

Sthita Prajna



Guru Vandana

*Om brahmanandam paramasukhadam kevalam jnanamurtim
dvandvatitam gaganasadrisham tattvamasyadilakshyam;
ekam nityam vimalam acalam sarvadhi-sakshi-bhutam
bhavatitam-trigunarahitam sadgurum tam namami*

“He who is the source of all bliss, the source of eternal happiness, personification of wisdom, beyond all duality, formless, whose attention is always on the divine. Thou are that. Guru is one, eternal, pure, steady. Witness in consciousness in all, beyond all thought and beyond the three qualities of nature I bow to that sat guru. I bow to my guru and God, who is pure, eternal, beyond all forms - pure consciousness. I bow to my guru.”

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FROM THE EDITORS :

“Human life is a gift from God. We the children of God have great potential divinity. Through selfless service our hearts will open, the bud of life will blossom, and we will be worthy children of God.”

Paramahansa Prajnanananda

As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of Gurudev coming to West, we bring you more articles of the Master on Kriya Yoga and his discourses in the West.

In Prajnnavani, Paramahansa Prajnananandaji gives an interesting account of Gurudev’s second visit to the West.

Devi Mahatmya, the glory of the Divine Mother describes the war of hundred years between the gods and the demons with a beautiful metaphorical commentary by Prajnananandaji.

As we look forward to Guru Purnima we discuss the need of the guru on the spiritual path.

We bring you news of the interfaith conferences in which Baba Prajnananandaji participated to commemorate Gurudev’s 40th anniversary of coming to West and the birthday celebrations of Gurudev at the Mother Center U.S.A.

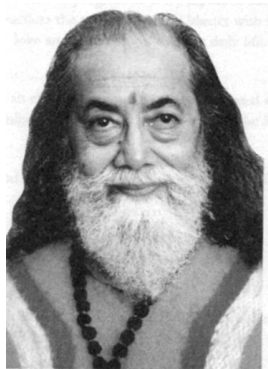
Relevant excerpts from some of Paramahansa Prajnanananda’s seminal works, The Universe Within and Mysticism of Religious Symbols continue.

We bring you news of the many activities of the Indian ashrams and the ashrams abroad.

Hope you enjoy this issue and those to come.

MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

KRIYA YOGA IN ANCIENT SCRIPTURES



“I proclaimed this imperishable yoga to Vivasvan. Vivasvan told it to Manu, and Manu told it to Ikshvaku. Thus handed down from one another the royal sages knew it till the yoga was lost to the world through long lapse of time.”

says the Blessed Lord in the Bhagavad Gita (4:1-2)

The imperishable yoga (Avyaya Yoga) is none other than Kriya Yoga, which has brought to mankind by the Lord God with his creation. The supreme mystery of Kriya Yoga was revealed by God Himself. Kriya Yoga is the spiritual practice based on breath control. God breathed into the nostrils the breath of life, which is mentioned in the Book of

Genesis (the Torah). God also taught the science of self-control through breath regulation. The Kriya Yoga was brought again into mass practice by the great master Babaji Maharaj through his able householder disciple Shri Shyamacharan Lahiri, popularly known as Lahiri Mahasaya, or Lahiri Baba, in modern times.

The Vedas

The Vedas are the most ancient and holy scriptures of mankind: no one knows how many thousand years old they are. Veda in Sanskrit comes from the root *vid*, which means ‘to know.’ The Vedas are the treasure house of material and spiritual knowledge. There are several detailed discussions about yoga practice in the Vedas. Nowadays you hear of many kinds of yoga, but at that time, there was one yoga, the yoga of breath control, canalization of *prana*, which ultimately brought control of life. Yoga in the Vedas was nothing less than the meditation of Kriya Yoga.

It is written in the Vedas,
yasmat rte na siddhyati, yajno
vipascitascana
sa dhinan yoga minvati

(Rig Veda 1:18:7)

Without yoga, the means to control thought (i.e., *prana karma*), no one can attain perfection. Yoga is the path of perfection and the key to success.

There are repeated descriptions of yoga (i.e., Kriya Yoga) in all the branches of the Vedas, including discussions about *chakras kvo trichakra*: Where are the lower three centers (Rig Veda 1:34:9).

In the Atharva Veda, it is said, *asta cakra navadvaya devanam puram ayodhya, tasyam hiranmayah kosah svargojyotisa vrtah*: This human body is the chariot of the nine doors and eight chakras. It has *ayodhya*, the place beyond all the frictions, fights, and fluctuations. In between there is ever-dazzling covering of delusion, beyond which you will enter the kingdom of heaven.

The Upanishads

The Upanishads are the last part of the Vedas: There are many in number and contain

divine wisdom. There are many meanings of the word *Upanishad* (to remove all ignorance quickly, to sit near the truth, to sit near the master). However, in some specific verses of different Upanishads, there is clear indication of meditation and Kriya practice.

In Shvetashvatara Upanishad (6:11) it is written,

“The one God is hiding in every living being, still then, He is all-pervading, the innermost being in all.

He does all the work (kri), abiding in all (ya).

He is the witnessing consciousness, formless and immortal.”

In the Mundaka Upanishad (3:1:4) it is described,

“Brahman, God is the indwelling Self in all. He is the reality of life and illumination. Realizing Brahman, man becomes enlightened. There is none wiser than the one who has realized God. He performs all daily works as the expression of his divine Self, and his enjoyment is infused with love of God. He is a true *kriyavan*, the wisest among the wise men.”

This verse contains three important words: *kriyavan* (the one who practices Kriya yoga, the supreme meditation), *atmakrida* (through every action, enjoys as the perceiver of the soul), *atmarati* (to love the soul, God, in every breath, in every moment, in every thought, disposition, and activity).

In the same Upanishad, at a different place (3:2:10) it is said,

“He is the *kriyavan*, lover of wisdom, devoted to God, constantly hearing the divine sound (i.e., Om), who practices the mystic rites of subjective meditation (i.e., Kriya Yoga), who has taken the vow of Self-illumination, perception of divine light on the top of the head, and he alone is rightly qualified to receive the divine wisdom and God-realization.”

The Bhagavad Gita

The Bhagavad Gita (in short, the Gita) is the handbook of yoga. From beginning to end, the Gita explains the science of meditation, right action, divine love, and realization. Each chapter of the Gita is also named as yoga. The concluding verse of each chapter declares that it is the essence of the

Upanishad (i.e., the Gita is the essence of the Absolute and the scripture of yoga, the Yoga Shastra). Every verse of the holy Gita explains the secret of spiritual practice. Kriya meditation and perception of divine qualities like divine illumination, vibration, and holy sound. In the history of explanation of the Bhagavad Gita by different scholars, yogis and realized masters, the yogic explanation of the Gita by Lahiri Mahasaya, Swami Pranavananda, Shriyuteshwarji, Pandit Panchanan Bhattacharya, Mother Suradhuni Devi, Shrimat Bhupendranath Sannyal are landmarks. The Gita is the scripture of yoga and above all Kriya Yoga; one can refer to the book *Bhagavad Gita in the Light of Kriya Yoga* by the author.

In the Gita (18:66) it is written, *mamekam saranam vraja*: “Come to me alone and surrender thyself,” which is the essence of all religions and scriptures. To perceive God and God alone, constantly, continuously is the essence of the practice of Kriya Yoga.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches how to control and

even kill all the negative propensities of body, mind, and intellect, and to go to the ultimate reality (the soul, God) quickly and easily by the scientific technique of Kriya Yoga.

The Brahmasutra

In Indian spiritual traditions, along with all the scriptures, the Upanishads, the Gita, and the Brahmasutra of Vyasa are given supreme importance. These three basic scriptures are known as *prasthanas trayi* (the triple canon of spirituality that enables one to return to the source from which one has come). The literal meaning of Brahmasutra is not aphorisms on the Absolute God, like the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali or the Bhakti Sutra of Narada. As the thread holds all the pearls together to make a beautiful garden, similarly the formless God is hiding in all of creation. As people look at the

pearls, not at the thread, similarly, ordinary people look to the world, not to God. Brahman (God) + *sutra* (thread).

In this holy book of Brahmasutra is a very subtle description of Kriya Yoga and its perception. *Guhya pravastavatmanau hi tad darsanat*: “By entering into the cave of cranium one is to perceive the union of individual self and universal Self” (1:2:11).

Kampanat: “Perception of vibration of *prana*” (1:3:39).

Jyoti darsanat: Perception of divine illumination” (1:3:40).

Pranavato sabdat: “Perception of divine sound” (2:4:15).

All these perceptions are realized even at the time of initiation into Kriya Yoga.

(From Kriya Yoga by Paramahansa Hariharananda)

PRAJNANAVANI - THE VOICE OF WISDOM

GURUDEV IN THE WEST



Second Visit to the West

Being pressed by Western disciples, Gurudev again undertook his Western tour in 1975. From Bogota (Columbia) a disciple came to accompany Swamiji to America. They boarded the plane on May 24, 1975, from Delhi to Amsterdam. After staying in Amsterdam for a day, where many of his disciples came to visit, he went to Curacao in South America. After an extremely long flight he reached there about 11p.m. that night, to find hundreds of people waiting to receive him with flowers and love.

The next day there was a public lecture which coincided with the birthday and day of *sannyasa* initiation of Gurudev. The news of the arrival of this great Indian Yogi in Curacao was published in the newspapers. The hall was packed with enthusiastic audiences who came to have a glimpse of this great soul and listen to his divine discourse. After a stay of six days in Curacao, he proceeded to Bogota, the capital of Columbia, a very beautiful place about 8,000 feet above sea level. Here, everyday the crowd increased, and people were

even waiting outside on the streets to see him. They had to rent the biggest auditorium to accommodate the large gathering of seeking souls.

In one such congregation there were about six hundred people in the audience. The moment he sat on the dais, he with his own inimitable style bowed down to the audience. In this gathering there were several priests, nuns, and religious people. One priest asked, "Swamiji! We pray loudly together, sing in the church and read the Holy Bible. But what do you do?" He replied with love, "In Kriya Yoga we only hear the whispering talk of the invisible soul, and calmly perceive the trinity - the voice of God, the invisible living touch of God and the divine illumination."

