the sea.” This interpretation has been accepted by Raghunandana Bhattacharya (sixteenth century Dharmashastra scholar of Bengal) who, in his *Purusottama-kshetra tattvam*, while endorsing the view of Sayanacharya, has stated that a similar verse is found in the *Paippalada sakha* of Atharva Veda (VI - 8/7).

Some other scholars are of the view that the *Mahabharata* contains references to the worship of Lord Jagannatha in Purusottama-kshetra. ‘The section dealing with ‘Tirtha-yatra’ in the ‘Vana-Parva’ of the *Mahabharata* (111-114, 17 to 24) mentions that the Pandavas, during their visit to Kalinga, took holy bath in the sea and climbed a sacred *vedi* to seek blessings. This *vedi* has been identified by scholars with the temple of Lord Jagannatha in Puri.

Many scholars today are, however, of the opinion that the aforesaid references in the Rig Veda and the *Mahabharata* cannot conclusively be held to refer to Lord Jagannatha in

Purusottama-kshetra. The earliest literary references to Lord Jagannatha, according to them, are found in the Puranas. The most elaborate account of the origin of the tradition of Lord Jagannatha is found in over three thousand slokas in the section entitled ‘*Purusottama-kshetra mahatmya*’ (or *Utkal Khanda*) in ‘Vaishnava Khanda’ of *Skanda-Purana*. Briefly stated, the Purana narrates that the Supreme Lord was originally worshiped as ‘Neelamadhava’ on top of Nilachala Hill in Purusottama-kshetra, i.e., at the very location where the present temple stands. The image of Lord Neelamadhava, standing under the *Kalpa Banyan Tree*, was made of *nilamani* (sapphire gem-stone) and the Lord was holding *sankha*, *chakra*, *gada* and *padma* in His four hands. Devi Mahalaxmi was to the left of the Lord with Lord Sesha (Ananta) behind and Shri Garuda and Shri Sudarshana Chakra (having assumed human form) in the front.

Situated amidst dense forest, the presence of the Lord was unknown to the world except for a few fortunate Savara tribal’s living in the tribal

village nearby who kept the Lord's presence a closely guarded secret. It was only when Vidyapati, the emissary of King Indradyumna of Malwa (Central India), visited Purusottama-kshetra; and, having won the trust and friendship of Savara chief Visvavasu, obtained *darshana* of Lord Neelamadhaba, that the presence of the Lord came to be known to the world outside. King Indradyumna, upon hearing the good news from Vidyapati and ardently seeking the Lord's *darshana*, immediately set forth from his capital Avanti (modern Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh) towards Purusottama-kshetra. But, before Indradyumna could reach his destination a great sand-storm completely covered the abode of the Lord and Lord Neelamadhaba was seen no more. Utterly dejected and grief-stricken at being deprived of the Lord's *darshana*, Indradyumna decided to fast unto death. Devarshi Narada (who had accompanied Indradyumna from Avanti) however consoled Indradyumna and advised him to perform one thousand Ashvamedha Yajnas for re-appearance of the Lord

in wooden form, as this had been predicted by none other than Lord Brahma.

This then is, in brief, the narration in the *Skanda Purana* regarding the manifestation of Lord Jagannatha as *Chaturdha-Vigraha daru murtis* in Purusottama-kshetra Puri. But the question remains as to when this auspicious event took place. According to *Skanda Purana* (Adhyayas XXXII-55-58 and XXIX-16), the manifestation of the Celestial Tree and carving of the *Chaturdha-Vigraha* wooden images occurred in the Satya Yuga of the second Chatur-yuga of Swayambhuva Manu (the first Manu) in the present Kalpa (Svetvaraha Kalpa). We are now in the Kali Yuga of the twenty-eighth Chatur-yuga of Vaivasvata Manu (the seventh Manu). Thus, a period of The king duly performed the Ashvamedha Yajna as advised by Sage Narada and, upon its conclusion; a Celestial Tree was seen floating on the sea. The King then heard a Divine Voice and, in obedience to its command, permitted an old carpenter to carve the image of the Lord from out of the



Celestial Tree. The Purana here states that the carpenter was none other than the Lord Himself. The Divine Carpenter worked in a closed chamber (at the site of the present Sri Gundicha Temple). When the door of the chamber was opened on the fifteenth day the old carpenter was not seen; and Sage Narada, King Indradyumna and the assembled gathering obtained their first darshana of the Lord in the *Chaturdha-Vigraha* wooden forms, namely, as Lord Jagannatha, Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Chakra Sudarshana. The Divine Voice once again commanded the King to cover the bare wooden forms with specific layers of coverings and the Lords thereafter finally assumed the forms in which they are seen today.

King Indradyumna then constructed a magnificent temple for the Lord 1000 cubits (i.e. 1500 feet) high and, at Indradyumna's behest; Lord Brahma came from Brahmaloaka and consecrated the *Chaturdha-Vigrahas* as well as the temple. Having accomplished his cherished mission, Indradyumna ascended

to Brahmaloaka after entrusting the charge of the temple and worship of the Lord to King Gala who was then the ruler of Utkal (Orissa).

More than six Manvantaras and twenty-seven Chatur-yugas has elapsed since the first manifestation of the *Chaturdha-Vigrahas*. Having regard to Vedic time-period calculation as stated in *vyotish shastra* and *Srimad Bhagavat* and other Puranas, wherein one Chatur-Yuga is equal to 43,20,000 human years and one Manvantara is equal to 30,67,20,000 human years (or seventy-one Chatur-Yugas) the dating of the first manifestation of *Chaturdha-Vigrahas* will go back to a mind-boggling figure of 2588 crore years or more.

In recent times, there has been considerable debate concerning the antiquity of this account in the *Skanda Purana*. The orthodox viewpoint that the *Skanda Purana* including 'Purusottama-Kshetra mahatmya' was compiled by Maharshi Vedavyasa is not accepted by many modern historians. Pargiter in his *Ancient Indian Historical Traditions* dates Puranic

literature to the fifth century B.C.

However, modern scholars on the subject have variously dated the composition of 'Purusottama-Kshetra mahatmya' from as early as the seventh century AD. Without entering into this controversy, it may however suffice to state here that, irrespective of the date when the Puranic account may have been actually written, the episode quite definitely is an ancient one which assumed legendary proportions, having come down by word of time immemorial even before being written down in the Purana.

Several other Puranas, particularly *Brahma Purana*, *Padma Purana* and *Agni Purana*, also contain narrations about the manifestation of Lord Jagannatha in Purusottama-Kshetra in more or less the same manner as *Skanda Purana*. Various literary works in Orissa in post-fourteenth century, such as, *Mahabharata* of Sarala Das, *Deula Tola of Nilambar Das*, *Deula Tola of Sisukrushna Das* and *Niladrimahodaya* of Loknath Panda by and large reiterate the legend contained in the *Skanda Purana*.

Apart from the Puranic literature mentioned above, other historical evidence regarding worship of Lord Jagannatha in Puri is found (according to historians) only from the eighth century AD onwards. The chronicle of Shri Jagannatha Temple (*Madala Panji*) mentions that the Lords were taken to Sonepur in central Orissa due to the invasion of one Raktabahu and that they were re-installed in Puri around the tenth century by Somavamsi King Yayati Keshari who constructed a new temple for the Lord in Puri. Worship of the Lord in Puri by the eighth century AD is moreover established beyond doubt by several other literary works including *Sankaravijaya-vilasa* of Chidvilasa Muni (ninth c. AD). *Anarghara-ghava-natakam* of Murari Mishra (ninth c. AD) and *Prabodha-chandrodaya-natakam* of Krishna Murari (eleventh c. AD). Epigraphic evidence, such as, Maihar Sarada Devi Temple Inscription in Satna, Madhya Pradesh (tenth c. AD) and Kalindi Grant of Eastern Chalukya King Rajaraja 1 (eleventh c. AD) also point in the same direction. With

the construction of the present Shri Jagannatha Temple in the beginning of the twelfth century AD by Ganga King Chodaganga Deb (on the very

site of the earlier temple), we find plenty of references relating to the worship of Lord Jagannatha in Puri.

