

# Sthita Prajna



## Guru Vandana

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

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

Guru Gita verse 100

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# CONTENTS

**VOLUME 12**

**ISSUE 4**

<b>Sub</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
• GURU VANDANA	3
• EDITORIAL	5
• MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER	6
• PRAJNANAVANI – A LIFE OF COMPASSION	10
• THE QUALITIES OF WISDOM	15
• BIRTHDAY OF PARAMAHAMSA.....	18
• PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY	20
• TEACHINGS OF THE MASTERS	22
• MYTHS AND METAPHORS DEVI MAHATMYA	23
• DATES TO REMEMBER	29
• YOGASUTRA OF PATANJALI	30
• VALUABLE VOLUMES	
PRACTICE OF MEDITATION	33
MYSTICISM OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS	40
• STORIES TO LIVE BY	
THE BEAUTIFUL HEART OF ABRAHAM...	41
• ATMA-VIDYA – PURSUING SELF-KNOWLEDGE	42
• UJJAIN AND INDORE	44
• PRAJNANA MISSION – SPECIAL EVENTS	51
• AROUND THE WORLD	57

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## FROM THE EDITORS :

*“Whatever comes from guru is direct message of God for which Guru is the medium.”*

***Paramahamsa Prajnanananda***

In this issue “Message of the Master” talks of the relationship between the guru and the disciple being eternal. Guru is responsible for his disciples until they attain moksha (liberation).

Prajnanavani talks of Compassion as a symbol of human evolution in spirit and consciousness and how compassion beautifies creation in a harmonious manner

Devi Mahatmaya elaborates on some verses of Devi Suktam with an enlightening commentary by Baba Prajnananandaji.

Kaivalya Upanishad our series on Self Knowledge Brahman as the illumining or the knowing principle in the wakeful, dream and deep sleep states.

Relevant excerpts from of Paramahamsa Prajnanananda’s “The Universe Within” elaborates on the practice and benefits of meditation and where and how to meditate.

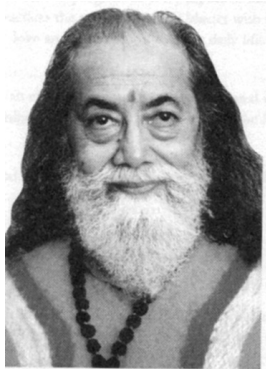
Yoga Sutra of Patanjali comments on Sleep being the wave of thought corresponding to nothingness. In deep sleep, although there is no knowledge of any objects, still one has the experience that it was a deep sleep.

We bring you news of special events at the Gurukulam, Guru Purnima celebrations, the Birthday celebrations of Guruji, and the Kriya activities of Prajnana Mission worldwide. Hope you enjoy this issue and those to come.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

## THE ROLE OF GURU



A guru, or preceptor, is indispensable for any spiritual practice. The scriptures say that the guru is Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the preserver; and Shiva, the destroyer. The guru creates new *samaskaras*, the longing for *moksha* (liberation). The guru preserves the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of the disciple, and destroys the effects of bad karma and base desires and leads the disciple towards light. The guru is God in His manifest and personal aspect. Gu means the Invisible (i.e., God), while *ru* means the visible. The Invisible uses the visible as its instrument. The relationship between the guru and the disciple is eternal. He is responsible for his disciples until they attain *moksha* (liberation).

Indian culture puts special emphasis on the guru-disciple relationship. The would-be disciple seeks access to the guru through humility, love, and service. The real guru is one who has attained Self-realization, which means complete mastery over the pulseless and breathless state ( i.e., *Samadhi*). Only then will one be fit for the role of a guru, not because one speaks elegantly or has a large following. If a person sincerely seeks enlightenment, God sees that he gets a true guru. Most people fail to find the Truth because they become lost in the forest of theology and travel from one thicket of theory to another. True religious principles are found in good books, but their full meaning cannot be grasped until their manifestation is seen in the life of a guru. Such an enlightened person can help his disciples, provided the latter are attuned to him. After that, the physical presence of the master is not necessary for guidance. The real guru is God himself. The human guru is only His instrument or agent.

The aspirant who seeks to know God must first rise above the consciousness of the body and material existence. By the practice of the great yogic method discovered by the sages of India, we can easily rise above the limited consciousness of the body. We can then feel our identity with God. We can feel that our own existence is spirit. We are the beginning and end of all. We can feel that we work through all hands and think through all minds, that our hearts throb through all hearts. We will feel our presence in everything and perceive that the stars are but the ornaments of our vast body. We are spreading over the stars, twinkling through their luminosity and creation is floating on the ocean of eternal existence.

Body and mind are but two forms of spirit. Spirit manifested as matter is still spirit. The spiritual tradition of India teaches how to realize that this spirit is living within us. The divine memory of the soul has to be awakened, as it has forgotten its real nature due to the bondage of body and matter. Then we will find that we are God, everything is God, and nothing exists but God. This is the treasure of India that can

be acquired by the technique of Kriya Yoga. The profound and ultimate truth will be realized.

All true gurus are alive, regardless of whether they have retained their physical forms or not. In the beginning of the spiritual search, we may have many teachers, but there can be only one guru. They are 'disciples' who come to the guru for an eternal relationship. The guru is the living embodiment of spiritual truth. When the devotee's heart has been purified, God sends the guru; it is easier to follow a living embodiment of Truth than to live on abstractions. No book, however noble, can substitute for the guru. The question is, how to know who is fit for the role of guru in the path of Self-realization. Shri Shankara says, "A real teacher is he who is well-versed in the Vedas, sinless, unsmitten by desire, and the best among the knower's of Brahman, who has withdrawn himself into Brahman, is calm like fire that has consumed its fuel, who is a boundless reservoir of mercy (i.e., ineffable and a friend of all good people that prostrate themselves before him)" (Viveka Chudamani 33).

In Bhagavad Gita (2:56) says that the person whose mind remains unperturbed in sorrow, whose thirst for pleasure has altogether disappeared and who is free from passion, fear, and anger is of stable mind. A liberated sage is free from desire, selfishness, egoism, “I-ness,” attachment, greed, and hatred. He is full of pure love, compassion, and mercy, and is a powerhouse of spiritual energy. It is a rare fortune indeed to come in contact with such a sage or *sad-guru*. God always sends His representatives to those who earnestly seek Him. Only a few have attained *nirvikalpa Samadhi*. But one must seek a true guru, if there is genuine desire for spiritual progress. Of course, a yogi advanced in spiritual practice can also guide an aspirant, but only a realized master can lead him to the goal.

A *sad-guru* (or realized master) can purify the body of the disciple at the time of initiation by infusing spiritual power into the disciple. By purifying the spine at the six spiritual centers, the untapped spiritual energy, the cosmic force latent in the human body is awakened. As a result of this, the disciple gets the triple

divine qualities: light, sound, and vibration. These six spinal centers keep man attached to the material world in accordance with his karma and do not allow him to transcend animality and rationality. If a disciple, under the guidance of the guru, can control the six spinal centers through the technique of Kriya Yoga and establish God-consciousness there, he will overcome all vices and evolve into a divine being. Then ignorance disappears and the light of wisdom shines upon him. (Diagram 1; page 44).

A Sanskrit maxim says, “Worship God after becoming God.” Unless a person raises the latent spiritual force present in the coccygeal center to the brain, after passing it through the different centers of the spine, he cannot become spiritual. Prayers worship, and rituals are of no avail. They produce no change either in his consciousness or in his heart. Only a realized master can rouse the latent cosmic power, the *kundalini*. Direct association with a guru is, therefore, essential.