Then another elderly priest asked him, "Swamiji! Are you a Christian? We are all Christians. If you are not a Christian, then what can we learn from you?" Listening to this question, he promptly answered, "Is your God a Christian? To what religion does he belong? Does He dress like you? Is God a Hindu or a Muslim Fakir? How many Gods

are there? What type of food does He take? I have realized there is one God, who is neither Hindu, nor Muslim, nor Christian. He is all-pervading, omniscient and omnipotent. It is described in the Holy Bible, "God made man and woman in His image and he breathed into the nostrils the breath of life." Then Man became the living soul. When God is everywhere, he is also in every human being. There is no question of caste, creed or color, there is no boundary and segmentation of religions. As the Sun is one and the Moon is one, so also God is one."

In this way he expounded the deep philosophy of Kriya Yoga and its practical application in daily life. During his stay in Bogota, every week there were two public meetings. He was invited to many churches and universities to deliver talks.

Once, during a talk to interested students, some followers of Hare Krishna movement were asking several questions. They said that Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has said that only chanting the name of Krishna was enough and so there was no need of other

practices. They were arguing with a dogmatic attitude.

With love Gurudev said, "I am from the land of Nadia, the birth place of Shri Chaitanya. Do you know that only by chanting the name of Krishna once, he could enter into the state of *samadhi*? There was no need of singing with musical instruments." Saying this, to demonstrate the practical Kriya Yoga, in a minute he entered into the deep state of meditation - then into *samadhi* completely absorbed in the Supreme. There was no visible sign of breath or pulse.

All the people there were astounded to see this great yogi in *samadhi*. Then a tall and well-built disciple had to carry him upstairs for his complete rest.

First Visit to the USA

There were already many people in USA initiated by Gurudev into Kriya Yoga. Knowing that he was in Curacao and Bogota, many people from New York and Washington D.C. visited him there and requested him to come to USA. Accepting their invitation he started for New York from Curacao via Miami.

His first public program in USA was in New York. There were many well-organized programs in New York. In the city, at many places big posters with beautiful pictures of Gurudev were posted on the walls. After a warm welcome at the airport, he went to his place of stay, where already a large number of people had assembled. Although he was tired because of his long flight, he talked to them for a short time and told them that he would stay longer than planned, so they could get his company and guidance.

During his twenty four days stay in New York, he delivered many public discourses, radio talks, gave interviews and initiated interested people. Many elite people of America came into contact with him and were blessed with his divine company.

From New York he proceeded to Washington D.C., accompanied by many of his old disciples. During his stay here, there was a proposal of starting an institution, which was officially incorporated in 1976 under the name of Kriya Yoga Ashram.

From Washington D.C. he started for Germany via Zurich. From there he went by car to Uhldingen, Germany. He stayed there for some time initiating and inspiring people into spiritual life. On August 7, 1975, after a trip to three continents, he left for India quietly without informing any disciple in India. This was his usual practice.

After a long gap of nearly two years, again for the third time he started for the West. Such a long separation from their beloved master was really difficult for sincere disciples. On June 2, 1977, he first went to Germany, stayed there for nearly two months and then visited Belgium. From there he went to Holland (the Netherlands) for teaching Kriya Yoga for the first time. It was in the month of August. He stayed there for twelve days and proceeded to London and Curacao and then to Bogota. It was his last visit to these two countries where people still remember him and follow his teachings sincerely even now.

From there he went to New York. There he had a full two days of television and radio programs on the *Gita*, the

Upanishads and Kriya Yoga. For a short time he went to Washington D.C. to guide his disciples. He was touched by their deep love and regard for him. He returned to New York towards the end of October and after a stay of eight days, he left for Stuttgart, Germany. He stayed in Germany for 24 days. From there, he left on December 2, 1977 for India and reached Delhi the next day. It was a complete six months stay in the West.

In this way, Kriya Yoga spread from city to city and country to country. Thousands of people, being extremely interested in spiritual life and meditation, have changed their life and followed the practical instructions of Kriya Yoga.

Since then Gurudev has toured many more European countries, including undivided USSR. Through his tireless efforts and guidance, more than 70 centers were established in the Western Hemisphere. Although many temporary ashrams were started in different countries, his first permanent Ashram in the West was in Sterksel, Holland. On August 5, 1993, it was inaugurated in his holy presence

where several hundred disciples gathered to participate in the divine celebration. This Ashram with a meditation hall and several guestrooms is located in very natural surroundings. It is far away from the crowd of the city on ten acres of beautiful gardens.

In 1994, he started another Ashram in a rented house in Vienna, Europe, with the generous help of his beloved disciple Ms. Christine Jacobsen, where he spends the summers guiding disciples.

With the wish of the Almighty, on September 22, 1997, on the autumnal equinox day, a new Ashram was

founded in Homestead, Florida, in a beautiful, tropical flower and fruit garden reminiscent of India. It functions as the Mother Center for USA.

On September 7, 1998, the permanent Ashram was inaugurated in the suburbs of Vienna to serve as the headquarters in Europe.

For the last four years, from 1995 to 1998, the birthday of Gurudev has been celebrated with joy and spiritual vibration in Europe, mostly in Vienna, where several hundred disciples congregate from all over the world to participate in the inspiring programs.

(From the *River of Compassion*)



Baba with Roy Eugene Davis

KRIYA YOGA IS THE BASE AND UNITY OF ALL RELIGIONS

(Lecture delivered by Gurudev at the Washington
Ethical Society, Washington, D.C.)

The Self is free from ignorance and delusion. From the Self you will get immortality, peace, bliss, and joy. Without knowing the Self, you have no escape. *Om santih, om santih, om santih.* I bow to my guru, *param-guru, para-paraguru, parameshti-guru.*

Today our point of discourse in this meeting is, “Kriya Yoga is the base and unity of all religion.” What is the goal of all religion? The goal of all religion is calmness; calmness is divineness. But what do we get in all religion? Only chaos. In the church we shout, in the temple we shout, in the mosque we shout. We chant mantras and we fast, but calmness is not taught in religion. Only Kriya Yoga teaches how to get calmness. Calmness is Godliness. Seclusion is the price of greatness. If you practice this Kriya Yoga technique, within a short period you will feel calmness, even with five

minutes time. The Kriya Yoga technique can give you divine sensation, can give you divine light within a short time. Many people have taken initiation here in Kriya Yoga.

The dormant spiritual energy of every human being is remaining in the body, in the form of illusion, delusion and error. Until and unless you can remove the delusion, illusion and error by Kriya Yoga practice, you cannot conceive soul, you cannot perceive soul, and you cannot realize soul. Kriya Yoga gives the power to accomplish this. The mind of every human being is restless. Throughout the day they are getting so many sensations, so many thoughts, so many worries, so many anxieties, activities, friendships. Through this they are absorbed in worldly things. Their hearts will become very weak. They will get nervousness. Only Kriya Yoga can remove this nervousness and heartsickness and can give the single-minded

state. If you want Self-realization or not, no matter. Through meditation every human being can get calmness, balance of mind, amity and solve the problems in the family, in the office, in the industry.

I n d r i y a n a m mananatha. Yoga scriptures say that the mind is master of the five sense telephones. Our five sense telephones are engrossed with matter. We are absorbed in the material world, so we cannot perceive the calmness and divineness that remain in every human being. *Mananathastu marutah.* You should control your breath by deep inhalation, then you can get extreme calmness. Otherwise, you cannot get calmness. In the night when you go to bed, you take deep inhalation: in that time, you get calmness. People are always busy with the worldly sense. Their mind, intellect, and five sense telephones are their enemy. Until and unless they introvert and go in the center, they cannot get calmness.

In the practice of Kriya Yoga you take deep inhalation, by which you get sufficient oxygen, which is the nutrition

of the brain. So, your brainpower increases and the brain becomes free. *Marutasthu layanatha.* If a person practices Kriya Yoga with deep inhalation, he can control his breathing. Through our every disposition our inhalation varies. During the time of passion, we take more inhalation. During the time of anger, our heartbeat increases. With fear inhalation changes. But when we sleep, we get calmness. At that time inhalation varies. In the Kriya Yoga technique we take the type of deep inhalation that we take during the time of our sleep. But only a Kriya Yoga teacher can teach this technique by which, within a short period, you can get calmness. Within a short time you can withdraw your mind from the body, from the room, from the universe, and you can get the single-minded state. From mind we go to intelligence, from intelligence to talent, from talent to knowledge, from knowledge we go to consciousness, from consciousness to superconsciousness, from superconsciousness to cosmic consciousness, and, finally, wisdom. We can perceive

wisdom, and wisdom is the level of God-realization. In scriptures it is said, *prajnanam brahma*.

When you take deep inhalation by the practice of Kriya Yoga, at that time you hear divine sound. *Sa laya nadam asritah*. The Kriya Yoga technique can give calmness and divineness within a short time. You will forget the world. You will get supersensation in your body. You will hear virulent sound. You will also see inner illumination. The divine kingdom is remaining in every human body. It is written in the Bible that the Kingdom of Heaven is within you. By the Kriya Yoga technique, you can reach that heaven.

First, I am telling the technique. In Yoga Shastras it is said, *mulapadme kundalini yavat nidrayate prabhuh tavat kincid na sidhyate tantra-mantra-arcana-dikam*. The *Kundalini shakti* is remaining in our coccygeal center in a coiled form. If you cannot withdraw that power, that divine power, from the coccygeal center to the fontanel, you cannot get perception of God, conception of God,

realization of God. How to do this is not taught in the church, not taught in the temple. So, instead, the people shout.

In the Upanishad it is said, *yad vaca nubhyuditam yena vak abhyudyate tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yad idam upasate*: “What the speech cannot reveal, but what reveals the speech, know that alone is God and not what people worship here.” Until and unless you cultivate the land and sow seeds on the ground, you cannot expect any harvest. Everywhere in the present day you will see there is adulteration. It is why in the Gita (4:7) it is said,

yada yada hi dharmasya glanir bhavati bharata

a b h y u t t h a n a m adharmasya tadatmanam srjamyaham

God Himself has said, “Whenever I find falsehood in humanity, even about truth and religion, I bring Myself forth.” So, every five or six hundred years a preceptor comes to the earth. It is why Babaji has come. He came and taught his disciple Lahiri Baba,

Shriyukteshwarji, and Yoganandaji this Kriya Yoga technique, which can give the calmness and unity in all religions. No question of person, caste, creed. The question is only receptivity. If anyone desires, he can get this calmness.