(to be contd)

*Courtesy Bulletin of  
the Ramakrishna Mission  
Institute of Culture*

October 2004

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The Dieties in Jagannath Temple  
Lord Jagannath ,Balabhadra and Subhadra

# MYTHS AND METAPHORS

## DEVI MAHATMYA



*prathamam shailaputriti dvitīyam brahmacharini  
tritīyam chandraghanteti kushmandeti chaturthakam...  
panchamam skandamateti sashtam katyayani tatha  
saptamam kalaratri ca mahagauriti chahshtamam.....  
navamam siddhidatri ca navadurgah prakirtitah  
uktanyetani namani brahmanaiva mahatmanah*  
(Devi kavacha verses 3,4,5.)

### Nava Durga in Devi Kavacha

Devi Kavacha is the answer of Brahma, the creator, to the questions of a great *rishi* Markandeya.

This kavacha or armor is a path of spiritual discipline to invoke the Divine Mother in different body parts, to perceive the presence of the divine energy manifested in all these limbs. It not only protects oneself, but also helps to be successful in every aspect of

life. In this kavacha in the following verses there is a description of *Navadurga*, the nine forms of the Divine Mother, with nine specific names.

*prathamam shailaputriti  
dvitīyam brahmacharini  
tritīyam chandraghanteti  
kushmandeti  
chaturthakam....3*

“The Devi has nine forms: First is Shailaputri, second is Brahmacharini, third

is Chandraghanta, and Kushmanda is the fourth.”

In this verse, from the nine names of the Divine Mother with nine forms, the first four have been described. These are:

- i. Shailaputri
- ii. Brahmacharini
- iii. Chandraghanta
- iv. Kushmanda

**Shailaputri** has two different meanings. According to the Kurma Purana, the Divine Mother, out of her infinite compassion accepted to be the daughter of a devotee, Shaila, and as a result she was known as Shailaputri.

*Shaila* also means mountain. Shailaputri is the daughter of *shaila* - the mountain, the Himalayas. The Himalayas are inside the body in the north (i.e. the brain). She is seated inside in the brain to give you courage, strength, and success. *Shaila*, or the mountain, is derived from the word *shila* (rock). Rock is firm and strong. One should be firm to experience her grace. In the Bible Mathew 16:18) Jesus said that Peter is the strong rock on whom he will build his church. Faith is strong and solid like rock.

**Brahmacharini** is a virgin, unmarried, and celibate. As the daughter of the Himalayas, she grew up in the lap of the Himalayas and kept meditating on Lord Shiva, to get him as her life companion. At this stage, she is called *brahmacharini*. She was practicing austerity and self-discipline.

*Brahmacharini* means roaming in Brahman; to be in divine consciousness in every breath. Being a *brahmacharini* and married to Lord Shiva appears to be a contradiction. The real meaning is that she lives in divine consciousness and helps the devotees attain Brahman, because she is the bestower of *brahmajnana*, the divine wisdom.

**Chandraghata** - this name consists of two parts: *chandra* and *ghanta*. *Chandra* means ‘the moon’ and *ghanta* is ‘the bell.’ The moon represents the mind and *ghanta* is the *nada*, or the divine sound.

When one listens to the divine sound, the mind becomes calm and peaceful. This is the state of bliss that is granted by the Divine Mother.

*Ghanta*, as the sound, is the means of communication.

When the mind is clean we can communicate with others with a peaceful mind, noble thoughts, and consistent expressions.

The Divine Mother, with such divine sound, is constantly inviting the devotees, the children of the Divine, to come to her for divine emancipation. This is Chandraghanta. She is clear and purer than the moon, *chandravat nirmala ghanta*.

**Kushmanda** - This name has also multiple meanings. One meaning of *kushmanda* is ash gourd and is from the pumpkin family. This vegetable is born from a small stem of the creeper, indicating that life manifests through slow breath, giving growth to different qualities.

Secondly, *kushmanda* is derived from three different words: *ka* + *ushma* + *anda*.

*ka* = head; *ushma* = warm; *anda* = egg

Just like the warmth of birds on an egg gives rise to the birth of the baby bird; similarly, inside the head (*ka*) with the warmth of love and devotion, divinity can manifest in human beings. She is the personification of bliss, love, and devotion.

Thirdly, *kushmanda* can be understood as *ku* + *ushma* + *anda*: *ku* means *kutsita* (painful or ugly); *ushma* means the heat of affliction and suffering (*santapa traya*) - the world of misery; *anda* - egg or the womb.

This means the Divine Mother is the source of *samsara*, the world of misery, as well as the one who swallows or devours the problems of creation, bestowing peace and love.

*panchamam skandamateti  
sashtam katyayani tatha  
saptamam kalaratri ca  
mahagauriti  
chahshtamam....4*

“The fifth is Skandamata, the sixth, Katyayani, the seventh, Kalaratri, the eighth is Mahagouri.”

In this verse, four more names of the Divine Mother are described:

- v. Skandamata
- vi. Katyayani
- vii. Kalaratri
- viii. Mahagouri

**Skandamata** means the mother of Skanda, another name of Kartikeya, who is adored as the commander in chief in the divine kingdom (*devasenapati*). In the

Bhagavad Gita (10:24) the Lord says, "I am Skanda among all warriors." She is the mother or the source of strength represented through *skanda*. Skanda is also known as Shanmukha, who has six heads, representing the ability to fight with the six inner enemies of *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed), *moha* (infatuation), *mada* (vanity), *matsarya* (jealousy).

**Katyayani** the daughter of Katyayana is a noted sage, a *rishi*, in whose *ashrama* (hermitage) the Divine Mother manifested and assumed his daughterhood and that is why she is known as Katyayani. Katyayani fulfills the divine mission of bringing peace.

In the Bhagavatam, the *gopis* (the milk-maids), worshipped Katyayani to intensify their love and devotion to Lord Krishna.

The name Katyayani is derived as follows: *ka* + *ati* + *ayani*

*Ka* means 'head,' *ati* is 'extreme' and *ayani* means 'movement.' The head is where thoughts originate, through which the life of the beings is moving up and down. When one can take the mind upward, then he or she can remain in constant

divine consciousness. She is Katyayani who can bless to give worldly enjoyment or divine enlightenment, which are two extreme movements.

**Kalarati** — this name is comprised of two words: *kala* means 'time,' 'limitation,' and 'death' and *ratri* means 'darkness' or 'night.' *Kalarati* means the eliminator of all, slaying *kala* (death), because in the ultimate dissolution (*mahapralaya*) there is destruction of Kala.

Most people are afraid of time, limitation, or death. If one truly loves the Divine Mother, Kali or Kalaratri, then all fear of *kala* will disappear, as darkness cannot exist in the presence of the lamp.

**Mahagouri** — *maha* means 'great' or 'supreme' and *gouri* is the 'fair-complexioned one.' In worshipping the Divine Mother, the seeker tries to perceive her in all women. There is a tradition in Kumari Puja when people adore and worship little girls, a girl of eight years is also known as Maha Gauri. When fear, anger, and other such emotions disappear, the life of the seeker becomes peaceful and happy. sattvic qualities manifest like the blessings of Mahagouri. When

Mahagouri is born in the life force of the seekers, they experience white light dancing everywhere.

*navamam siddhidatri  
ca navadurgah prakirtitah  
uktanyetani namani  
b r a h m a n a i v a  
mahatmanah.....5*

“The ninth is Siddhidatri. Thus, the Devi should be worshipped in these nine forms as described by Brahma”.

**Siddhidatri** is the ninth name. *Siddhi* means ‘success, perfection, complete attainment, and accomplishment.’ *Datri* means ‘the mother who gives

and bestows.’ The Divine Mother is the bestower of perfection and liberation.

These are the nine names and forms of the Divine Mother Durga. This body is the temple of nine doors. Adore the Divine Mother in her nine aspects in the nine doors, through self-discipline, prayer, and meditation.

Brahma is the creator and also has another meaning as the Vedas. These special prayers worship, and meditation on the nine forms of Durga (known as Navadurga) has been described in the Vedas.

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Srimat Bhupendranth Sannyal Museum  
Hariharananda Gurukulam



# THE YOGA SUTRA OF PATANJALI

## Sutra 6

### The Five Categories of Thought Waves

*pramana-viparyaya-vikalpa-nidra-smrtayah //6//*

### Word Meaning

*pramana* – right knowledge; *viparyaya* – wrong knowledge; *vikalpa* – fancy, imagination; *nidra* – sleep; *smrtayah* – memories

### Translation

Right knowledge, wrong knowledge, verbal delusion, sleep and memory [are the five sets of thought waves].