Shri Shankara says, “There are three things which are rare indeed and they are

attained only by the grace of God. These are: a human birth, desire for liberation, and the protecting care of a perfect sage” (Viveka Chudamani 3). Anyone and everyone cannot be a guru. In every age, God incarnates Himself as the guru to teach humanity. *Sat-cit-ananda* alone is the guru. The guru is only one, but *upa-gurus* may be many. An *upa-guru* is one from whom anything is learned. The great Avadhuta, a monk mentioned in the Bhagavatam, had twenty-four *upa-gurus*. God sends the *sad-guru* or realized master only to the earnest disciples.

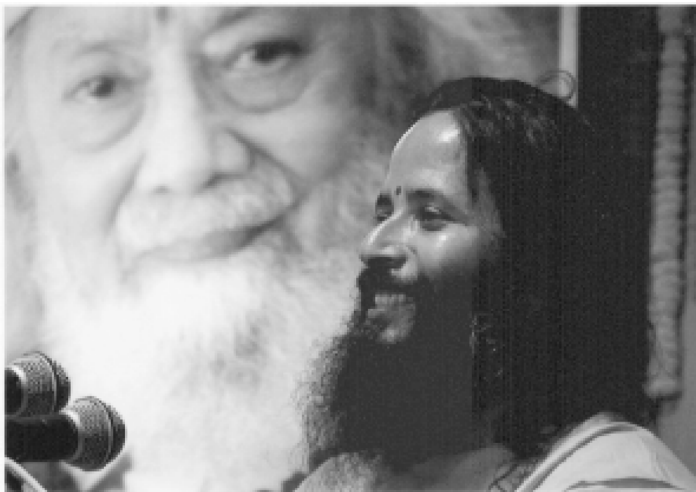
P a r a m a h a m s a  
Yoganandaji says that  
spiritualism cannot be bought in

the market. The father and mother give the physical birth. But it is the guru who gives the spiritual birth and leads the disciples to the shore of Self-realization. The disciple has to follow the instructions of the guru faithfully and sincerely, and practice meditation regularly to gain full benefit from the contact with the guru. Words cannot do justice to the soul-revealing power of Kriya Yoga. It is not necessary to be familiar with the theory of Kriya Yoga in order to progress in it. Only concentration and sincerity are required. A true guru is a nominee of God, through whom God teaches the devotees so that they may realize their real Self.

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# PRAJNANAVANI - THE VOICE OF WISDOM

## A LIFE OF COMPASSION



*Remember that when you leave this earth you can take nothing of what you have received, but only what you have given: a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice, and courage.*

*-Saint Francis of Assisi*

A young boy was sitting in the garden enjoying the beauty of nature: the lush green trees and bushes filled with flowers and fruits, the clear blue sky with the added colors of the afternoon sun, the buzzing and humming bees and butterflies, and the cool breeze creating a nice sensation on the body and mind. Suddenly, something fell down with a crashing sound and a cry of

pain. The boy ran to where the sound came from and found a swan in great pain struggling to survive. The swan had been shot with an arrow. The young boy sat down and took the hurt swan onto his lap. Carefully, he removed the arrow and applied some herbal leaves to the wound for healing.

While he was serving out of love and with a feeling of oneness with the swan, a few



teardrops fell from his eyes. His brother, who was almost the same age, came running towards him with a boastful gesture and said, “Hi Gautama, what are you doing? I brought this flying bird down with my skill in archery; therefore, this swan is mine.”

Gautama contradicted his brother and said, “Devadutta, one who gives life to others has the right over life and living. One who kills others has no right over them. So I cannot give the swan to you; it belongs to me.”

At an impasse, they went to their father Shuddhodana, who was also the king, to settle the matter. They lodged their complaints and asked for justice. Their father listened patiently to each one’s argument. Then he looked at Gautama and said, “My child, the swan belongs to you.” Then he told Devadutta, “Be not cruel to others. Be kind and loving.”

This child who saved the injured swan is Prince Gautama, who later in his life became Gautama Buddha. He taught the world with an emphasis on compassion. He said every person should try to

follow the maxim:  
*b a h u j a n a h i t a y a*  
*b a h u j a n a s u k h a y a*  
*lokanukampaya*, which means  
 “live for the good of the maximum, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world.”

This world is a beautiful creation. A life on this planet is a divine gift and a rare opportunity. Every human being is endowed with a body, sense organs, a mind, intellect, memory, and ego. Other creatures are not blessed with this opportunity and with all of these developed organs. That is why human beings have the faculty to act with diligence, love, and compassion for all of creation.

### **What is compassion?**

The dictionary defines compassion as “a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.” In other words, it means having a deep awareness of another person’s suffering and the desire to relieve it. The word “compassion” is derived from the Latin words *compassio* (fellow feelings) and *compati*

(to suffer with) as well as from two other Latin words *pati* and *cum*, which combined means “to suffer with.”

In India, in the ordinary language of the people as well as the ancient language of Sanskrit, there are three terms that are used regularly in daily life and in the scriptures: *daya* (kindness), *karuna* (compassion), and *anukampa* (pity or sympathy). The same words are found in the scriptures of other religions such as Jainism, Sikhism, and Buddhism, all three of which originated in India. In Persian and Urdu, *hamdardi* also means compassion and fellow feelings in the heart.

Compassion is an inherent human value that needs to flourish and become fruitful in the hearts of human beings in order for them to have a better life, a peaceful coexistence, and manifestation of love. Compassion beautifies creation in a harmonious manner. Compassion is a symbol of human evolution in spirit and consciousness. It is the reason why all the major religions and spiritual masters, as well as scientists and authors, have elaborately

emphasized compassion in the journey of human civilization.

The virtue of compassion for all living beings is a central concept in Vedic philosophy. Compassion is the basis for *ahimsa* (nonviolence, not to hurt, kill, or injure), a core virtue in the Hindu way of life. *Ahimsa* is also the foundation of Jainism and is emphasized in Sikhism.

In Hinduism, compassion is both absolute and relative. Absolute compassion refers to having compassion for people who suffer even though they did nothing wrong as well as for people who suffer because they did something wrong. Relative compassion addresses the difference between these two groups of sufferers. For those who are guilty of causing harm or injury to others, compassion is moderated with forgiveness and must be balanced with the virtue of justice. A common expression in Islam is, “In the name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful.”

In the Yajur Veda, there is a prayer in which God is referred to as Karunavatar, the incarnation of compassion:

*karpura gauram  
karunavataram  
samsara saram  
bhujagendra haram  
sada vasantam  
hrdayaravinde  
bhavam bhavani sahitam  
namami*

“I bow to Lord Shiva with Parvati, whose complexion is white as camphor, incarnation of compassion, the refuge of life in the world who has the king serpent as his necklace. Let them be seated in the lotus of my heart.”

Since the Lord is the incarnation of compassion and we are His children, we must have the same virtues of love and compassion within us. As such, compassion should be embedded in our thoughts and actions.

In the Old Testament (Psalm 145:8-9), it is said “The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The Lord is good to all; He has compassion on all He has made.”

Jesus taught his listeners in the Sermon on the Mount that, “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.” (Matthew 5:7) In the parable of the Good Samaritan, he holds

up to his followers the ideal of compassionate conduct. (Luke 25:37) Also in the Bible (2 Corinthians 1:3-7), Saint Paul wrote:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

Rumi, a Sufi master, emphasized unconditional acceptance, tolerance, patience, love, compassion, and benevolence in his teachings. The “Seven Advices” that he established convey the highest values of humanity and are common to all religions, as well as transcending religious boundaries:

1. In generosity and helping others, be like the river.
2. In compassion and grace, be like the sun.
3. In concealing others' faults, be like the night.
4. In anger and fury, be like the dead.
5. In modesty and humility, be like the soil.
6. In tolerance, be like the ocean.
7. Either you appear as you are, or be as you appear.