Pranayamat-rite anyat tarakam narakad eva samsara sagaramajjanam tarkam prana-samyama: You have the natural ability to control your breath, but you have no natural ability to control your heart. If you hold your breath for a short time, you can feel your whole system is affected. Your brain, tissues, diaphragm, and everything are changed. Also, your heartbeat is changed. It will be reduced and, if you practice this regularly, you will get a strong heart. Generally, people are very busy with worldly things, in mundane theatre. They are getting heart trouble, because they do not know how to control their mind. Kriya yoga technique can teach them how to get balance of mind, how to get amity, how to get friendship, how to work nicely, how to speak nicely. Their life in this

universe will be happy. Kriya Yoga says that, until and unless you control your breath, you have no rescue from the sin in which you are engrossed. This world is an ocean of sins. You must introvert your five sense telephones and make a friendship with them. If your eye is your friend, then through your sight you can perceive that the soul is abiding in the body. Also, you can perceive how the soul is functioning in the body. Also, you can perceive how the soul is functioning through you by which you can immediately make friendship with the five sense telephones. This Kriya Yoga technique can grant and promote peace and all-round development. This Kriya Yoga is a noble technique, simple technique, easy technique, sure technique and the best technique. Those who have taken it, they have felt it. On the day of their initiation, they have received the supersensation, divineness, calmness, and the triple divine qualities in them. So, this Kriya Yoga technique will grant everything in every human being.

Kriya Yoga gives simultaneous development of body, mind, intellect, material existence, and soul. If you practice this technique, then your body will be sound and healthy. You are giving pressure on your colon to aid in normal elimination and massage the liver by which the bile secretion and other factors are stimulated that aid in digesting your food nicely. If you give pressure over the pancreas, insulin comes out and keeps your blood sugar level normal. The secretion of salts from the adrenal gland is also stimulated. All endocrine glands become more balanced in their functioning, leading to health, strength and happiness. Your brain will be fertile. You will get prompt understanding and ready wit by the Kriya Yoga technique. At the same time you are getting God-realization, because you are getting calmness. Oxygen is the nutrition of the heart, so your heart will remain sound. You will get the breathless stage by Kriya Yoga. Your longevity will increase and you will work nicely and enjoy the world for a longer period.

You are taking food, so you are getting a body. From the body you are getting mind. Food gives us two qualities: one for hell, the other for heaven. One gives animality and the other gives divinity. In the scriptures it is said that from food we are getting mind.

Mana eva manusyanam karanam bandha moksayoh: From mind we get bondage. For example, our mind is always running in sex feeling. Of course, it is essential; but, if you practice Kriya Yoga, even through your sex sense you can perceive God. In your money sense, you can perceive God. In your hunger for food, you can perceive God. When you are getting sex sense, your soul is there. You can perceive that the soul is remaining detached during the time of sexual pleasure. So, the Kriya Yoga technique will give you constant divine perception. Throughout the day and night, if you can transform the mind, you can get divineness, peace, bliss, and joy. You can judge what is right and what is wrong. Our psychology is determined inside the brain. From here we get reason. We

can think deeply. Accordingly, we can do work. The Kriya Yoga technique gives good mind and intellect.

Any person above thirteen years old can practice this Kriya Yoga technique. This technique is helpful for students, because by taking sufficient oxygen their brains will be healthy so they can prepare their lessons nicely within a short period. They will be well-educated and creative in the future and be able to earn much money. Kriya Yoga also promotes this – that a person can earn sufficient wealth in the universe. The Kriya Yoga technique gives salvation. Accepting this technique, people of any religion will get balance of mind. They will get divinity. Every religion speaks ill of other religions. “My religion is the best religion. My religion is the best religion.” But they do not know what their religion truly is. If they practice this technique, they will feel the unity behind every religion. They will feel what God is. There are not many Gods or a separate God for every religion. God is one. Soul is one. They can perceive it.

Pindam kundalini saktim: God has created the whole gross body in such a way that people are always keeping their attention below the eyebrows. Physiological senses are there, so they are engrossed with delusion, illusion, and error. The truth is remaining far off. It is remaining in the psychological jurisdiction inside the cranium. A person can judge everything from that place.

The Kriya Yoga technique is the quickest means of success. You can go to foreign countries by plane very quickly. Similarly, the kriya Yoga technique can give you divine sensation within a short period. Many ladies and gentlemen present here are practicing Kriya Yoga. They are feeling the real effect and utility of Kriya Yoga. Worries and anxieties are not remaining. They are meditating nicely, by which they can get God-realization throughout their lives. Kriya Yoga is the highway of common religion. It gives mathematical results. Kriya Yoga is the applied part of Vedanta, Darsana Shastra, Sankhya, Upanishads, Gita, and Bible. It is the combination of

jnana, *karma*, and *bhakti*. Until and unless you get *bhakti*, you cannot get God-perception. Karma is going on through the spine, which by the kriya Yoga technique you can spiritually magnetize.

Danger remains in your coccygeal center, money center. You require money. You require health, house, industry, car, good husband, good wife, undoubtedly; but you also require sound health, sound mind, and long life. If you don't practice Kriya Yoga, you cannot enjoy your wealth. You may be a millionaire, but who will enjoy the wealth if you die at the age of thirty or forty? Who will enjoy if you get heart trouble? But Kriya Yoga can give you the power by which you can have a healthy heart and lungs.

The sacral center is where people get sex sense all the time. They cannot withdraw their minds. By the practice of magnetizing your spine, you can change your life force into all-accomplishing divine force,

which in turn hastens your physical, mental and spiritual regeneration and rejuvenation. Every moment through your every activity and in your every thought, you can perceive *kri* and *ya*. *Kri* means the work that you are doing from morning to evening. What is *ya*? Soul. Without the soul you cannot do anything, you are a dead body. So, anything you are doing, is done by Him, not by you. The Soul is remaining everywhere. The human being has two bodies; the visible body and invisible body. The visible body is your delusion. It is always remaining in the jungle of matter. Your invisible body is real. Cultivate your invisible body through the visible body, then you will get awareness of the inner Self and you can perceive the soul, you can conceive the soul, you can realize the soul. Through your every activity you can feel the oneness of the body and the soul. This is called yoga – Kriya Yoga.

(From the *Kriya Yoga* by
Paramahansa Hariharananda)

MEESSAGE BY PARAMAHAMSA PRAJNANANDA

Loving and Divine Soul,

Let the choicest blessing of God and the masters be upon you all.

I take the opportunity to pray for you and send my love and best wishes to all as kriyavans all over the world celebrate the birthday of our beloved Gurudev. At the same time we commemorate the 40th anniversary of Gurudev's arrival in the West. When I think of him, my heart and mind are filled with love, joy, and compassion. His memory and everything he did fill my mind with joy and inner peace.

I had the good fortune to observe him very closely from our first meeting until the moment he left his body. I experienced him as a child filled with simplicity and love, as a youth with strength, vigor, and dynamism, as an adult enriched with life experience, and as an elder brimming with wisdom and authority.

During my twenty-two-year association with Gurudev

I saw the love and compassion of a kind-hearted mother; the strength, discipline, and orderly life of a good father; and the amity and enthusiasm of a friend. He was always accommodating and could easily adjust to situations and people. When I first saw him, I was in my early twenties and he was in his seventies. What a loving and incomparable guide! I had the experience of seeing a mother, a father and a friend, all in him. He is not only a wonderful guru-preceptor and an incomparable guide, he was a very supportive friend. I have heard the same thing from countless others around the world.

When I consider Gurudev and myself, I see my own shortcomings, so I try to serve him in ways that would make him happy.

After describing Gurudev's personality a little, I want to elaborate his impersonal nature. He said that the guru-preceptor is not a human form; the guru-preceptor is dis-

criminating knowledge, the fire of wisdom, and the art of self-inquiry. He said that the guru is the eternal guide who abides within each and every living being. Unfortunately, we do not see or listen from within.

While contemplating him a beautiful verse from the Guru Gita came to mind that describes the qualities of a guru-preceptor:

vivekinam vivekaya
vimarshaya vimarshinam
prakashinam prakashaya
jnaninam jnana rupine

- Guru Gita (verse 332)

"I bow to the discrimination within all discriminating people, to the inquiry of all engaged in self-inquiry, to the light that illumines those who need light, to the one who is the

knowledge of all knowledgeable people."

While remembering Gurudev on this special day, let us love knowledge, inner light, and the divine instructions of the master and let us try to inculcate them into our daily lives. Let us be loving, kind, and compassionate in our daily lives. Let us try to be better people by improving the quality of our thinking, speaking, and living. Let us be instruments of the Divine on this earth.

On this special day, I pay my unspoken and heartfelt silent homage to my beloved Baba and pray to him to bless each one of us along the way with peace and prosperity everywhere.

With Love,
Prajnanananda



Gurudev's Birthday at Miami Ashram

THE NEED OF A TEACHER ON THE PATH OF LOVE

God is the real guru. If that is established, then we should learn. How will God teach us? Are we ready to learn? If we really love God, we will always be ready to follow the directions from God. Just as an instructor is needed to learn anything in life, a teacher is essential in spiritual life.

In the *Bhagavad Gita* Aurjna says,

*karpanya doshopahata
svabhavah
prichhami tvam dharma
sammudha chetah
yacchreyah syannichitam
bruhi tan me
sishyasteham sadhi mam
tvam prapannam*

(*Gita II:7*)

Krishna, I do not know what is good or bad. I am deluded and confused. I am your disciple. I am ready to learn.

How to Choose the Right Teacher

*dve vidye veditavye....
para cai vaparaca
Mundaka I-I-4*

There are two types of knowledge; material sciences and spirituality.