### Commentary by Shri Lahiri Mahasaya

*Pramana* (the path of knowledge), *viparyaya* (devastating state), *vikalpa* (wrong imagination), *nidra* (sleep). and *smriti* (memory) are the five types of *vruttis* (thought waves).

### Metaphorical Explanation

In the previous sutra, the sage explained the two types of thoughts and their resulting impact on the mind, as painful and non-painful. In this sutra, to help in understanding our inner nature, the sage has

classified the infinite thought waves into five categories: *pramana* (the path of knowledge), *viparyaya* (devastating state), *vikalpa* (wrong imagination), *nidra* (sleep). and *smriti* (memory).

When a person is in a dreamless, deep sleep, all thoughts are in a dormant state. But when he is awake, all of these thoughts are activated, creating restlessness, turmoil, and even some pleasure in the person's life.

Whatever waves of thought may arise in the ocean of consciousness, they are of five types, reflected through the five sense organs. The sense organs are the outlets of the manifested thoughts. These five thought waves will be explained in the next five sutras. Each type of *vrutti* (thought) reflected or cognized through the five senses (organs of perception) can also be of five distinctive natures.

In India, people worship Shiva, the Lord with five faces, representing the five types of *vruttis* (thought waves), again manifested through the five

sense organs. Along with this, they also meditate on the three-eyed Shiva – two eyes are *klishta* and *aklishta* (that is, duality) and the third eye is eye of realization (unity).

When one practices meditation, one perceives the unity of everything, and is free of all delusions. Although in the beginning, the restless mind constantly creates obstacles, one must try to look beyond it. Sit with determination. Pray to God sincerely. Practice the techniques that the teacher has taught you with love and devotion. Then all your wishes will be fulfilled.

The seer is the pure consciousness, the Lord of all thoughts and expressions. This is *kri* and *ya*. *Ya* means the pure consciousness, and *kri* is all mental and intellectual waves translated into actions. The soul

is one and without a second, but the soul in the play of life manifests as multiplicity with infinite thought waves. The ocean is one; the waves are many. When one looks at the waves, he cannot see two identical waves. This external universe and the internal universe are full of unlimited, infinite waves. But just as the ocean and the waves are one, so the Lord and the soul are one. The soul is beyond the reach of the mind and thought.

O Seeker! Nothing is impossible with determination and sincere effort. Love and devotion can conquer every aspect of human life. From the core of the heart, cry inside, “O Lord, reveal Thyself. You are mine. I am Thine. You and I are one – help me to realize this truth.” Surely all your prayers will be answered.

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Guru Purnima at Gurukulam

## VALUABLE VOLUMES



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

### PRACTICE OF MEDITATION

(From *THE UNIVERSE WITHIN*)

#### **The Family of Shiva**

Lord Shiva otherwise known as yogeshwara is the lord as well as a yogi leading family life of peace, love and cooperation. Shiva lives on mount Kailasha with his divine consort Parvathi and their two sons Ganesha and Kartikeya. Each of them represents different aspects of life. Shiva is always absorbed in meditation. Parvathi is engaged in serving her husband symbolizing love and the path of devotion. Ganesha is wisdom and Kartikeya is the symbol of strength and valor. They all have different interests and use different animals as their vehicles. Shiva rides a bull and has a snake around his neck. Parvathi uses a lion while Ganesha and Kartikeya have a mouse and a peacock as their means of transportation. Though

these animals are born enemies of each other they all live in harmony in that family. We all come from different backgrounds and even in the same family are of different minds and have different goals. With cooperation and respect to each other we can live harmoniously and achieve a state of meditation.

#### **Meditation: Practice and Benefits**

In the olden days, people churned yogurt to get butter. Butter is present in every drop of milk but you cannot see it unless it is extracted. We have to first heat the milk for the cream to come up. The cream is then made into yogurt by culturing it and keeping it undisturbed for some time. It is then churned to separate the butter. Once the butter is separated, it will float in milk,

buttermilk or water, and does not mix with them again. The butter is heated to get *ghee* and this *ghee* can burn in fire.

To obtain the precious butter or *ghee* within, the body has to be heated by the inner fire of meditation which is done by concentrating in the region between the soul center and the fontanel. First heat the milk of life by practicing deep, relaxed breathing. Then the cream will emerge. Maintain your inner silence for a period in order to convert the cream into yogurt. Continue your meditation to get the butter. Even deeper concentration will clarify the butter and make it pure enough to burn completely in fire.

### **Where to Meditate: Forest, House or Mind?**

Many people wonder about the perfect place for spiritual practice. Once we decide to meditate, what is the best place to do so? The scriptures dictate that we must meditate either in the forest, a corner of the house or within the mind.

Let us talk about the forest. In ancient times, the sages retreated into the forest to meditate. But forests are full of wild animals and other dangers. In modern times, when

most people live in urban areas, this is no longer a viable option. What is required instead is that we live in the shelter and solitude of the internal forest. This forest too contains the wild animals of emotion, anger, pride and these need to be subdued with the power of meditation.

A corner in one's own home is more practical for many. We need to choose a room or even a corner of our own, which is undisturbed, uncluttered and silent. We need to sit each day for at least 20 minutes in that special corner and meditate.

The forest and the house are physical locations. To go to the forest and house we need time. But to meditate internally, there is no right time or place needed. It can be done wherever and whatever we are doing. Meditating within the mind requires the cessation of thought. We need to go inward, keeping the mind peaceful and tranquil. Whatever the surroundings, we can keep the mind always anchored in God and not in anything else. The mind is the best place for meditation.

Many monks go to the cremation grounds to meditate as it helps them gain a sense of

detachment. Watching the precious body that we treat with so much care end up in ashes, gives us a rude awakening as to the temporary nature of the body which is ultimately destined to return to the elements from which it is made.

### **The Proper Posture**

There is a lot of confusion over the proper posture to be used in meditation. Some swear by the lotus posture, others advocate sitting cross-legged or lying down. The fact is, any posture is fine as long as the body is comfortable and we are able to forget its presence. Unduly painful positions make us more aware of the body and keep it in our consciousness, hindering our ability to go beyond. The *Yoga Sutra* of Patanjali recommends a posture which keeps the body still, steady, and comfortable as the right posture for meditation.

In the sixth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* there are very specific instructions for how and where to sit for meditation. We are asked to sit in a clean place, pure and holy. Where is it? If our minds are not calm and quiet, wherever we sit is not serene. In this body temple there is one place

that is serene. From the eyebrows to the top of the head is the place of serenity. If we concentrate there we can meditate.

### **The Proper Seat**

We are instructed to sit on a grass mat over which we must spread an animal skin, preferably that of a deer or tiger, and on top of that a silk or cotton cloth. Some insist on following these instructions to the letter. But many don't understand the underlying metaphorical meaning of these instructions.

Let's look at them carefully. *Kusa*, the Sanskrit word for grass, also means earth. In our body, the *Muladhara chakra* represents the earth. Wherever we sit, be it on the carpet, a blanket or a grass mat we are sitting on our *Muladhara chakra* or the earth. The *asana* or seat should be a nonconductor because when one meditates energy is produced in the body. Since earth is a conductor of electricity, we should try not to sit directly on the ground. A blanket would be sufficient.

If the animal skin (*ajina*) were really necessary then we would be encouraging the killing of animals. This goes against the non-violent philosophy of

Hinduism. There is another explanation for the skin. The Sanskrit word for dead skin *a-jina* also means difficult to conquer. Within our body one of the most difficult places to conquer is the sexual center. So we are being instructed to go above that center during meditation.

Finally, we have the silk or cotton cloth or *chela*. The word *chela* in Sanskrit also means fire. The center in the body whose element is fire is the navel center. Again we are being told to rise above the first three *chakras*, *Muladhara*, *Swadhistana* and *Manipura*, in order to meditate. We need to come up to the cranium, sit there and meditate. Where to concentrate? In yoga, we are taught to concentrate on the different *chakras* and to fix our attention mostly on the top of the head.

### **Meditation as Worship**

Lahiri Mahashaya often said, “My way of worship is not the usual one. I do not need any Ganga water or flowers or utensils for my worship nor do I burn incense or light lamps. I have forgotten who is Shiva, Kali or Durga. I am merged in myself. My way of worship is different.”