There has been much advancement in the field of science and technology, including a revolutionary change in transportation and communication. The physical distance between places and people has diminished beyond imagination. As a result of information technology, the news of the world is distributed very quickly. People are able to travel more easily to different countries and places. There are ample opportunities to know each other. Science and technology have enabled the study of the Earth at large as well as the five elements of

earth, water, fire, air, and space. Science and technology has also enabled the study of all living things including plants and animals. Such advanced knowledge provides more support for a better way of living.

But what has happened? Although the physical distance has decreased, the mental distance is increasing as people spend more time with machines than with humans, nature, and the environment. The present world is witnessing violence, hatred, war, terrorism, and the spread of intolerance in different countries and with people. At the same time the lifestyle of human beings is creating more destruction of nature. Many living species are disappearing every day. Global warming has become an alarming situation for our human civilization. Pollution and destruction of nature is a day-to-day phenomenon. The disparity between the rich and poor is a daily show on the streets and in the markets. Selfishness and ego are playing a vital role in daily life.

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# THE QUALITIES OF WISDOM

The Bhagavad Gita is a spiritual book. Its message is practical and profound. Its simplicity and direct guidance transcend time and place. In chapter 13, titled Kshetra Kshetrajna Vibhaga Yoga ( “ The Yoga of Knowledge of the Body Field and its knower”), verses 7-11 the Lord describes some practical teachings about how to grow in knowledge. These twenty instructions must be followed by any seeker on any path. Starting in this issue , we will reflect on one of the Lord’s instructions in each issue.

The first instruction is amanitvam (absence of pride). The word *mana* (pride ) in Sanskrit is derived from two verbs: man ,to be proud, to imagine, to consider, to honorand mi, to measure.”From these two verbs, mana can be better understood. We imagine ourselves to be better and superior to others. As a result, we want to honor, respect, and appreciation from others: we are proud and boastful.

The second verb, mi, is a technical word with psychological implication. Measurement is a common trait of the human mind. We measure everything. Height, weight, mass, temperature, velocity, and so on are common measurements we use in daily life. But we have another measurement – measuring others and measuring ourselves, assessing others and assessing ourselves, and ultimately, judging others and judging ourselves. This kind of measurement is selfish and biased. We think I am good and others are bad.” It causes pride, vanity, conceit and the demand for recognition and honor.

The Lord said that we should be free from pride and vanity (*amanitvam*). What do we really have to be proud of? Our beauty, family, intelligence, success country , culture and religion have been given to us.

Ponder it again and again. Be free from vanity or pride. Be humble. This is the

way to grow and love others as your own.

Twenty instructions that must be followed by any seeker on any pathas described in the Bhagavad Gita (13:7 – 11), titled Kshetra kshetrajna vibhaga yoga: “The knowledge of the Body Field and its knower.” Here in the Lord describes practical teachings about increasing our knowledge. Let us continue from where we left off:

We discussed amanitvam- absence of pride. A second quality a seeker must cultivate is adambhitvam, the absence of vanity or stubbornness. The word adambhitvam is derived from the root verb dambh which means “to be proud off.” But dambha has several meanings:

1. The ego, arrogance, and stubbornness that prevent us from bending ourselves and being humble. This is the feeling that whatever we think and do is right without listening to others’ views or options.
2. The selfishness that causes us to bring attention to ourselves

instead of using our energy to serve others as the children of God, with love.

3. The hypocrisy and deception that are the root of our hiding our real natures. We present a false, superior, or superficial appearance, as when Jesus said that a wolf can hide in sheep’s clothing.
4. The wickedness in thought, word or deed that hurts others feelings or worse.
5. The outward false portrayal of ourselves that intends to hide our real natures; it is self righteousness.

Therefore, *adambhitvam* is to be free from stubbornness, arrogance, selfishness, hypocrisy, and wickedness. We must be very strict with ourselves .We need to cultivate patience, fortitude, and humility in daily life. Rome was not built in a day. It was also not built by one individual. We need to develop the inner strength to transform our vices to virtues over course of time.

We must ponder our faults again and again to free ourselves from stubbornness and ego. We should be grateful to God and humble towards all. In this way we can grow and love others. A blooming flower

smiles with its beauty and radiates aroma; this is not due to ego or arrogance, this is its nature. We should look at our nature and be good children of God, loving and caring for others in every possible manner.

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Gurupurnima at the Gurukulam

# **Birthday of Paramahansa Prajnanananda**

*mahatsangastu durlabho'gamyo'moghashca*

- Narada Bhakti Sutra 39

*It is indeed extremely difficult to come into  
contact with a great soul  
and to be benefitted by his company.  
The influence of such a one is  
subtle, incomprehensible,  
and unerringly infallible in its effect.*

Of all the precious gifts that Gurudev bequeathed us, Paramahansa Prajnananandaji stands out as a living example of the divine legacy of Kriya Yoga. Beloved Gurudev could not have chosen a more fitting son to propagate the scientific aspect as well as the subtle beauty of this spiritual treasure that elevates humanity. Indeed, Paramahansa Prajnananandaji is the radiant sun that shines brightly through the dense forest of human ignorance, illuminating the path that takes seekers safely back home. In following the tradition of our lineage, a living realized master, one who embodies the qualities and conduct we need to follow on the path, is essential for us to confidently progress towards the

Goal.

No doubt life presents all of us with challenges, the ups and downs that test our resolve and shake us to the core. During such times we fervently pray to God and Gurus for help not to lose our way. And, unfailingly, whenever we need it, help always comes. We have been given the unique opportunity to learn from a living master who shows us not only how to meet these challenges but how to reach victory in the test of life. Our Guruji is truly our mother, father, teacher, and our most cherished eternal friend.

Paramahansa Prajnananandaji has often reminded us that the best way to show our love for him is to practice Gurudev's teachings in our daily lives.



Thus, at this special time commemorating his birth, we honor him best by renewing our vow to practice, meditate, and perceive KRI+YA in every breath. Let us always remember how Guruji completely dedicated his life to serving his master, the Kriya

lineage, and all of us, helping us realize that we are divine, that we are “God in Human Being, Human Being in God.” Let us follow the footprints of our beautiful master, so that we, too, may one day become living examples of this most esteemed spiritual tradition.

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New Monk Initiations at Gurukulam

# **PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY**

## **THE POWER OF WOMEN**

**Jyothi Bathina**

Whenever I gather even briefly with other women, it seems inconceivable that this world could be run by men. Women are so powerful, so full of energy and wisdom and life, that I wonder how it is that in so many parts of the world and so many arenas of society, our voices remain submerged and often unheard.

We met recently, my sisters and aunts and cousins and I, for a birthday celebration. We ended up celebrating each other instead. There is a tremendous healing power in the laughter among women that does more to soothe the spirit and replenish the energy lost in always putting others first, than any spa treatment or island getaway could ever accomplish. There is a deep sense of freedom in meeting without men in tow, allowing inhibitions to drop, and speaking from one's center without restraint and that stuffy sense of decorum that constantly reins in our truest feelings. Strangely enough this only happens when we are

together, for even in solitude, we tend to faithfully carry all our baggage with us. The voices in our heads continue, monitoring every thought, every gesture and every action. "Don't wear that sleeveless blouse, don't laugh too loud, don't stare too long, don't talk too much, and don't think too hard. Shouldn't you be doing something useful?" There is on the other hand something very liberating about women in groups, a sense of sisterhood that allows freedom and breaks down those barriers we seldom acknowledge, much less demolish.

Each time we meet as women, we break down those barriers a little further. This weekend, we ate, we drank, we laughed, we played, we went out to a show, and we stayed up all night talking. We fed each other at midnight, literally with a communal platter of rice and mango pickle and freshly made omelets and figuratively, with the sustenance of honest conversation and empowerment

so needed by our spirits. We examined our flaws, questioned our purpose, acknowledged our desires and shared our philosophies. Each of us has so much to offer, each has strength, character, ambition, intelligence and passion.