Accordingly there are two types of teachers. The teachers in universities and colleges are intellectuals with sharp minds and good teaching skills. In case of the spiritual teachers, more important than intelligence, is love and purity. A spiritual teacher, who does not have implicit love and purity from the beginning to end, will face difficulties. People are generally attracted to intellectual pursuits but that is not enough. That is why one has to be extra careful in choosing a spiritual teacher. With the teachers in schools and colleges our contact is limited. Most often the bond is of respect rather than love. In spirituality the teacher disciple relationship is very special. The teacher has to be full of love and pure. How can we choose? In olden days the teacher and the student were living together during the study period, which gave ample opportunity to know

each other. That is why Lahiri Mahasaya said; one should live with the guru at least for a month in the year. Ramakrishna Paramahansa said, "See the teacher by day and by night." One may be very attractive and fascinating outwardly but appearances are deceptive. Jesus warned about false teachers. The basic human nature does not change. From the time of the *Vedas*, the Mahabharata, the Ramayana or the *Bible* to modern times the basic nature is the same. People may have become a little more intelligent but still have the qualities of doubt, hatred and jealousy.

The teacher should have a good grasp of the great scriptures to communicate his profound knowledge to his disciples. Besides this spiritual knowledge, the guru should have great self-control and a heart rich with love. The primary essential quality of a spiritual teacher is love. If one has not experienced love within, that person cannot give love. If he is not rich in love, he cannot distribute love. In the *Bible* in the First Letter of John (4 -17) it is said, "God is Love." If the teacher has the realization, he

becomes a lover of the whole universe. He spreads knowledge to the true seekers who have surrendered themselves to him.

One, who experiences God, has seen God. Jesus said to worship God in spirit and truth. When Ramakrishna Paramahansa said to look by day and night, he meant examine every aspect of the teacher. In Kriya Yoga we say a person is influenced by the chakras. The three lower chakras are of money, sex and food. Passion is the lower form of love. From the heart center up -heart, throat and soul center are the higher centers. The soul center is the seat of the guru. Rama, explaining the nine steps of Divine love says, the third step is to sit at the feet of the guru. It means bring your mind to the soul center. From there you can go up or down as needed but first establish yourself in truth and love. Then you can really progress in the path of love. So the teacher is one who remains above in the soul center and does not go below to the emotions of anger, jealousy and temptation. A teacher is one who has experienced love and manifests

that love through every thought, word and action. The disciple is one who is ready to receive that love from the teacher.

In the Taittiriya *Upanishad* the guru while addressing the students at the time of their completion of studies says,

*yani anavatyani tani
sevitani na itarani*

Take with you only what is good and nourishing.

“My children, you have stayed here with me and you have learnt many things. We are all human. The teacher teaches, but if you have not learned in the right way or if you have not understood the teacher in the right way, it could have given you pain sometimes. Leave any negative feelings or pain here and take with you only the positive nourishing things.”

The Guru-disciple relationship is a very critical one. We live in society and think we are intelligent and we know everything. If you know everything then there is no need of going to a guru. If you go to learn something, then be humble with an attitude to learn what is good and beneficial to you. Do not be critical of other

things. What you perceive depends on your mind. Always be in a receptive mood. When Jesus was passing by, there were people who called him a drunkard and a glutton. But the disciples of Jesus who were simple people loved him and learnt more from him than the so-called intelligent and intellectual people.

I do not say that it is not good to be intelligent or critical. But analytical people analyze too much. When one looks at a flower, a botanist may appreciate the floral structure of the flower, a poet experiences the beauty of the flower and a devotee may appreciate the purity of the flower. The botanist analyzing the floral structure may miss the beauty and the purity of the flower. When we look at the lives of great incarnations, prophets and teachers, time and again, we find that most people could not understand them and some have even misunderstood them. If you are not able to rightly understand your teacher pray to God to give you the right understanding. Remember you want truth and love, and pray that there will not be any obstacles in the path of learning.

Even metaphorically if one has to reach God in the fontanel, one has to pass through the *ajná cakrá* the soul center. Jesus said, “Anyone who comes to God has to come with me. I am the way, I am the truth and I am the goal.”

Through self confidence and self control, one progresses in the path of self realization. With the help of the Guru, the

disciple gets up from the slumber of ignorance. The Guru is the guide who leads the disciple with all caution and extreme care. Being aware of the difficulties and possible hazards, the Guru helps the disciples to overcome all the obstacles, step by step.

(From The Path of Love by Paramahansa Prajnanananda)

DATES TO REMEMBER

July – September, 2014

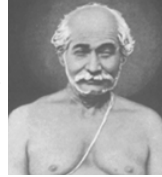
July 12	: Guru Purnima
August 10	: Birthday of Paramahansa Prajnananandaji Maharaj
August 2	: Mahasamadhi of Swami Satyanandaji
August 17	: Janmastami, Birthday of Lord Sri Krishna
August 29	: Ganesh Chatruthi Birthday of Lord Ganesh
September 22	: Miami Ashram Foundation Day
September 24	: Navaratri begins
September 26	: Mahasamadhi of Lahiri Mahashaya
September 30	: Birthday of Lahiri Mahashaya

Teachings of the Masters



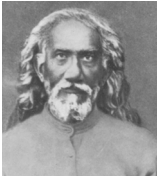
"The worldly man wants to realize God while continuing his daily life. A simple, easy, unostentatious, and highly effective Kriya Yoga is to be taught to him."

Mahavatara Babaji



"Weakness is sin, weakness is death. Rid yourself of all kinds of weakness."

Lahiri Mahasaya



"Control of the senses by Karma Yoga or Kriya Yoga is preferable to indifference to the senses."

Swami Shriyukteshwar

"Strong desire, keeping good company, and practice are three steps for quick spiritual evolution.."

Sanyal Mahasaya

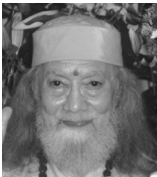


"The more peace you find in meditation, the closer you are to God."

Paramahansa Yogananda

"Although one may have a pressing engagement, if one is able to sit quietly for awhile, one will acquire a great deal of strength."

Swami Satyananda

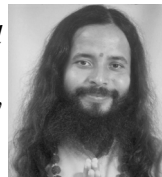


"The spiritual path is just like the edge of a sharp sword. You are to walk every step very cautiously and carefully."

Paramahansa Hariharananda

"Past lives influence this present lifetime and this present lifetime influences the future. Therefore, be careful today and spend every moment in God consciousness."

Paramahansa Prajnanananda



PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY

EMPOWERING THE SELF THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

Jyothi Bathina

I grew up in India and it was a common sight to see beggars on the street, shaking the coffee cans in their hands and rattling the few coins they had gathered in the hopes of gaining more from passersby.

“Please mother,” they would beg. “I haven’t eaten in three days. My children are starving, have mercy and I will be reborn your slave.”

There were children too, in tatters, their noses running and their feet bare as they ran alongside the cars in the scorching sun, little hands reaching up to the open car windows, pleading for a few coins.

When I returned to India as an adult, I would go straight to the currency exchange at the Hyderabad airport and get stacks of 10 rupee and 100 rupee bills. Every time I encountered a beggar I would peel off a note and give it to them, much to their delight and much to the chagrin of my

relatives who thought I was crazy.

“Don’t encourage beggars,” they would reprimand me. “They need to go find some useful work to do.”

Over the years, I am happy to say that there are a lot few beggars on the streets when I visit. In Hyderabad, there are virtually none. Yet, there is still unutterable poverty everywhere you turn. It hits you like a fist to the face as you make the trip from the gleaming new airport to the city, there are shacks and huts and makeshift shelters lining the roads as you get closer to the urban center, casting a gloomy pall over the joy of arrival.

I am overwhelmed with questions. So what has happened to the beggars? How do these people now make their living? Have they found useful occupations? If so, why is poverty still so widespread? While it’s true that every human being needs to have some

useful work to do, how do they prepare for that work? If we shun beggars and refuse to give alms, what are we doing to help them find a means to live?

Perhaps, as an educator, I am biased. But it seems to me the only possible solution is to educate those who are poor and disenfranchised. Long ago, in his work in Brazil with illiterate peasants who were being exploited by their feudal landlords, educator and critical thinker Paulo Freire insisted that the only way we can help the oppressed is by giving them the tools to fight oppression. We cannot fight it for them, nor can the oppressed decide to no longer trample them underfoot. He pointed out that it is the oppressed masses who must liberate not only themselves but those who are oppressing them (Freire, 1974). I always found this argument compelling but rather mystifying. How could those who had no power become so highly empowered that they could change their own circumstances and help those who held them down to live in a less exploitative manner? And how could we help them achieve that power?

Freire goes on to explain that the answer does not lie in giving monetary assistance, or building houses or opening shelters. Such acts of charity, while seemingly beneficial, only continue to maintain the status of oppressor and oppressed. My peeling off notes as I sat in the air-conditioned car on my way to the saree shop, while giving me immense satisfaction and providing the beggars with immediate relief, did nothing to change the power structure. I would continue to be chauffeured to luxury stores and they would continue to line the streets each morning hoping for alms. Between us was the giant gap of opportunity, privilege, and power, what I possessed and they had none of. My crisp ten and hundred rupee notes did nothing to bridge that gap, in fact, they reinforced it.

The only way to truly help another human being, who for reasons of birth or circumstance is deprived of all real power to improve their own lot, is to provide them with an education that helps them acquire that power themselves, through knowledge, discernment, analysis and

application. Not the mere shoving down of information down their throats, litanies of facts and figures that are meaningless and useless in the real world, but true knowledge, which allows them to develop their own voice, their own view and the ability to navigate the world.

On my last trip, we traveled all across South India and meandered by bus through many tiny villages and hamlets. What struck me most forcibly was the children in faded often tattered uniforms, passed down perhaps from sibling to sibling, their hair neatly combed, emerging from every tiny hut and roadside tenement, in village after dusty village in the early hours of the morning. We

passed groups of children walking determinedly with their heavy load of books, often trudging for miles just to get to school. I knew then that there was hope not only for those children but the millions around the world who continued to remain in the shackles of ignorance and oppression. If these little children and many others like them who eagerly attend school each day despite their often meager circumstances, could ignore the growling hunger in their bellies and seek to satisfy instead the hunger for knowledge and opportunity, then they would indeed rescue not only themselves, but as Freire predicted, they would rescue the rest of us as well.