There are two forms of worship. One requires a lot of preparation. We go to the temple or church, sit in front of the deity or altar, chant the mantras or sing. Looking, hearing, singing, burning incense - these are all worshipping with the use of the senses. This is external worship. The second form is that of inner worship. This worship involves closing the eyes and seeing the light, closing the ears and listening to the sound. No other preparation is needed except preparation of the mind. The spiritual journey is nothing but preparation of the mind. The gross body is born and it will die. The soul is ever pure. In between the soul and the body is the mind, which causes chaos, confusion and crisis.

### **How to Meditate**

There are many different techniques of meditation in the world today. Each has a unique method and tradition behind it. The important thing to realize is that all these methods have the same goal in mind. Meditation should open up the inner channels, calm and relax the mind and body, and develop the immense potential of human beings to be divine. Material prosperity, physical and mental

health, creative inspiration, intellectual prowess, increased youth and vigor, are all benefits which come along the way to those who meditate regularly. The goal, however, should be the search for self-knowledge and the realization of one's own self and its essentially divine nature.

### **The Need for a Teacher**

While meditation can be taught through books, and techniques explained and illustrated on the page, those who meditate regularly know that real spiritual practice requires a living teacher. I have been practicing a unique form of meditation throughout my life, and it has given me tremendous benefits, physical, mental and spiritual. I was initiated into this

ancient technique by a realized Master, who has guided me step by step on the path of spiritual progress. I, in turn, have initiated countless disciples into the same path, travelling the globe, teaching the technique, writing books and lecturing on the inner meanings of the world scriptures, including not only the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Vedas*, but the *Bible*, the *Torah* and other holy books. This meditation technique is not limited to any one religion. It is a tool with which we can enhance whatever religion we are currently practicing. It requires no expensive equipment or physical contortions and can be practiced by old and young alike.

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Inauguration of Museum at Gurukulam

# CEMETERY, OR GRAVE

(From *MYSTICISM OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS*)

Birth and death is the play of life. When one is born, one day he or she is to die. It is a natural law not only for plants or animals, but also for human beings. While living, we love and care for our own body, but when we die, people deal with the lifeless body in different ways, depending upon religious customs and traditions.

The Zoroastrians keep the human body in an elevated place or tower so that it can be eaten by birds. This shows detachment and the sacrifice of the body for the good of others.

The Christians, Jews and Muslims bury the dead body in a graveyard or cemetery. The Hindus usually cremate the body, but there is also the tradition of burial in certain situations. They bury the bodies of babies, realized people, and monks. When Hindus cremate the body, it is burned in fire with wood. Nowadays, because of the scarcity of space in the cities, people of other religions cremate the body, then bury only the ashes. In the traditional Hindu belief, when the body is buried or cremated, then the

soul releases its attachment to the body and goes forward in its journey.

The place where bodies are buried and cremated is a beautiful one. In Sanskrit it is known as *shmashana* and it is defined in the following way:

*sman shabde shava  
prokta shaman shayanam  
uchyate,*

“*Shmashana* means that place where the dead body takes rest.”

This *shmashana* is the abode of Lord Shiva and Mother Kali. Many people believe that this *shmashana* is the place where goblins, ghosts, and departed spirits live. The *shmashana*, or the burial place, reminds human beings of the transitoriness of the world and human existence.

Once a young man was passing through the graveyard, walking with so much ego and vanity, that his footsteps were creating a lot of vibration on the earth. He walked with pride and stubbornness. Then there came a sound from the grave. The voice came to him:



Behold and see as you pass by As you are now; so once was I,

As I am now, so once you will be.

Behold, see and follow me.

“O young man when you are passing by me look at me, what has happened to me. One day I was like you, walking with pride and vanity, but what happened to me? I left everything, and I came to this place where my body is buried. One day this thing will happen to you. Look at me, remember the futility of life and remember the unreality of this existence. Be sincere, be humble, love, and kindly accept the reality of life.”

The cremation place reminds us of the reality of life, the beauty of life. How can we make our life more beautiful, more humble, and more divine? The cremation place is a beautiful place for prayer and meditation. I have spent hours and hours, days and days, at the cremation grounds just to meditate and to attain a sense of detachment. Many people go there to pray and meditate. Especially in the West, the cemeteries are beautiful places

with trees, flowers, beautifully inscribed headstones, statues of Jesus, and more.

In India, there are beautiful temples near many cremation grounds. I recommend that people go to such places to meditate and pray whenever it is possible. The burial place where people go to pray and meditate creates or generates love of life.

Those who want to understand the reality of life and the ultimate end of life should visit two places regularly. One is a hospital to see how many people are suffering in so many ways, and to learn not to maintain pride in your body strength. Because today you may have good health, but who knows what will happen tomorrow? The second place to visit regularly is the burial ground, the graveyard, where one can feel the reality of life, it is the ultimate place.

Visit the cemeteries and pray for the departed souls as well as your own spiritual progress. Pray to God not to give you vanity, ego, and pride, but to give you more love, calmness, and happiness in your life.

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## STORIES TO LIVE BY TAKING REFUGE

There was once a realized *sadhu* who had thousands of disciples and everyone in that locality respected him. Even the king, being enthralled with the glory of the *sadhu*, also honored him. Whatever the *sadhu* predicted, happened. The number of his devotees was increasing daily.

One day, the *sadhu* sitting in a small row boat, set off for a nearby village. Two of his disciples manned the oars. It so happened that the king was also traveling in the same vicinity in his large decorated yacht. His ministers and other officials were following behind in other boats. In seeing the *sadhu* sitting in the small boat, the king jokingly asked his minister, "Considering that the *sadhu* has thousands of disciples, how can he take them all across the worldly ocean in such a small boat?"

Early one morning, there was a great commotion in the king's palace. Someone had stolen a golden necklace from the queen. The king's guards

searched every house for it. In their search, some guards happened to see the *sadhu* hang the gold necklace on his trident, then closed his eyes and began to meditate. The guards grabbed the *sadhu* and immediately brought him to the king's court. The king asked the *sadhu*, "Sir, did you steal the necklace?"

"Yes, Your Majesty," the *sadhu* replied.

The *sadhu* was given the death penalty for this crime, and the date of the execution was finalized. The news quickly spread throughout the kingdom. Some of the disciples were sad; a few even went to the king and requested that his life be spared. After repeated appeals, the king finally relented and said, "If any one of you is willing to accept the death penalty on his behalf, then we can release your guru."

Surprised, the disciples said, "We will go back and discuss this with others and will inform you of our decision."

A meeting was called, requesting all the disciples to attend. After everyone assembled, the king's proposal was presented and each person was asked if they were ready to help by accepting the death penalty on behalf of their guru. Nobody was willing; rather, all of them began to speak badly of the guru, even cursing him.

Some remarked that they had never wanted to be initiated by him, but were pressured to do so by others. Another one said that if he had known what a bad person the guru was, he would not have gone to him. Then someone shouted, "Let him be hanged. Since he has committed this crime, he should also suffer the consequences. Why should we die for him? We should not be concerned about him. Let him die!"

There was not even a trace of sadness among them, let alone an offer to take his place at the execution. None of them hesitated to smear his name. There was no concern that such a reputed *sadhu* would be treated in this way.

However, unknown to the unruly disciples, the king himself had arrived and was observing the drama that was taking place.

The king happened to notice two men arguing and fighting with each other. Being curious, he asked the guards to fetch them. He asked them why they were fighting.

One said, "I stole the necklace from the queen, so I should be given the death penalty. But he is saying that he will be the one to die."

The second man said, "I was also there. It was me who unlocked the door and kept guard so no one could come in, making it possible for him to steal the necklace. Therefore I am the real culprit and I should be given the death sentence. Why should he die? Now, please give us your decision."

The king was baffled and could not understand what was going on. On one hand, among such a big crowd of devotees, none was willing to die for the guru, rather they were slandering him. On the other hand, these two men were quarreling and ready to die for him. Seeing this stirred the king's conscience and he thought, "He is such a great monk, did he really steal the necklace? Surely not! There must be some hidden message in it."

The king then went to the *sadhu* and humbly asked, “O Adorable One, I am not able to understand the meaning of this mystery. Kindly tell me what the truth is.”

The *sadhu* replied, “O King, do you remember the day I was going in the small boat and you jokingly asked how so many disciples could cross the ocean of the world in such a small boat? The two men you saw quarreling today and who were willing to accept the death penalty for me, are going to cross the ocean of the world – and no one else. I created this drama to illustrate this to you.”