We need to remember that as we return to our lives as wives, mothers and daughters. We are not merely

our various roles. We are also ourselves and our self is the most valuable gift we can offer the world. The beautiful shining self that is apparent when we are together is the one that has the most to give. We need to keep it at the forefront and allow its light to shine on those we love and those we encounter in our daily lives. Here's to many more celebrations.

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Gurupurnima at the Gurukulam

## Teachings of the Masters

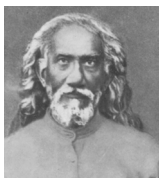
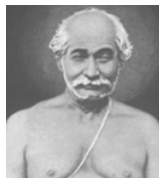


*"It is not proper to unnecessarily mention the name of the Guru by this, he is belittled."*

Mahavantara Babaji

*"Do not be perturbed by small happenings, Shri Master keeps a watch on those who rest in Him."*

Lahiri Mahasaya



*"If one becomes judicious, reasonable, and attentive about many common place and ordinary things, one can achieve higher things."*

Swami Shriyukteshwar

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

Sanyal Mahasaya

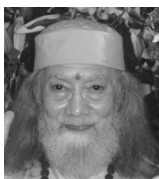
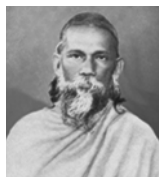


*"The moon is not reflected clearly in ruffled water, but only on its calm surface. True love for God is manifested through calmness of the mind.."*

Paramahansa Yogananda

*"A person is able to progress in every aspect of life when he or she practices the teachings of the master with faith and love and incorporates them in daily life."*

Swami Satyananda



*"Breath control is self-control. Breath mastery is self mastery. Breathlessness stage is deathlessness stage."*

Paramahansa Hariharananda

*"One must constantly endeavour to be perfect in every thought, word, and action. One reaches the state of perfection through regular practice and integrated awareness."*

Paramahansa Prajnanananda



# MYTHS AND METAPHORS

## DEVI MAHATMYA



*ya devi sarvabhuteshu vishnumayeti sabdita /  
namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo nama ||16||  
ya devi sarvabhuteshu cetanetyabhidhiyate /  
namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo nama ||19||  
ya devi sarvabhuteshu buddhirupena samsthita /  
namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo nama || 22||  
ya devî sarvabhuteshu nidrarupena samsthita  
namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo nama || 25||  
ya devi sarvabhuteshu kshudharupena samsthita /  
namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo nama || 28||*

Devi Suktam 16-28

*ya devi sarvabhuteshu vishnumayeti sabdita /  
namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo nama ||16||*

### Translation

**Repeated salutations to the Devi who is in the form of *maya*, the delusive power of Lord Vishnu.**

## Metaphorical Explanation

Devi is the Divine Mother in the form of illumination. She is manifest everywhere. She is the cause of everything. Again and again, the *devas* adore her. They experience and extol her special attributes.

O Divine Mother, you are Vishnumaya, the creative power of Lord Vishnu. Who is Vishnu? *Vish vyapane nuk iti vishnu*: “one who pervades everything is Vishnu.” *Vishnati-viyanaktu bhaktam mayapasarena sansarat iti-Vishnuh*: Lord Vishnu separates the devotees’ minds from the illusion of the world.” *Vish praveshane vishati vishanti va sarvabhutani atra iti Vishnu*; *veveshti vyapnoti vishwam yah vishnuh*: “Vishnu is derived from the verb *vish*, which means “to pervade” or “to permeate.” One who permeates everywhere is Lord Vishnu.” *Veshati sinchati apyayate vishwam iti vishnuh*: One who brings contentment into creation is Lord Vishnu.” When one understands who Lord Vishnu is, then one can understand Vishnumaya, or the power of sustenance, the power of contentment, as well as the

illusory power of Lord Vishnu. It is the omnipresence of the Divine. Vishnumaya is the primordial ignorance or the power to sustain creation. In the Varaha Purana, *vishnumaya* is described as the power that manifests as clouds, rain, and harvest. Vishnumaya, Mahamaya, and Yogamaya are three names of the Divine Mother.

*Sarva bhuteshu* means “in all elements,” “in all living beings” or “in all that occurs.” The *devas* are praising the Divine Mother as *vishnumaya*, the sustaining power in all beings. Here is the practice of experiencing the Divine Mother in all.

In this mantra and in successive ones, *namastasyai* is repeated three times, and at the end *namo namah* is added. Why is there such repetition?

1. The first bow, *namah tasyai* (we bow to her), is the physical bow. This bow reveres the gross form of the Divine Mother.
2. The second bow is to the subtle form of the Divine Mother. She is in the form of

consciousness. This is a mental bow.

3. The third bow is in the form of a causal bow, bowing at the feet of the Divine Mother, who is the cause of everything (*karana swarupa*).
4. *Namo namah* is the fourth bow, which is beyond the gross, subtle (astral), and causal. It is pure wisdom. In this state, there is no difference between the person who bows and to whom he or she bows: It is a state of divine union.

These four bows can be also understood from another angle:

1. bows in the wakeful state,
2. bows in the dream state,
3. bows in the deep sleep state, and
4. bows in the state of realization.

O Seeker! Bow again and again. Bow in every way. Bow during every breath. Through this, you will taste reality and realization.

*ya devi sarvabhuteshu  
cetanetyabhidhiyate /*

*namastasyai namastasyai  
namastasyai namo nama%*

### Translation

**Repeated salutations to her, the Devi who abides in the form of consciousness in all beings.**

### Metaphorical Explanation

*Chetana iti abhidhiyate:* “the one who is named consciousness.” *Chetana* is derived from the root *chit*, which means “thought,” “perception,” “intellect,” “intelligence,” “heart,” “the soul” or Brahman. *Sat chit ananda* are the three inherent qualities of divinity. *Sat* is “eternity” or “immortality”. *Chit* is “consciousness” and *ananda* is “bliss.” Since divinity (the Divine Mother) is omnipresent, so is consciousness.

According to some, *chetana* is the quality of the inner instruments (*antahkarana*): the mind, intellect, ego, and memory. In reality, consciousness is the power of God that enables every instrument to be conscious. It is the power of the Divine Mother. In the gross body, it is known as *vishwa* (universe), in the astral body, *taijasa* (brilliance), and in the

causal body, *prajna* (wisdom). In the *muladhara chakra*, it is *vishwa* (universe); in the *svadhisthana chakra*, *virat* (glory all round); in the *manipura chakra*, *taijasa* (brilliance); in the *anahata chakra*, *hiranyagarbha* (golden womb); in the *vishuddha chakra*, Ishwara (the Lord); and in the *ajna chakra*, it is known as *abhasa chaitanya* (apparent consciousness).

O Divine Mother! You are the consciousness in all living beings. Your presence keeps us alive, active, and aware of our existence; you make us conscious of what is going on inside and outside. Consciousness is your nature. You make consciousness burn in all life. We bow to you as the consciousness in all beings as well as within ourselves.

O Seeker! Every thought is the Mother manifest in you. Your awareness of everything is the awakening of yourself to remember the Divine Mother. You sing in the same tune as the *devas*, and you bow to the Divine Mother in all as consciousness.

*ya devi sarvabhuteshu  
buddhirupena saA sthita |*

*namastasyai namastasyai  
namastasyai namo  
nama% || 22||*

### Translation

**Repeated salutations to the Devi in the form of the intellect in all living beings.**

### Metaphorical Explanation

In all these mantras, the Divine Mother is offered adorations in a very beautiful way, mostly indirectly, *ya devi* (the *devi*, who), but also *tasyai* (to her). It is because she is beyond words and articulation. She is the essence of reality. It is also the traditional way to communicate with the most adorable one.

O Divine Mother! You are in the form of *buddhi* (intellect or intelligence). *Buddhi*, or intellect, is present collectively as *mahat* (unmanifest). In an individual, the Divine Mother is present as understanding and knowing. We bow to you physically, mentally, and vocally.