Interfaith Conference FIU

A TRIP TO SOMNATH

*Yatra ganga ca Yamuna ca, yatra prachi saraswati,
yatra someshwaro devah tatra mamamrutam krudhi*

Rigveda Sukta

Somnath is the first among the twelve Jyotirlingas of India. The Pilgrimage to Somnath is considered to be one of the oldest and reference to it is found in ancient texts like Skanda Purana, Srimad Bhagavatam and Shiva Purana. A hymn from Rigveda mentions darshan of Someswara along with great pilgrimages like Ganga, Yamuna and Prachi.

After a long anticipation of wanting to visit Somnath , it finally happened on one of our visits to India. We left for Ahmedabad from Hyderabad. A friend of ours Rahul Parekh in the United States helped us with the contact of his uncle, a trustee of Somnath temple. He was very helpful in planning our trip and had also arranged for a taxi to take us to Somnath from Ahmedabad. Somnath Trust maintains a VIP guest house which is adjacent to the temple complex and also many other guest houses. The accommodation was also arranged in the temple guest house. On arrival at

Ahmedabad airport, we were met by the taxi driver who took us to the trustee's office in Ahmedabad and we met the manager to whom our trip was entrusted. We were treated to a breakfast and from there we took to the road.

This was my first trip to Gujarat and I was amazed at the highways and road conditions which were as good as in any western countries. We also noticed that many foreign companies had their branches in Gujarat and the state looked quite prosperous. We reached Somnath via Rajkot by the evening and checked in to our guest house which was simple but quite comfortable. The person at the desk said the temple would be closing soon and we rushed to the temple since we wanted to have the *darshan* it being a Monday. Monday is considered a special day for Lord Shiva's worship. We reached the temple on time and it was quite a walk going through the many doors of the temple and finally reached the

sanctum sanctorum. The lingam was quite big and decorated beautifully. Security was strict and one could not really go very close to the deity as it was cordoned off. The strict security was as a result of the number of times the temple was vandalized. But we had a good *darshan* and on asking if one could perform the *abhisheka* of the Lord, one of the priests showed a simple technique by which you could pour water on the lingam of Lord Shiva, in the inner temple even standing where you are. There was a tube connecting into the main temple and when you poured water at one end where you are standing that water was transported to be poured on the lingam. It was very exciting as we still could offer water on Lord Shiva on a Monday evening which is considered very auspicious. We came back to the guest house feeling very happy. We were back at the temple early next morning. Though worship is not permitted in the main temple there was provision for miniature lingam from the inner temple to be brought out into the outer hall of the temple and there were priests who would help you perform the *abhisheka* to the

reciting of *rudram* with the *panchamritas*. We signed up for one of those and did the *puja*.

After the *puja* we walked down to the sea shore which is just behind the guest house. It was a great experience to see the vast expanse of the ocean and listen to the wave sounds against the back drop of the grand Somnath temple.

The location of Somnath temple is unique. The temple is built on the shores of Arabian Sea on the West coast of the Indian subcontinent. The temple is situated at such a strategic place, it is said that there is no land in straight line between Somnath seashore all the way to Antarctica.

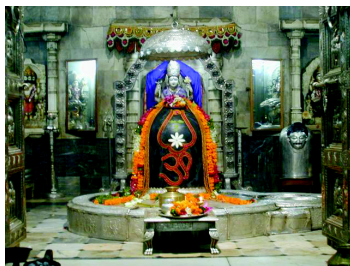
Legend has it that Soma (Moon god) who was relieved from the curse of his father in law by Mahadev (Lord Shiva) built the temple in gratitude. The deity is named Somnath – Lord of the Moon god. Daksha Prajapati cursed moon (his son in law) because of which moon lost his power of light. Moon worshipped Lord Shiva at this place and performed great penance. Pleased with his devotion Lord Shiva relieved him

from the curse of darkness. Mythological traditions say, that Moon had built a golden temple and it was followed by a silver temple by Ravana , a sandal wood temple by Sri Krishna and later a stone temple by king Bhim Dev. The temple has been a source of great devotion and inspiration to millions of Hindus since times immemorial.

The temple has survived six repeated desecrations by Muslim invaders during 11 to 18th century A.D and was reconstructed each time. The 7th (present) temple was built in 1947- 1951. The existence of the temple is a symbol of the reconstructive spirit and cultural unity of our society. It is built in Kailash Mahameru Prasad style. The temple has a *garbha griha* (sanctum sanctorum), *sabhamantap* (court hall), and *Nritya mandap* (dance theater) . The *shikhar* (peak) of the temple is 150 ft high with a *kalasha* on the top.

Besides being a home to the famous Somnath temple, this region of Gujarat is also reconised as the holy site from where Sri Krishna is said to have returned to his real abode at the end of his incarnation on earth. Lord Krishna is said be meditating under a pippal tree when he was accidentally hit by a hunter's arrow mistaking his foot to be a bird. This place is known as Bhalka teerth. After this incidence Lord Krishna is said to have walked a short distance to the confluence of three holy rivers Hiran, Kapila and Saraswati and their meeting the ocean. A gita Mandir is built here with the message of Gita carved on the eighteen marble pillars.the message of the *Gita* is carved on eighteen marble pillars.

After visiting these holy places of pilgrimage we left for our next destination, Dwaraka of Lord Krishna. ***



MYTHS AND METAPHORS

THE HUNDRED YEAR WAR



Once upon a time there was a one-hundred-year war between the *devas* (gods) and the *asuras* (demons). Mahisha was the leader of the *asuras*, and Indra led the *devas*.

Metaphorical Explanation

Consciousness as the *atma* (soul) exists in three states: divinity, humanity, and animality (devilish, asuric, demonic nature).

Divinity (*devah*) — divine people or gods. These beings are described as celestials. *Devah* is derived from the root verb *div*, meaning

“to shine or to be bright,” “to cast or throw,” “to play or sport,” or “to be glad or happy.” Thus, *devas* are those who throw away ignorance and constantly live in knowledge, consciousness, superconsciousness, and wisdom. They accept life as a play or sport and are happy. They are self-luminous, or they remain in the state of divine illumination.

Animality can be called *asuratva*, demonic, devilish, or asuric. *Na surah iti asurah*: “Those who are not noble or

divine.” These are always the enemies who oppose the *devas* (divine ones). *Asyati devam kshipyati iti asurah*: “Those who drive away the *devas* (the good) are known as *asuras*, demons, or devils.” To live in ego, pride, ignorance, and forgetfulness is *asuric*.

Nara (human beings) and *naratva* (human nature) are combinations of the demonic and the divine. In every human being, these two qualities remain in a state of union, compromise, or harmony. One who can take the *asuras* to the Divine and divinity to the *asuras* is a human being. *Nayati iti narah*: “One who is capable of carrying is *nara*, a human being.” Again, *nara* can also be defined as *nrunati prapayati iti*: “One who is able to deliver something is *nara* or human being.” Thus, human beings have the ability to carry and deliver. So each human being has the inherent nature for self-evolution. In every human being there are two fields, the divine and the demonic — *Yajnamaya* and *Karmamaya*. *Yajnamaya* is the art of sacrifice, service, and love with knowledge. *Karmamaya* is the state of

ignorance - *kama* (desire), and *karma* (action) - leading to ego, pride, and materialism.

In every human being, the upper chakras in the upper body comprise a divine kingdom, a higher state of existence. The lower chakras in the lower body constitute a field of lower existence, where the demonic nature (animal qualities, lower propensities) rules. The human state (*nara*) is considered superior because humans have the ability to rise up or descend. The philosophy of Samkhya, as enunciated by sage Kapila, describes these three states. The right to Self-realization is superior for humans (*nara*), moderate for *devas* (celestials, gods, or the divine), and inferior for *asuras* (devilish or demonic). Why does the human being have superior capability? Humans can bring harmony between the two natures. *Devas* are inimical to *asuras*, and *asuras* are the opposite of *devas*. Those who can bring harmony between the two natures are *nara*, human.

The *devas* represent light and knowledge. The *asuras* are ignorance and darkness. Where there is light, there is no darkness. When darkness is

prominent, light or visibility decreases or even disappears. Those who can bring light and darkness together are human beings. Therefore, human life is like the pivot of a compass, between the north and south poles. When human beings give prominence to demonic forces, the kingdom of demons becomes enlarged, and likewise for the divine kingdom. Therefore, the human kingdom is a field of activity, but the divine and asuric kingdoms are fields of enjoyment.

In the Vedic and the Puranic descriptions, the *asuras* are considered the eldest, and the *devas* are the youngest. The Brihadaranayaka Upanishad (1:3:1) says, *tatah kaniyasa eva devah jyayasa asurah*: “The *asuras* are the first born, and the *devas* the next or later born.”

The field of the *asuras* is gross life. As long as the gross field or the gross body is absent, the subtle state of bliss, which is divinity, cannot be experienced. In the gross field there is duality, plurality, and multiplicity. This is the state of *asuras*. Taking a miniature state of bliss and forgetting the

infinite state of bliss and joy is the quality of the *asuras*.

The *devas*, or the divine, represent subtle and spiritual life. It is the state of transcendental experience. One has to rise above the field of gross life to experience divine joy. Because of this, the *asuras* are considered as the first born or the elders and the *devas* the youngest. The *devas* and *asuras* can also be described as *nivritti* (detachment) and *pravritti* (attachment). During human life we are emotionally attached to little things. As a result of our emotions, we experience anger, ego, pride, and other negative qualities. On the other hand, to be detached from worldly possessions is to be attached to the Divine - one with the Divine. That is why the scriptures say, *nivrittih tu mahalabhah*: “Detachment gives the absolute result.”

A seeker trying to achieve a little name and fame, or worldly possessions, is embracing the Divine Mother only momentarily, not out of knowledge or love, but out of ignorance. At some point, a realization occurs that transforms a seeker's life. The seeker no longer becomes

attached to worldly things, but is more attracted to the Divine Mother through love, devotion, prayer, and meditation, and wants to be united with the Divine Mother. At that time, every moment of sense enjoyment and pleasure becomes tasteless, bitter, and even poisonous.