The king bowed down flat at the feet of the *sadhu* and apologized for his mistake. He said, “O Divine One, now I

realize how much self-surrender is needed to cross the ocean of the world by the grace of the guru.”

### **Reflection**

Claiming that one has taken refuge at the feet of the guru-preceptor is not so simple. It is not enough to just mouth these words. As soon as something is not to your liking, you begin to doubt and find fault in every little thing. What is the gain by bowing down? It is just a show for others to say that you have taken refuge. Will you really gain anything by saying, “I have taken refuge?” If you have faithfully taken refuge at the master’s feet, then there is no need for anything else. Everything will come automatically.



Interfaith conference at Kriya Vedanta Gurukulam , Joliet IL

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# **GURU PURNIMA MESSAGE**

## **A TRIPLE BLESSED DAY**

**22nd July, 2013**

Loving and Divine Soul,

Guru Purnima, the Master's Day, the birthday of sage Vyasadeva, has arrived. It is the full moon day in the month of June-July. On this occasion, I send my love and best wishes to all and simultaneously pray to God and gurus for all of you. I bow to God as the Master of masters. I humbly bow to all the masters of all times and all places. I bow to all the saints and sages. I bow to all the masters in our lineage. I bow to my beloved and ever worshipful Gurudev. I bow to all the masters who will appear in the future. I even bow to all creation as the master that will teach me in many different ways.

In the Bhagavatam (11), sage Avadhuta the naked monk had twenty-four gurus including a bee, a python, and a prostitute named Pingala. Upon hearing this, King Yadu was surprised, but sage Avadhuta beautifully described how he learned from all of them.

In reality, we can learn from anybody and everybody if we are inwardly prepared. We must have receptive minds. We

need open hearts. We must have a proper attitude.

When our minds are saturated with ego, and our lives are full of confusion, how can we learn? Where is the attitude of seeking and striving? We seek the physical company of the master, and we believe the magic touch of the master will give us everything while we do nothing. Spiritual life is not easy; it is hard work and self-surrender. If we don't adopt an attitude that lets us live joyfully in spite of obstacles, how can we grow and change?

On this special day, I pray for each one of you. I want to see you all live with love, full of spirit, with a positive, optimistic outlook, full of kindness and compassion, ready to serve, without finding fault in others, free from grumbling and complaining, fulfilling your responsibilities, being a good, ideal person, and being a good person in the creation of God. This will bring joy to God and all the Masters.

I send my love and best wishes to all of you.

Praying for you all.

With Love,  
Prajnanananda

# ATMA-VIDYA

## SELF KNOWLEDGE

### KAIVALYOPANISHAD

#### Mantra 13

The Guru continued his teaching on self knowledge further to answer Asvalayana's question. This verse explains the perception of pleasure and pain in dream and deep sleep states

*Svapne sa jivah sukha dukhah bhokta  
sva maya ya kalpita jivaloke  
sushupti kale sakale viline  
tamobhi bhutah sukha rupameti*

#### Substance

The embodied soul enjoys pleasure and pain in the dream, in the mundane world created through one's own delusive power. In deep sleep when everything is dissolved he is covered by ignorance and is in bliss.

#### Commentary

*jivah* the individual , embodied soul associated with the body, enjoys both pleasure and pain in the world created by his own delusive power. There is no physical presence of sense objects in dream. So how do we enjoy? With our own delusive nature imagined, in this mundane world.

A monk who was always in the forest once came to a

village just to see the outside world. He found a marriage procession on the way. Coming back to the ashram he lay down besides a pond and fell asleep. He dreamt that he was married and happily living with his wife and in the dream imagined that the wife pushed him. He moved in the dream and fell into the pond and he woke up from his dream marveling at the delusive power of imagination.

In dreamless deep sleep the same individual attains to happiness overpowered by ignorance. At that time everything gets merged or disappears for that person who is sleeping- all attachments, all association and all pleasure and pains disappear. There is no thought and when there is no

thought there is no association or attachment. No physical or dream objects are present. Deep sleep is a *pralaya* that you face every day- you forget your body, home and all relationships and you have nothing. When everything dissolves for you overpowered with ignorance you find some happiness. This happiness of deep sleep is not conditioned – it is a complete state of ignorance. But it is not

permanent because as soon as you get up you remember the world, the relationships, and the responsibilities and again both joys and sorrows come. So although we get happiness, it is not permanent happiness. The real happiness is in knowledge and light and that is what the spiritual seeker tries for, so one could be in continuous happiness in wakeful, dream and deep sleep states.

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Guriji's Birthday celebration at Mother Center USA

## A TRIP TO UJJAIN AND INDORE

After the program at Amarkantak we left for programs at Ujjain and Indore along with Swami Shuddhanandaji and Swami Muktipriyanandaji. We travelled by train from Amarkantak to Ujjain. The train journey was quite and relaxing through the country side. When we reached Ujjain disciples were waiting to welcome us and we were taken to the house of Yogacharya Shakuntala Ma, a long time disciple of Gurudev and very committed to Kriya Yoga. Some disciples were from Bhopal who had travelled to Ujjain to attend the programs. Shakuntala Ma was our host at Ujjain.

Ujjain is situated on the banks of the Shipra river, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, in central India. From time immemorial this area and the Shipra river have been considered as most sacred. Ujjain is full of great tradition and history with many temples and ashrams.

### **Gopal Mandir**

The first temple we went to was Gopal Mandir also

known as Dwarakadheesh temple. An ancient and beautiful temple with traditional Maratha architecture. The temple is dedicated to Lord Krishna as Gopala (cowherd man). Temple is almost in the center of the Ujjain city.

The statue of Lord Krishna was beautiful on a marble inlaid altar.

### **Chintamani Ganesha**

Chintaman Ganesh was another old and beautiful temple. The idol is interesting with a larger Ganesha and a smaller Ganesha in lying posture. It is believed that one is blessed with whatever one wishes for when one prays to this Ganesha. The two wives of Lord Ganesha Siddhi and Riddhi are seated on either side of the idol. Then we went to Harasiddhi Mandir which is considered a shakti Pitha. The deity is beautiful Shakti aspect of the Divine Mother holding all her weapons but with a beautiful smile. In every temple besides the main deity there were also many other deities in the side temples.



## **Mahakaleshwar**

Ujjain is famous for Mahakaleshwar temple. The temple has five levels and the sanctum sanctorum is in the bottom most level which is underground and brass lamps light the way to go down. This ancient temple is referred to in many puranas. Mahakaleshwar is one of the twelve Jyotir Lingas in India. A Jyotir Linga is a self manifested Linga. Lord Shiva is here in his aspect as the Lord of time which brings an end to all that is born. We reached the temple at dusk and had a very beautiful darshan. It was surprising to see the Lingam representing the formless decorated to look like the form of Lord Shiva at once beautiful and strikingly Lord like. He is the Lord of dissolution. We went in and being monks were given a favorable treatment . We were given time to do the abhishekam and touch the idol with our heads and bow down.

As we came out, the evening arati was to follow and none of us felt like going back and so we went into the gallery from where you could watch the arati. It was a thrilling experience to look at the deity

and felt a real detachment like nothing else counted and all you wanted to do was to gaze at that form in formless forever. The arati was quite elaborate with conches blowing, sound of cymbals and many other musical instruments. Many kinds of lighted lamps were waived around the deity. It is a unique experience to see the Lord in the light of those oil lamps without the electric lights on. After 45 minutes of this 'out of the world' experience we came out and left the place silently as no one was in a mood to talk.

The next day we attended the famous bhasma arati.

The bhasma arati is performed every single day at 4.00 in the morning. It is to awaken Lord Shiva who is the Lord of Time or Death. The Linga is anointed with milk, ghee, curd, honey and sugar as is done in many temples. But the specialty here is bhasma or ashes from the funeral pyre is also one of the offerings. As the worship was in progress we saw a man from the burial grounds dressed in black come into the temple with huge bags of bhasma or ash from the

burial grounds. The Lord is said to be fond of dwelling in the burial grounds and is fond of the ashes. The bags of ashes are vigorously shaken by the priests all around the deity and in a few minutes the Lingam is completely covered with a thick layer of ashes. This ash smearing ceremony is considered a homage to Lord Shiva, the Lord of dissolution of the universe. The worship is symbolic of birth and death being inseparable.