What is *buddhi*? In the Vedantic texts, it is described as *nischayatmika*: “the faculty of decision making.” While the mind deliberates and looks for alternatives, the intellect makes the decision.



O Divine Mother, you are present in all living beings, and you determine our choices in every step of life. Please manifest in us! The *Gayatri Mantra* says, *dhiyo yo nah prachodayat*: “Lead our intellect.” O Divine Mother in the form of intellect, please reveal thyself within us.

O Seeker! Do not let your ego create chaos. Be devoted to the Mother as intellect. She will guide you in daily life. She is the real intelligence in you. If you follow her, your decisions and choices will not be erroneous.

*ya devî sarvabhuteshu  
nidrarupeG a saA sthita  
namastasyai / namastasyai /  
namastasyai namo nama%*

### **Translation**

**Repeated salutations to the Devi who is in the form of sleep in all living beings.**

### **Metaphorical Explanation**

O Divine Mother! You manifest in the form of sleep. We all bow to you with deep love and devotion again and yet again.

Everyone loves to sleep. Plants, insects, animals, humans, even the *devas* are fond of

sleep. Sleep provides rest; it rejuvenates the body and mind; it provides relaxation. During sleep the play of the mind, intellect, ego, and memory are suspended for some time. During deep sleep, ignorance prevails. That is why after deep sleep we say, “I do not remember anything.”

O Divine Mother! You visit every living being as sleep. As a human mother puts a baby to sleep by singing and rocking, in the same way, you make all creation sleep on your lap. O Divine Mother, manifestation of knowledge and intellect, during sleep, you play your role as ignorance.

O Divine Mother! If you were not present as sleep, misery would be pervasive. Your loving embrace and your nectar-like touch removes troubles and restlessness for the time being. Your soothing touch is loving and refreshing to all living beings.

Deep sleep provides a taste of deep meditation. O Divine Mother, through your presence as sleep, remind us to learn the art of meditation. During meditation, with a little calm, it is a common experience that sleep occurs. O Divine

Mother! Please keep us alert and vigilant during meditation, so that we can achieve a state of deep meditation.

O Seeker! Every night, the Divine Mother comes to you as sleep. When you go to bed, may you feel as if you are sleeping on the lap of the Divine Mother. It is not the blanket you cover yourself with, it is the touch of her loving hands. In the *Shiva Manasa Puja*, Shri Adi Shankara said, *nidra Samadhi-sthitih*: “Sleep is the state of *samadhi*.” Pray to the Divine Mother, so that your sleep will be yogic sleep, *yoganidra*, and you will continuously be in a state of deep meditation.

*ya devi sarvabhuteshu  
kshudharupena samsthita /  
namastasyai namastasyai  
namastasyai namo  
namah|| 28||*

### Translation

**Repeated salutations to the Devi who is in the form of hunger in all living beings.**

### Metaphorical Explanation

O Divine Mother! We all bow to you in the form of hunger, present in all living beings. From plants to

celestials, all feel the desire for food. The gross body, through everyday exertion, loses energies. Food replenishes the body.

Not only the *annamaya kosha* (physical sheath) needs food, but the four other sheaths also need to feel your manifestation: In the *pranamaya kosha* (vital air sheath), food is life energy; in the *manomaya kosha* (mental sheath) food is the thought; in the *vijnanamaya kosha* (knowledge sheath), there is knowledge as food, and in the *anandamaya kosha* (blissful sheath) the food is in the form of love and contentment.

The gross, astral and causal bodies need food: the gross body needs physical food; the astral body requires good thoughts; the causal body needs love for God.

The five chakras have hunger for food: the *muladhara* hungers for material possessions; the *svadhisthana* hungers for physical pleasure; the *manipura* hungers for gross food and drink; the *anahata* hungers for friendship; the *vishuddha* desires religious practices.

O Divine Mother! We bow at your holy feet. You are hunger; you are also food. Please bless us to be free from all appetite for sensual pleasures. Life after life, this temptation is never ending. Please reveal thyself and remove all the misery that arises from appetite.

O Divine Mother! Your form is Annapurna. You fulfill the desire for food. We are

hungry children. Please make us content and fulfilled.

O Seeker! Bow to the Divine Mother as hunger. Pray from the core of your heart that you will be free from an appetite for sensual pleasures. The Mother will also fulfill your appetite for love and devotion. She is the wish-fulfilling Mother. Nothing is impossible for her. Only love her, and bow to her again and again.

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## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

**October - December, 2014**

Sept 25-October 3	: Navaratri – 9 day festival of Divine Mother
October 23	: Deepvali – Festival of Lights
November 17	: Birthday of Swami Satyananda Giri
December 3	: Mahasamadhi Day of Gurudev
December 2	: Gita Jayanti – Birthday of Bhagavad Gita
December 24-25	: Christmas Celebration
December 31	: New Year Eve

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# THE YOGA SUTRA OF PATANJALI

## Sutra 10

*abhava- pratyaya-alambana  
vrittih nidra ||10||*

### Word Meaning

abhava – non-existence;  
pratyaya – experience of  
wakeful and dream; alambana  
– being support of;

### Translation

Sleep is the wave of  
thought corresponding to  
nothingness.

Commentary by Shri  
Lahiri Mahasaya

Cessation of external  
perception or awareness is  
sleep. In deep sleep, although  
there is no knowledge of any  
objects, still one has the  
experience that it was a deep  
sleep.

### Metaphorical Explanation

The fourth vritti (thought  
wave), nidra (sleep), is  
discussed very nicely by Sage  
Patanjali. Yoga as defined  
earlier, eliminates the vritti  
(thought wave) from chitta  
(mind-stuff), and is a means as  
well as an end. (See the  
explanation of Sutra 2). Many  
people have the idea that sleep

is a state of no thought, but in  
this sutra, Sage Patanjali  
explains that sleep is also a vritti  
(a thought wave). Then what  
type of thought is it? To  
understand nidra better, one  
should be familiar with the three  
states of experience that one  
enjoys daily in regular life:  
wakeful, dreaming, and in deep  
sleep. In this state there is a  
dominance of rajasic (active)  
quality and gross thought  
waves. In jagrat, or the wakeful  
state, the gross body of five  
elements, five senses of actions,  
five senses of perception, and  
four inner instruments are used  
in different ways. There is  
direct perception of sense  
objects, expression of mind,  
thoughts, likes and dislikes,  
interaction with people or the  
material world, driving this state.  
Man is stressed and strained in  
this condition. In this state all  
three bodies (gross, astral, and  
causal) are active  
simultaneously. The wakeful  
state is a state in which gross  
thought waves flow.

In this state there is a  
dominance of tamasic (idle)

quality and subtle thought waves. In swapna, or the dream state, the gross body is inactive. The sense organs are calm and quiet. The eyes are closed. The ears are functionless. In this state, experience is only possible in an extremely subtle way. During sleep, the gross body is lying on the bed, but the subtle body can experience pleasure and pain while in the dream state. In this condition, with the subtle body, one becomes the creator of the entire dream world. But because of the predominance of the tamasic quality in the dream state, one cannot gain energy or strength, dreams produce idleness and lethargy. In this state there is only tamasic (rest) quality and causal thought waves.

The third state is called sushupti, or deep sleep. In this state, the experience of the wakeful state and the dream state. This deep sleep state is the fourth vritti, according to Sage Patanjali. In this situation, there is no experience of other things, but one is aware of “not knowing” during sleep. When one gets up from sleep, one exclaims, “I did not know anything. I had a nice sleep. I

slept happily.” Such an expression is a sign of ignorance, which is the cause of the cycle of birth and rebirth and also continuation of activities in the present. Therefore, it is described by the yogis that such memory of deep sleep is the cause of the

In deep sleep, according to Sage Patanjali, there is vritti (a thought wave). In wakeful or dream states, thoughts are manifold. A person is conscious of many things in these states. However, in deep sleep, one is aware of only one’s ignorance or absence of knowledge. “I do not know anything” expresses knowledge of one’s not knowing. I know ignorance, so it survives.