O Seeker! The worldly objects of attachment are not bondage, rather bondage arises from an ignorant attitude. Change your perception; transform your outlook. Seek the Divine Mother in anything and everything. Love, love, and love. Cry out with the pain of separation as a child cries to be with its mother. Surely, the Divine Mother will embrace you with her all-encompassing arms, lifting you up to her vast bosom of love and union.

Devasuram abhud yuddham: “A battle took place between the *devas* and *asuras*.” Every human being carries the impression of wrong karma (our past actions), which creates a great deal of trouble in life. Our past arises in the form of anger, ego, pride, and other such tendencies. Temptation and desire for enjoyment pull us toward

worldly life. These are the *asuras* in each human being. On the other hand, good deeds of the past are carried as favorable impressions, as they are the result of prayer and meditation. These are the *devas*. Good impressions from past actions inspire a person to proceed towards God-realization.

The sixteenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita (verses 1–4) explains, elaborately, the yoga of the divine and demonic natures:

“Absolute fearlessness, perfect purity of mind, constant fixation in the yoga of meditation for the sake of Self-realization, charity, self-restraint, sacrifice, study and teaching of the scriptures, austerity, rectitude (uprighteousness), non-violence, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, calm, aversion to fault-finding, compassion toward all beings, freedom from desire, gentleness, modesty, and absence of fickleness, vigor, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, freedom from malice, and freedom from pride, these are the marks of those born with divine qualities, godly gifts. O Partha (Arjuna)! Hypocrisy (fraud, deceit), arrogance, pride,

anger, harshness, and ignorance are the marks of those born with a demonic nature.”

The Chhandogya Upanishad, (1:2:1) describes demons and the divine. *Devasura ha vai samyetira*: “The *devas* and the *asuras* had a war.” Shri Adi Shankara, while commenting upon this mantra, said:

Devasurah, the gods and the demons: The word *deva* is derived from the root *div* in the sense of shining. So it means the functions of the organs, which are illumined by the scriptures. The *asuras* are verily the normal, unilluminated (ignorant) activities of the organs; opposite to them (the *devas*) because they remain engrossed in the enjoyment of their own respective lives, i.e., in (their respective) diverse objects and vital functions.

In every human body, during each human life, the battle between good and evil between the *devas* and the *asuras* has been taking place since time immemorial. In every human being, these two groups of opposite qualities exist. The battle between these two rival forces can be clearly seen in the Bhagavad Gita, the

Chhandogya Upanishad, the teachings of Shri Adi Shankara, and others. We understand the message of the war between the *devas* and the *asuras*. The *devas* and *asuras* are described elaborately. The narration is so vivid that they appear to be two different groups of entities, with special characters and behaviors as elder and younger brothers.

Just as human beings have three bodies - gross, astral, and causal - in creation there are three states of existence - physical, astral, and causal. Among human beings you can easily find someone who is very divine, noble, and humble, while another is aggressive, stubborn, and egotistical. Metaphorically, we should consider all three states to be within ourselves. Shri Lahiri Mahasaya said, *ke bolere swarga narak ke balore bahudur manusher madhye swarga narak manusher majhe sur-asur*: “Who is saying that heaven and hell are far away; heaven and hell as well as the *devas* (divine) and the *asuras* (demons) are within every human being.”

The mantra declares, *mahisha asuranam adhipte*:

“Mahisha is the leader of the *asuras*.” In Sanskrit, *mahisha* has many meanings:

1. buffalo,
2. the carrier of Yama, the lord of death,
3. *mahamti pujayati devam anena iti*: “one who adores and worships the celestials,” or
4. anger, impurities, sinful nature, power hungry, or crazy.

Mahisha, as described in the Puranas, is a half-human arising from a buffalo. *Mahishasura* represents the rajasic nature. The Bhagavad Gita (3:37) says:

“Passionate desire and anger are the vital enemies of a God-realized person. Passion and anger originate from *rajas* (actions with attachment to wealth, sensual pleasure, pomp, and grandeur). Passion remains always unfulfilled, and anger is a vicious enemy; these are the vital, sinful enemies in this world.”

M a h i s h a s u r a , representing rajasic qualities, is full of anger, passion, ego, and other such negativities. In the ritualistic worship of the Divine Mother, there is a description

of sacrifice. The buffalo is sacrificed, which represents *kama* (desires and passion). (For an elaborate description, see the *Jnana Sankalini Tantra*.)

The three episodes of the Chandi elucidate the triple qualities of nature. The first episode (*Prathama Charitra*) portrays *sattva* (calmness, purity), the middle episode (*Madhyama Charitra*) depicts *rajas* (restless, passionate nature), and the final episode (*Uttara Charitra*) renders *tamas* (inactivity, lethargy, rest).

“I am alone and I will be many” is a manifestation of the rajasic nature. Every human mind is filled with an extroverted nature that desires multiplicity, acquisition, and possession, in order to show strength, power, and authority over others. As described in the Bhagavad Gita, the qualities of the demonic nature are *rajas*. When an individual is overpowered by these qualities, it is a gross manifestation of *rajas*. Mahishasura, in the form of rajasic qualities, is the leader of the *asuras*.

Devanam cha purandara: “Purandara (Indra) is the leader of the *devas*.” As

described, the extroverted state of the rajasic qualities is the asuric nature, led by Mahisha. In the same way the introverted state of the rajasic qualities is the *devas*, the divine qualities, and Purandara is their leader. Purandara has many names, which include the names Indra and Sahasraksha. The name, “Purandara,” is derived in different ways:

Arinam puram darayati iti: “One who destroys the cities or the dominion of the enemies is *purandara*.”

Puram nagaram darayati iti: “One who helps to destroy (body consciousness) is *purandara*.”

In the Bhagavad Gita (5:13), the body is the city of nine doors. Purandara, eliminating the extroverted state, enables the seeker to rest in the lap of the Divine Mother with peace, bliss, and joy. He is also called Indra, who sees everything with detachment, *idam drashta iti indrah*: “Those who can see everything as different from themselves.” Indra can also be understood as *indati iti-idi paramaiswarye-ran*: “He is the lord of all prosperity.” He is the ruler. He is Sahasraksha,

someone who can only perceive divinity from every point of view. Purandara is the leader of the *devas* and divine qualities, such as fearlessness, purity, and other such traits. All these divine qualities are the followers of Purandara.

The extroverted triple qualities of nature have the nature of enjoyment and attachment, and the introverted aspect of the triple qualities manifests detachment and calm. The devilish, demonic forces headed by Mahisha and the divine and noble qualities led by Purandara are trying to diminish and subdue each other by eliminating the other’s power, strength, and ability. Extroverted attachment, involvement, and emotion are trying to overpower introverted detachment, compassion, and devotion, and vice versa. This struggle transpires in the life of every human being, during every moment, during every stage of life. Unfortunately, most human beings live with instinct and emotion and cannot recognize this troublesome war continuously raging within.

Blessed are those who perceive that this war constantly rules their inner lives. This

realization is possible due to accumulated good deeds and the grace of God and gurus. All impressions from the past catalyze tumultuous waves of desire in the mind — desire for enjoyment, pleasure, possession, and power. These passions divert the seeker from acquiring the loving lap of the Divine Mother. Fearlessness, purity of mind and the yoga of knowledge comprise the army of the divine kingdom. These divine qualities help us regain the lost divine kingdom and the unification with the Divine Mother. These two opposing forces are symbolically called *devas* and *asuras*.

Purnam abdashatam: “For complete one hundred years.” The battle between the *devas*, headed by Purandara, and the *asuras*, led by Mahisha, took place for one hundred years. This concept of one hundred years is a symbol, a myth, and a metaphor. It is said in the scriptures, *shatam vai purushanam ayuh:* “The life span of human beings is one hundred years.” In the Isha Upanishad (mantra 2), it is revealed to the rishi:

“Always performing works here, one should wish to

live for one hundred years. For a person such as you (who wants to live thus), there is no way other than this, whereby karma (or deed) may not cling to you.”

The Vedic mantras say, *pashyema sharadam shatam:* “Let me enjoy one hundred autumns.” Sage Bhartruhari, in his one hundred verses on detachment, the Vairagya Shatakam (verse 95), beautifully described the human life span, *ayuh varsha-shatam nrinam parinitam:* “Every human being has a limited life of a hundred years.” In Vedic Astrology, two concepts are narrated, *vimshottari* and *ashtottari* (life spans of 120 years and 108 years). Through a yogic lifestyle, we can enhance the length of human life. There are exceptions, but these cases do not contradict the Vedic declaration of one hundred years.

Living one hundred years symbolizes a complete human life. Very rarely someone is aware of the inner war for truth from early childhood, because ordinarily, most people spend their lives carelessly. In the same verse, Sage Bhartruhari, declared:

During the limited span of human life, night or sleeping steals half of it. For the other half, childhood and old age account for a quarter. The rest of life is filled with various kinds of diseases, misery, taking care of others, quarrel, conflict, and miserable conditions. Life is restless and insecure, as a stream of water. Where is the real joy?

Shri Adi Shankara, in Bhaja Govindam (verse 7), emphatically declared:

“The child is busy in play. Youths are busy in love and pleasure. Old people are overburdened with worries. No one is loving God sincerely.”

Therefore, in one human life, how long are we conscious of the battle between the *devas* and the *asuras* taking place within us? In the Bhagavad Gita (7:19), the Lord stated, *bahunam janmanam ante jnanavan mam prapadyate*: “After many lives or births, a person of knowledge takes

refuge in Me.” After many lives, we become people of knowledge. Regarding the total population of human beings, how many are experiencing the inner torture and turmoil of the demons? Eat, drink, and be merry — this is the mantra of many. Food, sleep, fear, and procreation are the common features of animals and most humans.

A complete one hundred years also symbolizes a long span of time. Those who recognize the inner battle are real human beings, real seekers, who realize the futility of lives of pleasure and the significance of divine grace.

O Seeker! Be a human being. Look at yourself with eyes open. How you have been exploited by the tyrannical rule of demonic forces of pleasure, enjoyment, misery, vanity, and pride. Stand up; be strong. Pray to the Divine Mother. Seek her grace. Finish the battle with your victory over darkness.