The Lord is then cleaned and decorated again to look like a form and an elaborate arati is performed with the instruments playing and different types of lighted ghee lamps moved in circles around the linga. Finally a camphor arati is given. Bhasma arati is something you do not want to miss. It transports you into a different realm beyond life and death.

### **Mangalanath Temple**

The next day we visited few more temples. The first stop was at Mangalanath temple. It is the temple of the planet Mars (Mangala). It is considered to be the birthplace of Mangala. People from all over the country come here to worship the planet especially if

the planet is not in a conducive position in their horoscope.

### **Sandeepani Ashram**

It was interesting to see Sandeepani ashram which was a beautiful serene place and to think of the little Krishna and his brother Balarama studying under the tutelage of their Guru Sandeepani. Lord Shiva is worshipped in the ashram and we saw Nandi the bull of Shiva in a standing posture which is very rare.

### **Kala Bhairava Temple**

Kala Bhairava temple was our next stop. Kala bhairava is depicted as a dog – he is time himself. Here wine is offered to Bhairava and he drinks as the priest pours it into his mouth. Any amount of the drink goes into the mouth of the idol and he is never full.

We then visited a Kali temple.

### **Samadhi site of Machhendranath**

The most remarkable yogi of the Natha sampradaya was another beautiful place. He is considered the preceptor of Gorakhnath who was the founder of Natha tradition. We sat around the Samadhi and meditated for a few minutes.

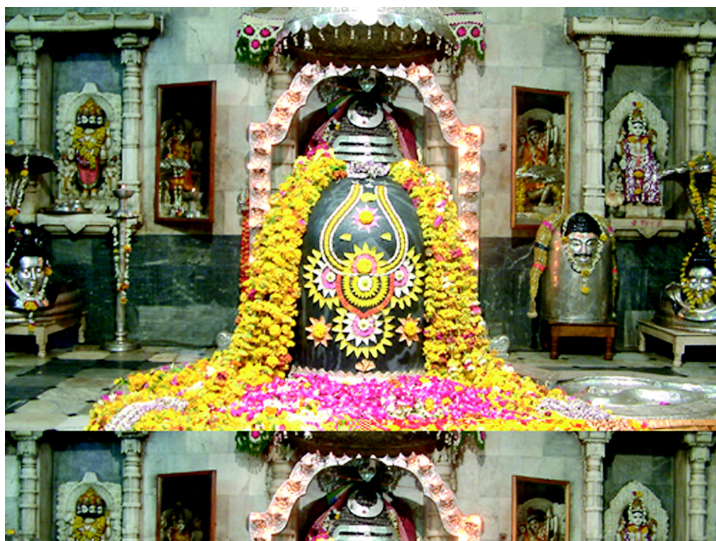
## Bhartruhari Guha

Bhartruhari was the king of Ujjain whose life presents a complete transformation from a pleasure loving king to an ascetic and sage of high reputation. He is said to have performed penance in these caves. The underground rocky caves on the banks of river

Shipra indicate how austere he must have lived. He is recognized as a yogi of high reputation and his shatakas on love, ethics and renunciation are unparalleled.

The trip to Ujjain was very fulfilling and we were ready for Indore the following day. (to be continued ...)

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Mahakaleshwar, Ujjain

## BALASHRAM 10<sup>TH</sup> BLESSING DAY

Times goes fast. Balashram the dream child of Baba Prajnananandaji celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> foundation day on July 29<sup>th</sup> 2013. The growth has been steady and wonderful with the children blossoming like beautiful flowers under the care of the many dedicated persons involved in this noble project.

Those of us who have seen its humble beginnings of ten years ago and spent time at Balashram can truly appreciate the tremendous growth of this magnanimous, humanitarian project.

Each and every one of the children are incredibly grateful for the opportunity they have been given to fulfil their potential as human beings.

These children are being raised and educated in an environment that fosters human values and spirituality than just secular education. If this is the atmosphere and these are the noble young citizens of the future that the school is preparing, then Hariharananda Balashram is truly fulfilling its purpose. Education is not merely content knowledge but

the inculcating of human values, the preparation for the real world and the ability to not only navigate the world but to contribute meaningfully toward its betterment.

The cultural program and the science and art exhibits by the young students at this event are a testimony to the excellent multi talented skills they have acquired in every field. They celebrated their 10<sup>th</sup> blessings day anchoring the whole program beautifully.

Monks of Prajnana Mission Swami Shuddhanandaji, Swami Samarpananandaji, Swami Gurukrupanandaji, Swami Arupanandaji, Swami Achalanandaji, the Principal of Balashram along with the Chief Guest Shri Ramachandra Behera, the former president of Odisha Sahitya Academy and Guest of Honour Smt. Ahalya Dhal, the District Social Welfare Officer, Kendrapara, participated in the blessings ceremony and showered their blessings. Swami Sarvatmanandaji of Matru ashram involved with the school since long time talked to the

students on the way to live a happy and successful life. The chief guest praised the Balashram project as a hope of light for impoverished society.

A Jr Math Lab, a Jr Science Lab and a Dairy facility for the school were inaugurated on this special day.

Baba Prajnananandaji sent his message of love and blessings to the children, and to each and every one that contributes to the growth and functioning of Hariharananda Balashram.

In his address to the children Baba said,  
“My loving children,

I love you from the core of my heart. I dream of you

and have high hopes for you. You are your future as well as the future of the nation and the world. Please always remember the following:

1. Time is God. Do not waste time.
2. Work hard to be successful.
3. Play and pray, but do not neglect your studies and other activities.
4. Build up a good character.
5. Have self-confidence and trust in God.
6. Create a feeling of love and harmony.

I am with you always and I am praying for your success.”

More than 1000 people attended the Program and the dinner that followed.

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Celebration of 10th Blessing Day at Balashram

## MA AMRITANANDAJI IS NO MORE



Some years ago a village girl, born in the small village of Dakshinidia, not far from Pattamundai, became a good friend of another girl, who was born in the village of Arua. One was named Kamala (meaning Goddess Lakshmi) and the other was named Vaidehi (another name of Mother Sita). One was called Shukuti (the emaciated or thin) and the other was called Benga (frog ? perhaps because she was a little chubby). One was a bit short-tempered and the other was very calm and peaceful. But, above all, both were exceptionally unique and loving. As their homes were a few miles apart, how was it they became such good friends? Kamala was a neighbor of Vaidehi's aunt. And because they were very close in age, they played together and spent time together. But who knew that one day their bond of friendship would transform into a new bond of familial relationship? When Kamala grew up, she married Vaidehi's paternal uncle, Shyama Sundar. Thus, Kamala took on a new role as her aunt in the family.

Although they loved each other as friends, Kamala had now become a respectable family member, as the aunt of Vaidehi. Consequently, Vaidehi had to bow down to her new aunt.

Again, by the law of providence or the will of God, Vaidehi became our adorable mother and Kamala became our great aunt, although we called her grandmother (aai). Growing up, we never had the opportunity to receive the direct blessings of our grandparents, neither maternal nor paternal. So, our great aunt Kamala was our virtual grandmother who took care of all of us. Because Kamala and her husband were unable to have children for some time, they adopted Gopi Baba, the second son of Vaidehi, when he was only two and a half months old. Later, in her advanced age, Kamala was blessed with a son. In my own childhood, especially as a sick child, I had the good fortune of receiving an abundance of Kamala's care, love, and gentle, soothing attention.

Decades have passed. Happiness and unhappiness come by turn. Kamala lost her only son, born during her middle stage of life, who was very young and handsome, and also her beloved husband. After their demise, she was lovingly cared for by Gopi Baba.

For Kamala, the year 2002 was a big turning point in her life. In January 2002, Vaidehi lost her beloved husband. After that Vaidehi mostly stayed at our ashram as a vanaprasthi. Her presence there was a blessing, and all the residents loved her as the mother. Sometimes when she came to the ashram Kamala would also come with her. That same year, when the plan to establish Balashram was cropping up in our minds, Gopi Baba encouraged Kamala to be a part of this great mission. Hence, she happily accepted it and donated all of her property for Balashram, where this blessed temple of learning and living the true purpose of human life, of honoring and cultivating the beauty and innocence of children, making them worthy children of God, is now established.