In the Kaivalya Upanishad (13), it is written:

“In deep sleep, all other external thought waves disappear; one remains in a state of complete darkness, enjoying a taste of happiness.”

Nidra (sleep) is a vritti (thought wave). In the Devi Mahatmya, otherwise known as Shri Chandi (chapter 4), in a prayer to the Divine Mother it is said:

*ya devi sarvabhutesu  
nidrarupena samsthita  
namastasyai namastasyai  
namastasyai namonamah*

“I bow to that Divine Mother again and again, who is present as sleep waves in every being.

Plants, animals, and human beings sleep to be free from the worries, anxieties, and stresses of life, to forget the experiences of pleasure and pain of the wakeful and dream states. The Divine Mother comes during deep sleep and makes one revitalized and rejuvenated. Sleep is a blessing from God. Sleep is a good teacher that points out that life is intended for seeking the greatest state of happiness, which can

In deep sleep, there is no experience of the material world, friends or relatives, no sense of body, and no tyrannical play of the mind. Sleep is the teacher of yoga and meditation. In sleep, everyone is a yogi, without any conscious effort. But if, in practical life, one is

able to get into the state of meditation and yoga, one will enjoy a continuous state of peace, bliss, and joy.

In the wakeful state, only viparyaya vritti (false inference) manifests. It is elaborately described in Sutra 1:8. In deep sleep, there is a state of nothingness, which is the function of abhava vritti (no thought). Although they appear to be different, in reality, all such states are nothing but O Seeker! Look at your own condition in daily life. Look at the state of your mind in deep sleep. Deep sleep reminds you that the process of erasing restlessness brings calmness and rest. Deep sleep is a state of ignorance and lack of awareness. But through the practice of spiritual discipline, you can experience a sleep-like state in complete awareness. Do you know the Divine Mother reveals herself to you as deep sleep? Pray to her so that instead of deep sleep being a state of ignorance and darkness, it will also be a state of knowledge and illumination.

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## VALUABLE VOLUMES



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

### PRACTICE OF MEDITATION

(From *THE UNIVERSE WITHIN*)

#### The Family of Shiva

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

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

#### Meditation: Practice and Benefits

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

then churned to separate the butter. Once the butter is separated, it will float in milk, buttermilk or water, and does not mix with them again. The butter is heated to get *ghee* and this *ghee* can burn in fire.

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

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

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

Let us talk about the forest. In ancient times, the

sages retreated into the forest to meditate. But forests are full of wild animals and other dangers. In modern times, when most people live in urban areas, this is no longer a viable option. What is required instead is that we live in the shelter and solitude of the internal forest. This forest too contains the wild animals of emotion, anger, pride and these need to be subdued with the power of meditation.

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

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



mind is the best place for meditation.

Many monks go to the cremation grounds to meditate as it helps them gain a sense of detachment. Watching the precious body that we treat with so much care end up in ashes, gives us a rude awakening as to the temporary nature of the body which is ultimately destined to return to the elements from which it is made.

### **The Proper Posture**

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

In the sixth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* there are very specific instructions for how and where to sit for

meditation. We are asked to sit in a clean place, pure and holy. Where is it? If our minds are not calm and quiet, wherever we sit is not serene. In this body temple there is one place that is serene. From the eyebrows to the top of the head is the place of serenity. If we concentrate there we can meditate.

### **The Proper Seat**

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

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

sit directly on the ground. A blanket would be sufficient.

If the animal skin (ajina) were really necessary then we would be encouraging the killing of animals. This goes against the non-violent philosophy of Hinduism. There is another explanation for the skin. The Sanskrit word for dead skin ajina also means difficult to conquer. Within our body one of the most difficult places to conquer is the sexual center. So we are being instructed to go above that center during meditation.

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

### **Meditation as Worship**

Lahiri Mahashaya often said, "My way of worship is

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

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

### **How to Meditate**

There are many different techniques of meditation in the world today. Each has a unique method and tradition behind it.

The important thing to realize is that all these methods have the same goal in mind. Meditation should open up the inner channels, calm and relax the mind and body, and develop the immense potential of human beings to be divine. Material prosperity, physical and mental health, creative inspiration, intellectual prowess, increased youth and vigor, are all benefits which come along the way to those who meditate regularly. The goal, however, should be the search for self-knowledge and the realization of one's own self and its essentially divine nature.

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

While meditation can be taught through books, and techniques explained and illustrated on the page, those who meditate regularly know that real spiritual practice requires a living teacher. I have been practicing a unique form of meditation throughout my life, and it has given me tremendous benefits, physical, mental and spiritual. I was initiated into this ancient technique by a realized Master, who has guided me step by step on the path of spiritual progress. I, in turn, have initiated countless disciples

into the same path, travelling the globe, teaching the technique, writing books and lecturing on the inner meanings of the world scriptures, including not only the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Vedas*, but the *Bible*, the *Torah* and other holy books. This meditation technique is not limited to any one religion. It is a tool with which we can enhance whatever religion we are currently practicing. It requires no expensive equipment or physical contortions and can be practiced by old and young alike.

### **The Basic Method**

The basic method for any type of meditation is to sit for a minimum of 20 minutes a day, in complete silence, to breathe slowly and deeply from each *chakra*, concentrating intensely on that *chakra*, and to energize the entire body using the techniques taught by the teacher. After relaxing the mind and body through simple breathing and concentration exercises, we merge silently with the universe, allowing the inner voice to be heard.

In that silence, we gain tremendous peace, strength and even practical answers to the

questions, which may be haunting us, whether they have to do with our families, our careers or our spiritual growth.

In order to learn the technique, we need to be initiated by a teacher who is qualified to purify the *chakras*, teach the technique and guide the spiritual aspirant on their path. Those who wish to learn the technique of yoga which I practice can find contact information at the back of the book.

### **Having a Road Map**

It is the mind which is involved in sinful activities. The mind can go in ten different directions through the ten senses. The mind is restless by nature. To keep the mind concentrated, focused and always directed toward the goal is the spiritual journey. We train the mind to go up step by step. Eventually we reach the mountaintop of the Himalayas. Physically climbing the Himalayas and reaching the peak is actually easier than making the same inner journey. If you want to go to the Himalayas for a pilgrimage, if you go with a map knowing the location of the places you want to visit, it makes the journey

easier and you can be confident that you are on the right path. Spiritual theory is like a map. But merely looking at a map does not give you the direct experience of the Himalayas. Experience comes through practice.

In every breath we need to try reaching the highest peak with our self-effort. The teacher can give us some help. The teacher can give us some spiritual nourishment. But it is we who have to digest the food and assimilate the essence. How long can we continue to be spoon-fed? We have within ourselves the strength to overcome all the negative aspects, weaknesses and temptations.

### **Daily Practice**

Meditating everyday is a form of self-inquiry. After we eat, the food remains in the body for some time. In the same way, spiritual truths, whether you read them in the scriptures or gain insight through your meditation, need to be retained until the next session. Regular practice is extremely important. Spirituality is a continuous process and not a part-time job. Someone asked a great spiritual personality, "I am meditating but

not getting any results.” He answered “You are doing a part-time job and expecting full-time pay. How many hours of work is considered a full time job? 40 hours a week constitutes full-time. But in spirituality, we need to maintain the awakened

state 24 hours a day, seven days a week. How do we maintain this state? The scriptures ask us to open the Sushumna canal in the spine in order to experience the spiritual state for extended periods of time.