THE YOGA SUTRA OF PATANJALI

Sutra 9

*sabdamnananupati
vastusunyo vikalpah ||9||*

When words do not correspond to reality, verbal delusion arises [is created].

Commentary by Shri Lahiri Mahasaya

The knowledge arising out of sound, etc, is justified with words, but without real objects. Such experience is called *vikalpa* (verbal delusion), or imagination alone.

Metaphorical Explanation

Verbal delusion is possible when words and reality are not one. Every object, emotion, or thought corresponds to a word. For example, “potato” is a word as well as an object. When the word potato is uttered, first the idea comes as an image; then it can be matched with a corresponding object called a potato, as well as with any emotion or thought. However, if there is no correlation between a word and an object, then people enter into a state

of imagination. Imagination may not always be accurate.

In spiritual life, words such as “infinite, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, immortal, realization and eternity” are widely used. These subjective terms are not able to indicate the real meaning. Through these words, in the practical world, people have theoretical knowledge, which is called *vikalpa*. Through such language, one gains some apparent knowledge, but it is not real knowledge.

In *viparyaya* (wrong inference), as described in the previous sutra, there is an amalgamation of two non-identical things, such as seeing a snake in the rope at twilight. Here the rope is not seen as a rope; rather it is perceived as a snake. This is wrong inference. But *vikalpa* (verbal delusion) is different from *viparyaya* (wrong inference); it falsely offers knowledge that is not possible to comprehend through the mind.

Most people have bookish knowledge. Yet reading geography books cannot give the real experience of a place; similarly, by reading spiritual books, one cannot get inner experience. Knowledge, consciousness, super consciousness, cosmic consciousness, and wisdom are different levels of inner awakening and realization. This state of experience comes when one goes beyond the periphery of the inner instruments.

In deep meditation, words disappear. With the disappearance of language, there is dissolution of the world. Word and world are correlated. With words, there is a

corresponding imaginary state of one's own perception. Meditation is not perception or conception; it is realization. To awaken into the realm of knowledge, to experience one's own Self is the purpose of all spiritual practice and self-discipline.

O Seeker! Be practical. Too much study of books and others' experiences will not give you the taste of reality, rather it will make you more confused. An ounce of practice is better than tons of theories. So practice a life of self-discipline, prayer, and meditation. This will give you the taste of reality.



Paramahansa
Prajnanananda at Gurudev's
Birthday, Miami Ashram

VALUABLE VOLUMES



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

THE PERFECT FAMILY (From *THE UNIVERSE WITHIN*)

Bhartruhari, a king, poet, and yogi of India once asked: Oh my friend, if a man has a family with patience as the father, forgiveness as the mother, continuous peace as the wife, truthfulness as the son, compassion as a sister and mind control as the brother, whose bed is the Earth, whose clothes are the infinity of space and whose food is the nectar of knowledge, where is the cause for fear? (*Vairagya Satakam*). Let us examine the qualities of a perfect family, one by one, and see how we can adopt them as our own.

Patience as the Father

To work with love without being concerned about the result is patience. Sound decisions, sound judgment, and sound thinking are all born of patience. Those who are patient

can think calmly and make the right choices. Those who are impatient are restless and uncertain, often making hasty decisions that lead to unnecessary grief. When faced with a major problem, we tend to get very agitated and depressed even before we analyze the problem and understand its nature. If we approach each circumstance slowly and with patience, we will almost always make the right decision. Patience brings tolerance and fortitude.

Forgiveness as the Mother

Forgiveness is the source for kindness and compassion to our fellow man. Like a mother, we should be able to give to and forgive those around us. There is an episode from the life of Buddha which illustrates the nature of true forgiveness.

Once Buddha was sitting under a tree in a village, giving a discourse. An enraged person approached him and started calling him a hypocrite and other vile names. When Buddha did not respond, he became angrier and spat on his face. Buddha quietly wiped his face and continued his discourse. Ananda, who was a disciple, asked him “That man abused you wrongly and you did not react. Are you a stone statue?” Buddha just smiled and continued his discourse.

The person who abused him later regretted his action and went back to Buddha to apologize. Not finding Buddha, he went in search of him to the next village where Buddha was discoursing under another tree. He bowed at his feet and asked for forgiveness. Buddha, who did not even remember the incident, asked him the details. When the man reminded him of what had happened, Buddha replied, “We are no longer in that village or under that tree. Why do you still carry that memory? I have forgotten it long ago.”

Like that man, most of us tend to carry around a lot of past burdens, which make our

present miserable. Forgiveness eases our burdens, ridding us of the hatred, the anger, the spite and the resentment that we carry on our shoulders. Having forgiven, we are free to aspire to greater things without the past holding us down.

Peace as the Spouse

Peace is the state of calmness in every situation. When we are wedded to peace, there can be no conflict in our lives. People marry for constant companionship of the spouse but mostly end up spending very little time together, which causes unhappiness in married life. The expected happiness out of marriage will be lost if the vow of companionship is not kept up. We need to all make the vow of lifelong companionship with lasting peace. In sickness and in health, for better or for worse, for richer, for poorer, we need to keep peace in our lives under all circumstances. When there is peace in the mind, it reflects and radiates peace everywhere.

Buddha was begging for food. One day a lady was calling him names and ridiculing him for begging. Buddha patiently bore all her insults and

did not reply. Later the lady repented at her folly and came to offer alms to him. Buddha asked, "If I do not accept your offer what would happen?" The lady replied, "I will take it back." With a very peaceful smile Buddha said, "If I don't accept all your previous accusations will you take them back?"

Truth as the Child

Every word we utter is our child. Sound is born from the mouth. We give birth to every thought, word and action we perform. When we realize the importance of our creations, we will make sure every thought, word, and action is true in spirit and in action. If there is no correlation in thought word and deed there will be an inner conflict.

Truth is speech that is free from falsehood and does not hurt others and is what exists. Truth should be expressed in such away as not to hurt others. The way of speaking is also as important as what is spoken. To be truthful in thought word and deed, we should have a proper understanding of things and speak what we think without hurting the feelings of others.

The truth you speak should also be for the good of others. Mahatma Gandhi is a shining example of one who upheld the value of truth throughout his life.

God is Truth. When one lives in God conscious thoughts seeing the presence of God everywhere there will be no room for false hood in any aspect of life.

Compassion as the Sister

Our every action should reflect compassion for others. In order to have compassion, we need to put ourselves in the other person's place, to see life from their perspective and to understand their needs and outlook. Compassion requires that we emerge from our narrow shell and expand our love to those beyond our immediate circle. We live in this world among people of many different attitudes, behavior and expectations. Live intelligently and tactfully with mental maturity and emotional balance. Compassion comes by understanding human nature and relationships. Be objective about the behavior of others. If we understand the circumstances and reason for a certain behavior we can be more compassionate. When a

child jumps on the lap of the mother while playing even if it hurts, the mother accepts it compassionately as play.

Love gives and forgives. Selfishness gets and forgets. Jesus is the ultimate example of compassion as he prayed for the people who crucified him.

Controlled Mind as the Brother

Be the master of your mind, not the slave. Keep the mind under control, without letting the mind control you. The mind can be a wonderful servant but a terrible master. The human mind is like a piece of cloth. To keep your clothes clean, you have to avoid sitting in a dirty place. If your surroundings are not conducive to spirituality and progress, then change them. If you have no escape, then be present physically, but mentally detach yourself and stay with the divinity inside. Wash the cloth of the mind regularly with the water of love. Regular spiritual practice is necessary. Then the mind will be like a loving and loyal brother you can count on.

In Indian mythology, there is an episode of a son and a father. The father is a

great scholar, a man of wisdom and the son is an equally intelligent, young celibate leading a strict disciplined life. The father directs the son to go to a guru to learn more about spiritual disciplines. When the son asks to which guru he should go, the father replies that he should go to a certain king to learn from him. The son is surprised that a *brahmacari* like him should go to a king to learn about spirituality. With some hesitation, he follows the instructions of his father and goes to the king. When he reaches the king's palace, he does not get permission for three days to see the king, and is not well attended to. But he waits patiently. Finally the king called him in and asked the purpose of his visit.

At the time, the king is not completely dressed and beautiful girls are massaging his body. The young *brahmacari* thinks "How can this man be my Guru and what spirituality can he teach me? Why did my father send me here?" His thoughts are interrupted by the king with the question, "Did your father send you here to meditate and know more about spiritual life?" He says yes. The king then asks him if he can first

fulfill a task for him to which the young man agrees.

The king gives him a pot full to the brim with oil and asks him to go around the palace with it and come back to him. The king arranges to have many distractions like music and dancing, on the way around the palace. After some time the young *brahmacari* comes back to the king with the pot of oil. The king asks him, "Did any oil spill?". The young man says no. Then the king asks him, "Did you see anything on your way?" He says no. The king says, "There was so much music and dance on the way. Did you not notice it?" The young man says, "My attention was only on the pot of oil. If I got distracted the oil would have spilled. My whole concentration was only on the pot". Then the king says, "My child, you were not happy to see me in these surroundings. But just as you had your attention fully focused on the pot of oil without being disturbed by the song or dance, I have my attention focused only on God and on nothing else".

After that the young *brahmacari* stays with the king for some time as his disciple

and practices spirituality and then leaves the palace with due respect to the king. This young man was Suka, his father was sage Vyasa, the author of the Bhagavad Gita, Mahabharata and many other scriptures. The king was Janaka. I tell this story to point out that spirituality is not the monopoly of monks or a certain group of people but is for each and every one.

The Earth as a Bed

When a person dies he is buried in the earth. We use comforters, quilts and blankets to cover our body to be comfortable. The blanket of Earth has always been holding and comforting us. We are born on the earth, play on earth and again leave this body on earth. Wherever you sleep, whether on a comfortable bed or on the hard floor, remember it is earth. Whether it is a beggar's body or a king's body it goes to the burial ground at the end. In German the word for burial ground is 'friedhof' which means home of peace. Sleep in the lap of God with the blanket of god consciousness.

Space as the Garment

The frail human body needs clothing to cover and protect it. The physical body

and the clothes made from the earth are of limited existence. If once we realize we are not just little human beings but perceive ourselves as the formless infinite what clothes can cover us? All space is the garment of the Infinite.