One day Kamala said, “How beautiful was the decision to be free from the burden of the property, including my home! God gave me one child and took

him back and now at this very same place hundreds of blooming flowers are joyfully playing. If I would not have given away this property, then I would have just spent my days running after the monkeys while they were destroying the garden.”

After donating all of her property for Balashram, Kamala stayed with her niece Vaidehi at our ashrams in Jagatpur and Balighai, and they once again became the same childhood friends, now in their seventies. The two brahmin widows spent time in puja, chanting, praying, singing, reading the scriptures, and sometimes even quarreling a little. However, the next moment they would hug each other and smile and discuss how silly it was to have even a little difference about trivial and insignificant matters.

When we decided to fulfill Vaidehi’s strong wish to be initiated as a monk, Kamala came forward with a strong demand to be initiated as well. Consequently, on July 30, 2007, on the auspicious day of Guru Purnima, both of them were initiated as sannyasinis: Kamala became Swami Amritanandaji, and Vaidehi became Swami Gurupremanandaji. Following that, both of them traveled and lived together, doing their own

personal sadhana and collective practices. Needless to say, their residence in the ashram was always crowded with smiling visitors, especially ladies, who came to them to receive their blessings as well as a taste of love and compassion, and strength and support in their lives. The visiting disciples and the ashramites adored and accepted them as Aai (grandmother) and Maa (mother), respectively.

The day of February 6, 2009, was again another shocking day for Amritanandaji ? as she lost her friend, niece, and beloved companion. No doubt, the pain in her heart was immense, for her lifelong friend and trusted confidante was no longer with her. But God is kind, time heals. Her pain made her even more loving, kind, and caring. Everyone loved her. In time her room once again became a shelter for many.

Since childhood I relished her delicious cooking. While living in the ashram, she used to cook for us and then send the food to the dining hall. She made sure to be informed about Prajnanananda's food ? always asking whether he was getting proper food and eating joyfully. Many times she even came to supervise while we sat for meals.

Eventually her health started to deteriorate. She always loved me as her grandchild and later she also adored me as her spiritual guide. While staying at the ashram, I would often go to the front of her room with my bicycle and spend a good period of time with her, in humor, love, listening to her singing, and sometimes even her complaints.

Now she is no more. After the departure of Gurupremanandaji, she was very close to me, and now there will be a big void. No doubt I feel a loss, but I feel happy that God and Gurudev took away her suffering, and that now she is in a better state.

I am praying for her. I am remembering her love. Flashes of my childhood, my precious time with her, keep coming into my mind. These few words are but my humble offering, a recollection of her beautiful soul, and how she touched my life and the lives of so many others.

Let the beautiful temple of Balashram flourish, always keeping the memory of her generosity in mind. Let her and her charitable nature be an example to all of us. I bow to her in love and devotion again and again.

With Love,  
**Prajnanananda**

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# AROUND THE WORLD

## INDIA

### PRAJNANA MISSION

#### **The 106th Birthday of Sri Gurudev Paramahansa Hariharanandaji - May 25-27**

‘Guru Paduka Puja’ and Havana was performed by Swami Muktipriyanandaji at the well decorated Guru Mandir on 27th May at 9 am in presence of monks and devotees with great devotion and enthusiasm. Revered Swami Shuddhanandaji released the newly published parts of the Hariharananda Rachanavali that contains the 3 volume set of Bhagavat Gita by Gurudev.

Evening satsang was held on all the three days by the monks and yogacharyas on topics of –”Role of Guru in unfoldment of divinity” and long time disciples shared some experiences with Gurudev. Arati and evening prayers were offered at the Deva Mandir, followed by meditation in the meditation hall.

#### **Gurudev’s Birthday celebration at Goshala by H.H. Matruashram**

Gurudev

Baba

Pramhansa Hariharanandaji’s 106th Birthday was celebrated at the premises of Goshala (cows shed) by mothers of Hariharananda Matruashram on 25<sup>th</sup> May, the day of Buddha Purnima with the help of disciples from kriya yoga ashram, Pattamundai and the Kendrapada Branch. A decorated chariot with a life size portrait of Gurudev was taken in procession with sankirtan through the village streets early in the morning in which many devotees participated with great joy. Several sankirtan groups also participated in another procession in the afternoon to honor Gurudev, starting at Pattamundai and ending at the Goshala.

Thirty two new initiations followed. Swami Shuddhanandaji President of Prajnana Mission presided over the Mahasatsang. Swami Achalanandaji, Swami Arupanandaji, Swami Srikrishnananandaji and other brahmacharis of our ashrams were present. Swami Aseemanandaji Sarswati from Paramahansa Nigamanandaji’s

ashram in Cuttack was the chief guest. Blessings and discourses of the saints of many spiritual organizations were inspiring and enlightening. There was plantation of about 50 new trees in commemoration of the event. About two thousand devotees were present and in spite of a little rain the satsang continued and ended with prasad for all.

### **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Gurudev coming to Puri –June 10-12**

Platinum Jubilee of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary was a grand three day celebration at Hariharananda Gurukulam.

Day one started with an early morning sankirtan and ashram parikrama. There was a gopuja at the Goshala in the presence of Baba Prajnananandaji and other monks. Evening satsang was conducted by Swami Samarpananandaji. New books released included- The beauty of Scriptural Wisdom, Rama Katha (Odia), The Path of Perfection and Nectar Drops (Telugu).

On day two about 1000 devotees led by our beloved Paramahansa Prajnananandaji Maharaj participated in the grand procession with sankirtan

on Badadanda (Grand Road) of Puri in the morning. The procession with a chariot with pictures of Gurudev started from Sri Guru mandir of Hariharananda Gurukulam and passed Gundicha temple and Jagannath Mandir and ended at the Sea beach. A priest from Jagannath temple garlanded Gurudev's picture and gave arati while passing the temple.

Discourses in the evening satsang were by the Yogacharyas and monks in different languages. Baba Prajnananandaji gave his discourse in a mixture of English, Odia, Hindi and Bengali to satisfy the vast number of devotees from different parts of the country. Two new books were released - Biography of Satyanandaji and Biography of Sannyal Mahasaya.

On day 3 Special Gurupuja was done in Guru Mandir by Swami Muktipriyanandaji. Guru paduka puja was followed by a fire ceremony and devotional songs. Two new books were released – “Bhakti Arghya” a compilation of 75 Bhajans in Odia language, and “At Thy Feet”, a compilation of life stories of gurudev

Hariharanandaji Maharaj both authored by Baba Prajnananandaji.

### **Inauguration of a New Goshala at the Gurukulam**

A new Goshala (cow shed) was inaugurated at the Gurukulam by Baba Prajnananandaji as a part of the Goseva movement. This would be used as a shelter to care for abandoned cows and bulls.

### **Ratha Yatra**

The most awaited festival of Rath Yatra 2013 at Puri commenced on the 10th July, and their return Car Festival or 'Bahuda Yatra' was on 19th July this year. Hariharananda Gurukulam, Balighai had the proud privilege to serve the hundreds and thousands of devotees coming from different corners of India and abroad to participate in the great festival. This year the following services were provided by the gurukulam during the Ratha Yatra.

1. Distributing packed drinking water.
2. Sprinkling of water to reduce heat and humidity.
3. Charitable health service supported by doctors, pharmacists with free medicines.

4. Ambulance service with oxygen supply and stretcher.
5. Book stall to spread the message of spirituality.
6. A cleaning team to maintain cleanliness.

### **Guru Purnima Seminar July 20-22**

Guru Purnima was celebrated at Hariharananda Gurukulam, Balighai from 20<sup>th</sup> July to 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2013, in the serene and meditative atmosphere of the Gurukulam to pay homage to the lineage of Kriya Yoga masters in the divine presence of Baba Paramahansa Prajnananandaji Maharaj. Guru Paduka puja and fire ceremony were performed in the Guru Mandir as per tradition.

The Gurukulam was vibrant with love and devotion to the Guru as close to seven hundred people visited in the course of the day to pay their homage and to get the blessings of the Paramahansa Prajnanananda, the current leader and Guru. With great compassion Guruji broke his silence for some time in the afternoon to discourse on the Guru on Guru Purnima day.

He also gave his darshan and greeted the residents of the ashrams abroad with a short message - The Miami Mother Center and Chicago Ashram in USA, Kriya Yoga Center in Tattendorf, Vienna and The Kriya Yoga Ashram in Brazil who all celebrated the event with great devotion.