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Independence day at Balashram

# FAROHAR, OR FARAVAHAR

(From *MYSTICISM OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS*)

Zoroastrianism is a religion of ethics and values. It emphasizes inner purity through good words, thoughts, and action. When we live in this world there is a constant struggle between good and evil. When one wants to be a perfect person, or a person in spirit, one should try to eliminate evil propensities from the mind and heart, and be strong in virtues and good qualities.

The symbol used in the Zoroastrian religion is the farohar or faravahar. Faravahar means to “choose.” There are three aspects to the faravahar: a winged disk, two streamers, and the head of a man.

The three layers of the feather of the winged disk symbolize the three virtues of

the Zoroastrian faith: good words, good thoughts, and good deeds. Wings represent flying upwards. When birds approach danger they fly away. Similarly, one should be careful in daily life. In the Upanishads it is said that there are two wings of the bird of divinity. One is *satya* or truth in understanding, and the other is *nitam* or truth in practice – *satyam nitam*. One who lives a life of understanding and practical spirituality is on the path of perfection, realization.

The two streamers symbolize the duality of good and evil. The head of a man facing left represents the prophet Zoroaster and the choice to live a morally upright life.

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## **STORIES TO LIVE BY**

### **THE BEAUTIFUL HEART OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN**

One day while Abraham Lincoln was on his way to give a speech at an important meeting, he saw a little piglet that had fallen into a muddy ditch and was desperately struggling to get out. Although he was dressed in his best suit, he did not think twice about going into the mud to help the poor animal. After rescuing the piglet and making sure it was safe, he had no time to change his very dirty clothes, so he continued on his way to the meeting. Upon arriving at his destination and walking into the room, people began to ask him what had happened. He simply told them, "Joy."

Since Abraham Lincoln was on his way to make an important speech, he could so easily have ignored the little pig's situation, or expected someone else to rescue it. Yet, he felt the pain that it was suffering, and he felt the joy of

being of service to the little pig. Do we feel this if we see someone who is in misery or suffering? Are we able to feel their pain in our own hearts? Do we feel the joy of serving others? Let us think and reflect upon this for a while. Let us also take positive steps in our lives towards transforming ourselves and living in this world with a compassionate heart. Wherever we are in this world, instead of having a heart of stone, let us resolve to expand our hearts so that we can think of others and help them. We should strive to make our hearts as tender and beautiful as a rose blossom. However, in order to do so, we must overcome the stubbornness and selfishness that are the ever present stumbling blocks preventing our transformation. Remember, if we are really determined to change ourselves, no one can stop us.

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# ATMA-VIDYA

## PURSUING SELF-KNOWLEDGE

### KAIVALYOPANISHAD

#### Mantra 17

*jagratsvapna sushuptyadi prapancha yat prakashate  
tadbrahmahamiti jnatva sarva bandhaih pramucyate*

#### Meanings

*jagrat*-wakeful state, *svapna*-dream, *sushupti*-deep sleep, *adi*-etc, *prapancha*-world, *yat*-that *prakashate*-is apparent, *tad*- that, *brahma*-brahman, *aham* –I, *iti*-this, *jnata*-having known *sarva*-all, *bandhaih*–bondages, *pramucyate*-liberated

#### Substance

That which illumines the three states of wakeful, dream and deep sleep states and the phenomenon of the world is Brahman. If one knows that the Brahman is himself, he is liberated from all bondage

#### Commentary

The guru is saying, the illumining or the knowing principle in the wakeful, dream and deep sleep states is Brahman.

The word *Prapancha* is derived as *panca panca*-

*prapancha* -from five and five. In Vedanta it is everything of five – five sense organs, five objects of the senses, five elements, five vital airs, all these make up the *prapancha* and create confusion in us. *Prapancha* deludes a person, who is ignorant. A person in knowledge finds that it is all a play and is the light of God. A movie appears to be very real for a person who forgets that it is a play, so real that one becomes a part of that movie. But for a person who remembers that it is only a movie, it is a play. Once a person who has not seen a movie before, came from a village to our town and my friend took him to a theatre. In the beginning of the movie they showed a picture of Durga this person immediately got up and bowed down. He was reacting to all the scenes in the movie like they were very real.



One who knows that which illumines the wakeful, dream and deep sleep states, that Brahman is himself – “*I am that Brahman*- and from me everything comes”, and feels one with God, is liberated from all bondage. That light or awareness which is the substratum for the world to be apparent, because of which you are able to know the world is *brahman* and that *brahman* is you. When the identification is with the wave, then one is limited to the individual ego and feels superior among the smaller waves and inferior to the bigger waves. When the wave realizes that I am the ocean and from me alone all the waves are coming only the ocean exists. Dissociating from

the body and mind and realizing the unity with the divine and knowing that the world and the three states of existence all come from that *brahman* alone releases one from all bondage.

In this mantra the *mahavakya* of “*aham brahmasmi*-I am brahman” is discussed. -This *aham* is not egocentric *I*, but *I* -the pure consciousness. I am everything there is no comparison and no play of the individual ego. We have seen how the Wiseman burns the bondages. To have that total liberation we should have this experience of unity with the divinity. Just listening to talks or reading books is not enough. This has to be not only during meditation but all the time.

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Australia Retreat

## UJJAIN AND INDORE

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

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

### **Gopal Mandir**

The first temple we went to was Gopal Mandir also known as Dwarakadheesh temple, an ancient and beautiful temple with traditional Maratha architecture. The temple is dedicated to Lord Krishna as Gopala (cow herd man). Temple is almost in the center of the Ujjain city. The statue of Lord Krishna was beautiful on a marble inlaid altar.

### **Chintamani Ganesh**

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

every temple besides the main deity there were also many other deities in the side temples.

### **Mahakaleshwar**

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

As we came out, the evening arati was to follow and none of us felt like going back and so we went into the gallery from where you could watch

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

The next day morning we attended the famous bhasma arati.

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

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

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

### **Mangalanath Temple**

The next day we visited few more temples. The first stop was at Mangalanath temple. It is the temple of the planet Mars (Mangala). It is considered to be the birthplace

of Mangala. People from all over the country come here to worship the planet especially if the planet is not in a conducive position in the horoscope.

### **Sandeepani Ashram**

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

### **Kala Bhairava Temple**

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

### **Samadhi Shrine of Machhendranath**

The Samadhi of the most remarkable yogi of the Natha sampradaya was another beautiful place. He is considered the preceptor of Goraknath who was the founder of natha tradition. We sat

around the Samadhi and meditated for a few minutes.

### **Bhartruhari Guha**

Bhartruhari was the king of Ujjain whose life presents a complete transformation from a pleasure loving king to an ascetic and sage of high reputation. He is said to have performed penance in these caves. The underground rocky caves on the banks of river kshipra indicate how austere he must have lived. He is recognized as a yogi of high reputation and his shatakas on love, ethics and renunciation are unparalleled.

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

### **Indore**

The day we arrived in Indore we had a special bonus. There was Bhagavata Pravachan of Sri Rajendra Dasji. Sri Rajendra Das is well known for his satsang. Baba and Shuddhanandaji know him well and he had visited our Balighai ashram sometimes. We were invited on to the stage to participate in the satang program. His Bhagavatha Katha inspired love for Krishna

in the heart of anyone who listened. After satsang we had the privilege of meeting him and his followers in their temporary quarters and received some Prasad.