Wisdom as Food

There is food for the body, food for the mind and food for the soul. Food for the body is the food we eat to sustain the physical body. The mind can be nourished by good thoughts and study of scriptures and food for the spirit is meditation and wisdom. Knowledge gathered from outside from external sources when applied intelligently leads to wisdom, the

super or the cosmic conscious state. Wisdom is the real food that a yogi lives on. Drink the nectar of wisdom every day as your food. Knowledge is a great purifier and a source of energy. Ignorance causes fear and makes the person weak. Knowledge makes a person strong and enables him to experience the truth. You need the knowledge of the self to realize that you are not the body, and you are only playing through the body and the *chakras*. If we as individuals were to cultivate a family with each of these qualities, we would surely achieve the fearless state of absolute peace and happiness.



Hong Kong Retreat

SHANTI OR PEACE

(From *MYSTICISM OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS*)

Why do people chant *shanti* three times? *Shanti* means “let there be peace.” *Amen* and *n* are the same word. *Shanti* comes from *sham*, and it means “auspiciousness,” “goodness,” and “peace.” Peace comes through good life, good thought, good talk, and good activities. So when we live a life of goodness, we are not far away from God or Divinity. That is the way to peace. And to live a good life we need regular prayer, meditation, and a life of consciousness, eliminating negative qualities. In Vedic prayer, there are quite a few peace invocations. In the conclusions to many ceremonies, people chant *om shantih, shantih, shantih*, three times.

Why three times? Every person is suffering from three types of afflictions and miseries. Such afflictions come from sources in the environment, both from nature and from other humans; afflictions also come from within the human mind.

Some misery comes from outer sources like storms, hurricanes, floods, lightning, and

earthquakes. Afflictions come from the environment. Even when you want to meditate, maybe a mosquito might create trouble. Misery also comes from people with wrong ideas, wrong thought. And misery comes to us from within ourselves. So let there be peace in the environment and peace within. To have peace in the mind and to be free from three afflictions, we chant *shantih, shantih, shantih*.

We also say *shanti* three times to have peace in the gross, astral, and causal bodies. We chant peace three times to bring peace in our personal life, peace in the family, and peace in the whole world. Chanting peace three times also speaks of past, present and future. “I had peace in the past, I am cultivating peace at present, I will have peace in future, because peace is my real nature.” Chanting peace brings peace in your own life, peace everywhere. Those who are peaceful can achieve all-round success and full development. Do not forget your own peace.

STORIES TO LIVE BY

THE BIGGER SACRIFICE

There once was a holy man, a very beautiful humble person, who had absolutely no possessions. Many people came to see him and he always made himself available to them, talking to them with love and giving them spiritual advice if they asked for it. His name and reputation spread among the towns people, and it also reached the king. The king, wanting to meet him, paid him a visit and was charmed by his simple lifestyle and talk. When their conversation ended, the king decided to accept him as his guru.

One day as they were having a discussion, the king said to the holy man, "You are so great. You have renounced everything to serve the people and help their spiritual progress. One can truly say that you have made a huge sacrifice and your power of renunciation is really immense."

The holy man replied, "That is not true. You have renounced much more than I ever did."

"What do you mean?" asked the king. "I still have a kingdom, my power, and my many subjects. It is you who have given up everything."

"Yes I did give up a few comforts, family, house, and some possessions, but look what I got in return. Consider for a moment what I gained."

"You have gained extreme love, joy, and happiness, and above all, you have gained God-realization, which is the highest gain," said the king.

"But you, dear King," said the monk, "have renounced your love, joy, and even God, in order to be a king and have some little earthly power. Truly yours is a greater sacrifice."

Reflection

We should know the value of what we renounce and what we receive in return, and when we sacrifice in order to gain. Renunciation done with the right attitude is invaluable.

ATMA-VIDYA PURSUING SELF-KNOWLEDGE KAIVALYOPANISHAD

Mantra 16

*sa eva maya parimohitātma
sariram asthaya karoti sarvaā
stri anna panadi vicitra bhogaih
sa eva jagrit paritriptimeti*

Meanings

*sa-he, eva-herewith,
maya- confusion,
parimohitātma- deluded self
sariram-body asthaya-
identifying with, karoti-does,
sarvah-everything stri-
woman, anna-food, panadi-
drink etc, vicitra- various
bhogaih- enjoyments, sa-he
eva- herewith, jagrit –
wakeful state, paritriptimeti-
derives satisfaction*

Substance

He herewith completely deluded by *maya* and identifying with the body is doing all actions. In the wakeful state he is deriving satisfaction from different enjoyments such as physical pleasure, food and drinks

Commentary

Freedom is not something that one will achieve

after death. Freedom is not a place to which you go after death. Bliss is not something you experience after leaving the body. The state of freedom, peace, bliss and joy should be experienced here and now, living in this world with this body. If one does meditation according to the instructions of the teacher one will come to a stage of awareness to watch how this play of world is going on.

The rishi is describing the play of the world. What is *maya*? *ma* is no and *ya* is yes –yes and no is the state of confusion and it is *maya*. People have a wrong understanding of *maya*. Thinking you are in bondage is *maya*. In the Svetasvatara Upanishad it is said,

*sa maya palini shakti
srusti samhara karini* — that

maya is the energy that continues the worldly play of creation and dissolution

In the Gita Lord Krishna describes *maya* as

daivi hi yesa guna mayi mama maya duratyaya – My divine *maya* is difficult to surpass.

Once Narada requested Lord Vishnu to show him what *maya* is. Vishnu said come with me, and took him to a lake and asked him to go and take a dip in the waters. When Narada did that and got up from the water, he had lost all his past memory and was transformed into a beautiful lady. Just at that time a king who was on a hunting trip stopped by and fell in love with this beautiful lady and married her. They had a few children and lived very happily for a long time. Then a neighboring king attacked this kingdom and many of Narada's children were killed. Narada who was heartbroken was lamenting sitting near the dead bodies. One old man approached him and consoled him telling him about the impermanence of life and how nothing was permanent in the world. He pointed out to a lake nearby and said, "Go and take

a bath in that holy lake and your mind will be peaceful." Narada regained his form and found Krishna standing by the lake as before. He approached him and relating his experience said the memory of it was so strong that he was still upset about his children. This is the veiling power of *maya*.

sa eva maya parimohitatma –

One who is not in truth will be in delusion. What a person, who is not in truth and is in delusion does is described in this mantra. *mohita* comes from the word *moha* that means deluded and *pari mohita* means completely deluded. One who is in *maya* cannot have a clear decision. The person who is deluded because of *maya* identifies himself with the body or associating with the body does everything. He is engrossed in various apparently colorful enjoyments such as physical pleasure, food and drinks in the wakeful state to derive happiness. A musk deer runs around searching for the fragrance, which is coming from itself. Similarly under the veil of *maya*, a person searches for happiness outside not knowing it is within him. ***

AROUND THE WORLD

INDIA

Prajnana Mission

Holi at Balashram

Baba Prajnananandaji along with the other monks of the mission was present for the annual Holi celebrations at Balashram where 400 students of the school participated in the festivities of the color festival having him in their midst. There was music and dancing and little children dressed up as Radha and Krishna specially stole the show.

Ravenshaw Talk

Baba Prajnananandaji spoke at the Seminar on National Integrity organized by the Student Welfare Forum of Ravenshaw University in the month of March.

Goseva Jagaran Yatra

The third part of the Go Seva Jagaran Yatra was completed successfully by Baba Prajnananandaji. Some of the places included Brahmapuri, Bhavani Patna and Shabri Khetra. The welcome was great and the programs successful at every place. Baba had visited the Gupteshwar

Mahadev site sixty Km from Jeypore and also the Jagannath temple at Shabri Khetra during this trip

Annual Day Celebrations of Bhishindipur Vidyashram and Yuktashram

Swami Shuddhananda Giri and other monks of Prajnana Mission were present for our Bhishindipur and Yuktashram school celebrations. The program included inspiring talks by the monks and a cultural program by the school children.

Initiation and meditation programs were held at Habibpur, Allahabad and Pune during the months of Apr- July. There were also retreats at Uttara Kashi in the months of May and June.

AMERICAS

Higher Kriya Retreat, April 12 - 17

The higher kriya retreat at the Mother Center was well attended from national and international participants who were initiated into Higher Kriyas and deepened their practice with Atmavidyanandaji and other yogacharyas.

The Annual Midwest retreat was held from April 24 - 27 at the Gurukulam.

Special Event – 40th Anniversary of Gurudev's Journey to the West

This year we are celebrating the special event of arrival in the west 40 years ago and several special programs are held in this connection.

May 21, 6-9.30 PM

An Interfaith conference was held at Florida International University, Miami. The theme for the dialogue was "Love and Compassion is our True Nature." The event was hosted by Kriya Yoga Institute and FIU's program in study of spirituality.

Paramahansa Prajnananandaji participated along with other prominent leaders of many faiths – Buddhist, Islam, Christian, Jain and Jewish. The panel included Arun Gandhi, the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and founder of MK Gandhi Institute.

May 22, 5- 9.30 P.M

"One world Family: Uniting the world through Compassion", was the theme for another interfaith conference at Sanctuary of Unity, Fort Lauderdale.

The program started with Paramahansa Prajnanananda's talk about the Journey of Love and Compassion that explains the 40th Anniversary Celebrations. This was followed by presentations by spiritual leaders, and question and answer sessions. The program concluded with Paramahamsaji's closing address.

May 23- 27 Gurudev's Birthday Program,

Our beloved Gurudev, Baba Hariharanandaji's birthday was celebrated at the Miami ashram in the divine presence of Baba Prajnananandaji and several acharyas, brahmacharis, monks and other guests. The five day seminar was one of great festivity, with guided meditations, discourses, question and answer sessions, cultural programs and devotional singing.. Many long time disciples of Gurudev shared their experiences with the great Master.

EUROPE

May 30 - June 4

Vienna Ashram celebrated the 40th Anniversary of Gurudev coming to West in the divine presence of Baba Prajnananandaji. ***



Interfaith Conference at Unity

Visit our web site:

[www. prajnanamission.org](http://www.prajnanamission.org)

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