Initiations into 1<sup>st</sup> Kriya and higher kriyas were held on 20<sup>th</sup> July and 21<sup>st</sup> July 2013 respectively. Guru Puja and fire ceremony was performed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July, the day of Guru Purnima.

Guided meditations and spiritual discourses on topics of “I have no existence without my Guru”, “The words of the Guru are the Mantra to be practiced” and “Knowledge flows to them who serve the Guru” were enlightening and inspiring.

As a part of Guru Purnima Celebration, there were also talks by devotees on chosen topics and a quiz on the lineage of Gurus.

### **Inauguration of Sanyal Mahasaya Museum**

The newly constructed museum dedicated to the life and works of Pujya Gurudev

was inaugurated on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2013.

### **Birthday of Paramahansa Prajnananandaji Maharaj, Aug 10**

#### **Hariharananda Gurukulam**

Our beloved Baba Prajnananandaji's 53<sup>rd</sup> birthday was celebrated at the Gurukulam with a special gurupaduka puja at the Guru Mandir followed by a satsang and meditation. All our other Ashrams in India celebrated the event with great devotion with special worship, meditations and devotional songs and Sadhu Bhandaras.

### **Kriya Programs and Retreats**

Several initiation programs and intensive meditation camps were conducted August through September, in Orissa and also in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh by the monks and brahmacharis of the mission. Several sadhana camps were also conducted in the cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar on a regular basis giving the disciples a chance to intensify their sadhana.

## **ASIA**

### **July 22 Gurupurnima Celebration at Dubai**

Dubai group celebrated Gurupurnima with a group meditation, offering of lotus flowers to the Gurus and a video presentation of guruji's discourse followed by Prasad distribution.

### **Aug 22-24 Kriya work shop at Dubai**

Dubai group held its 6th Kriya Yoga workshop with Swami Samarpanananda Giri, a senior monk of Prajnana Mission.

### **August 10 Birthday of Guruji**

Paramahansa Prajnananandaji's Birthday was celebrated with special worship and meditation.

## **EUROPE**

### **Himalayan Retreat 30th May – 13th of June 2013**

For the first time, a group of European Kriyavans took part in a ten day retreat at our beautiful Himalayan Ashram in Maneri (Uttarkashi area). This retreat was conducted by yogacharyas - Rajarshi Peterananda and Claudia Ma. Many were visiting India for the first time and were thrilled by the rare opportunity to sit on

the banks of the sacred river Ganga for meditation and prayer and the chance to have a daily dip in the river. The holy pilgrimage to Gangotri was of intense spiritual vibration. Long and deep kriya meditations and enlightening discussions with the teachers about spiritual life were inspiring. Despite some initial adjustment to the simple austere life every one really felt blessed to be there and left with memorable impressions of divine grace. The stay in Rishikesh directly at the banks of Mother Ganga, in Paramarth Niketan on the way to Uttara Kashi and the return journey was refreshing and enjoyable. The Ganga arati was a unique experience when the blessings of the Divine could be felt.

## **Holland Ashram**

**Aug 2-8** Foundation Day Seminar at Sterskel Ashram

**Aug 6** Special event- **Holland Ashram celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> Foundation day**

**Vienna Ashram, Tattendorf**  
**August 10 - Birthday of Paramhansa Prajnanananda**

Guruji's birthday was celebrated as a special event at Tattendorf with special worship, meditation and satsang.

## **September 4-9**

Foundation day Seminar was held at the Kriya Yoga Center Vienna, Austria .The Ashram celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> foundation day on Sept - 6

### **Kriya Initiation programs**

Initiation programs were held in centers of many countries throughout Europe.

### **Retreats**

Retreats were held in Latvia, Poland, Sweden, Germany, Sterskel and France.

### **Upcoming events include**

**Nov 13-17**

Frankfurt Retreat

**Dec-03,**

Special Event  
P a r a m a h a m s a  
Hariharanandaji's Mahsamadhi  
Commemoration service

**Dec-24 to Jan-01, 2013**

Retreat Christmas / New  
Year Seminar, Kriya Yoga  
Centre Vienna, Austria

**Dec 23 – Jan-01**

Retreat Christmas / New  
Year Seminar, Sterskel , Holland

## **AMERICAS**

### **North America**

**Mother Center –**  
**Homestead FL**

## **Guru Purnima Celebrations**

Guru Purnima was celebrated with a three day seminar at the Mother center with Yogacharya John Baba and swamis Matrukrupanandaji and Gurupriyananda with discourse on Gurus , long meditations and devotional songs. Special worship with Gurupaduka puja and a fire ceremony and the chanting of Guru Gita were done on Monday by the residents of the ashram. Many disciples attended the program and paid their homage to the Masters.

### **P a r a m a h a m s a Prajnananandaji's Birthday Celebration –Aug 9-11**

The 3 day event marked the birthday of our beloved Guruji Baba Prajnananandaji who is spending time in silence and seclusion this year.

The Birthday of Baba was celebrated at the Mother center on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August with special worship along with Guru Paduka Puja and a fire ceremony, followed by meditation and a festive lunch. The Seminar continued with classes and guided meditations, devotional songs and bhajans. Residents and the disciples shared their love and

experiences with the guru. There was a feeling of great joy and everyone felt the presence and the blessings of the guru. Swami Atmavidyanandaji and yogacharya John Baba conducted the program assisted by swamis Matrukrupananda and swami Gurupriyananda, and brahmacharis of the Ashram.

### **Annual Fall Retreat and Foundation Day, September 17-24**

The Annual Fall Retreat at the Mother Center was well attended by national and international participants. Swami Atmavidyanandaji conducted the retreat along with Yogacharya John Thomas Baba and Swamis Matrukrupanandaji and Swami Gurupriyanandaji and the resident Brahmacharis. Swami Atmavidyanandaji gave discourses on Hatha yoga Pradipika. The six day retreat of several guided meditations, and inspiring discourses intensified the practice of Kriya disciples.

### **September 22<sup>nd</sup>, Foundation Day of Mother Center**

The Mother Center celebrated the Foundation day

of the Homestead Ashram with special worship and fire ceremony.

This day, sixteen years ago, Gurudev founded this spiritual center, which was also his home where he stayed continuously and guided us.

### **Kriya Vedanta Gurukulam, Joliet IL**

### **Guru Purnima and Foundation Day Program**

Kriya Vedanta Gurukulam, our Joliet ashram held its 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Interfaith Conference on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July, as a part of its three day event of Gurupurnima and foundation day celebrations. The topic was "Love your Neighbor" and the faiths were represented by an excellent panel of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism who all talked of how love is the key element that brings joy and eternal peace. The event attracted over 150 citizens from various local and neighboring communities. "We are our own neighbor. Our body, mind, intellect are our immediate neighbor." Said Swami Atmavidyananda Giri, who chaired the program "We need to turn our attention within and look at ourselves to develop love.

## **Birthday of Paramahansa Prajnananandaji**

Guruji's Birthday was celebrated at our Joliet Ashram on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August. The resident monks and Brahmacharis conducted the program along with Yogacharya Durga Ma, with worship of Guru followed by chanting, songs and spiritual discussion. The program concluded with a special lunch.

## **Retreats and Programs**

Initiation programs were held in many centers of the country in the month of August – September and the following retreats were held in the month of August.

**August 30 - Sept 1** - East Coast Retreat

## **Upcoming Retreats**

Oct – 17-20 Higher Kriya Retreat at Kriya Vedanta Gurukulam

Oct 25-27 Toronto Canada

Nov 8-10 Texas Silent Retreat

Nov 30 – Dec 3  
Mahasamadhi Seminar

Dec 24-25 Holy Days  
Seminar

Dec 28 - Jan1 2014 New  
Year Seminar

## **South America**

**Aug 15- 19** – A retreat was held in Barranquilla in Colombia. Initiation programs were also held in different parts of Colombia.

## **Upcoming Events**

Dec 9-16 retreat at  
Armenia Colombia.

## **Australia and New Zealand Initiation programs**

Programs were held at Adelaide, Perth, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Brisbane with Swami Samarpanananda Giri.

## **Upcoming Programs**

Initiation programs in Auckland, New Zealand and Wellington, New Zealand with Swami Samarpanananda Giri

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***Visit our web site:***

***www. prajnanamission.org***

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