### **Omkareshwar and Mamaleshwar**

Next morning we left for Omkareshwar. Many disciples joined us in the trip from Indore and Bhopal as they did not want to miss the opportunity of going to these holy places in the company of monks. They had made excellent arrangements and organized the program. We left early for the two hour drive. Breakfast was on the way and we had the famous Poha Namkeen of Malwa along with Jalebi and Kachori. All along the way we have the darshan of River Narmada again. Soon we were at Omkareshwar. We crossed the bridge to the other side and first went to see a yogi on the banks of Narmada. We then took a boat to the bathing ghat. Narmada is the most unpolluted river here. It narrows between the mountains and this section is compared to the waist of a lady. We had a really exhilarating bath in the cool waters of Namada . Had to

drag ourselves out it was so beautiful. I, who was at first hesitant to take a bath in the river with other people, now got the hang of how to manage and was really looking forward to bathe in the river wherever possible. After bath we had to cross another huge bridge to get to the Omkareshwar Mandir. It is a huge temple with a few floors. But the main temple itself is rather small. There is the Omkkareshwar who is also known as the Mukti Linga and Mother Parvati is there in the back. We were all allowed to pour water on Lord Shiva and flowers and bilva patra to the Lord and Mother Parvati. When we were done we went and sat in a side verandah from where we could see the sanctum. Soon a couple of priests came there and chanted the Rudram and distributed coconuts to all of us as Prasad. Then we moved to another floor and sat around reciting Shiva Mahimna Stotra. A couple of people in the group were real good singers and sang nice bhajans in which the others followed. Then we went back across the bridge and went to see Mamaleshwar another Jyotir Linga. The priest did a

nice puja and we could all touch our heads to the lingam and pray. As we sat in the outer temple the priests came and again recited the Rudram.

After that we went back to Gajananaji's ashram and had lunch there. After a short break we left around 2 pm and drove to a small village where Shiva lingams are shaped out of the natural stones from the banks of Narmada. It was interesting to walk through the small narrow mountain roads sometimes going down and sometimes up. We ended up at a small place which was half filled with Lingas of many shapes and sizes and they all looked beautiful and one of a kind. After much deliberation Shuddhanandaji bought a lingam for a swami in Cuttack.

### **Maheshwar**

From there it was a long drive to Maheshwar. The road was not good for quite a distance which made it even more time consuming. We finally reached the place at dusk. The temple was on the banks of Narmada. We all headed for a bath which was cool and refreshing. After the bath we visited the Shiva temple and Shuddhanandaji

related an incident that happened a few years back. They had stopped at the same spot during their Narmada Parikrama and while preparing food a monk from nowhere visited them and asked them for food. They said the food was being prepared and would call him when it was ready. The monk said he would be in a small temple nearby on the premises. When the food was ready they invited him. He took prasad with contentment. Then he left to the small temple. After finishing our food they could not find him. They did not find him there. Others who were around said they did not see any one leave. It is still a mystery to this day who this was.

We then went up a hill to see a temple complex built by Rani Ahalya Bai. It was quiet and peaceful and the temples were beautiful. Ahalya Bai was the queen of Malwa territory and is responsible for making Indore, a small town, into a well built big city. Her own capital though was Maheshwar, a small place on the banks of Narmada. Where she built a temple complex and performed worship on special

occasions. She was a devotee of Lord Shiva and built many temples.

There is a beautiful Ganesh temple, a Shiva temple and also a temple of Sahasrabahu Arjuna who was an emperor who ruled with his capital at Maheshwar also. Then we walked down to another level of the mountain where there was another Shiva temple with huge linga. The singers in our group started singing bhajans of Lord Shiva. We all joined in the chorus of *Mahadeva, sadashiva*. It was an ecstatic moment and felt like a climax to the day's events and one could really feel the presence of Lord Shiva on the mountains. We returned back to Indore at midnight. It was a hectic but memorable trip.

### **Chamunada Temple**

Next day was a trip to Devas, famous for the Chamunda temple. Someone said it is a hard climb to the top of the mountain and I might have trouble climbing up as I had a broken ankle the year before which sometimes still would give trouble. I decided to go anyway and was praying that there should be some way for me to have darshan as I

really wanted to see this temple after all the stories I had heard about the temple. I had a pleasant surprise waiting for me. By the grace of the divine Mother we came to know that now there is a road that went all the way up and there was no need to use the walking path. As we waited for the second car to approach we bought a huge garland for the goddess.

The first temple we visited was of Tulja Devi which is also a beautiful temple. These temples are carved out of the mountain rocks and the deity is also a carved stone figure. The face is painted red with very large and powerful eyes. Our singers sang a beautiful bhajan on Durga. Then we went around to the side of the hill to the Chamunda temple. It was a huge form carved out of the mountain rock and the goddess was seated on a lion in her full splendor holding many weapons. The priest garlanded her with our flower garland and offered puja. There was also a Kalabhairava temple in the premises.

## **Ashram of Swami ShivomTirtha**

From there we went to the Ashram of Shivom Tirtha. We had heard of this swami and were also reading his book on sadhana at the Miami ashram and so it was very special to be able to visit this ashram. The place was beautiful, right on the banks of Narmada. The resident Swamis welcomed us with great love and we were treated to a nice lunch. Before we left the Swami also gave us dakshina (a token gift of money) as is the custom of respect when other monks visit. After lunch we went back to Indore and left for the airport. We returned to Hyderabad via Raipur.

### **Indore Program**

A very memorable trip in great company. It was also nice to attend the Kriya program at Indore and meet the disciples from both Indore and Bhopal and see their love and commitment to Gurudev and the extraordinary love and care they treated us with and the excellent arrangements they made.

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# PRAJNANA MISSION – SPECIAL EVENTS

**Surabhi Maha Yajna and Govatsa Pathasala  
at the Gurukulam  
6-12 June 2014**

Preparations for Surabhi Maha Yajna started from the 6<sup>th</sup> of June with the traditional ankurarpana . On the 7<sup>th</sup> of June Swami Shuddhanandaji and Swami Samarpananandaji participated in the kalsha Shobha Yatra a beautiful procession of carrying water pots to the site of the yajna , followed by samkalpa ( the pledge to perform the ceremony and the purification of the place of fire ceremony.

The Inauguration of the Go satsang in the evening started with the lighting of the lamp by Baba Prajnananandaji and other prominent monks. Balvyas Sri Radhakrishnaji Maharaj of Jodhpur , Swami Shivachidanandaji Maharaj of the Divine Life Society and many other monks were present.

Swami Samarpanananda introduced the guests on the dais. Swami Shivachidanandaji and Sri Radhakrishnaji Maharaj gave their discourses on the Glory of Mother cow. Baba

Prajnananandaji spoke of the glory of Gomata and Srikshetra. The program for the day ended with arati and the parikrama of the yajna shala.

From 8th- 11th the day started with early morning *go-samkirtan* followed by Yogasana, *surabhi mantra Japa* and meditation. Surabhi Yajna was performed daily from 8.00 AM – 1.00 Pm. In evening at 05:00pm there was Bhajan–Kirtan followed by Go-satsanga, Arati, encircling the Yajnashtala and Pushpanjali followed by Prasad. In Go-satsanga Shri Guruji, Sri Dattasharananandaji Maharaj of Pathamedha Godham, Valvyas Sri Radhakrishnaji Maharaj of Jodhpur, Rajashtan and many prominent monks from all over Odisha and India gave their discourses on the divine glory of Gomata and how to serve Gomata, how protect Gomata etc.

## **Go Vatsa Pathasala**

There was also “govatsa pathashala” organized by Sri

Radhakrishnaji Maharaj of Jodhpur, Rajashtan in the meditation Hall from 8.00 am to 1 00 pm . The Seminar started off with the blessings and inaugural talks of Baba Prajnananandaji, Sri Dattasharananandaji of Pathmeda, Swami Shuddhanandaji and Swami Samarpananandaji. 150 students registered from different parts of India as Govatsas –( children of the gomata) attended the short course and were trained in different ways of how to love and serve the Mother cow. The course was inspiring and informative with devotional singing

The ceremonies concluded with Poornahuti of Surabhi Maha Yajna on the 12<sup>th</sup>. In the afternoon there was a Go Bhandara- Feeding the cows and a Go satsanga in the evening.

Over 600 people attended to participate and receive blessings on the concluding day.

Excerpt from the talk of Duttasarananandaji Maharaj of Pathmeda Godham

S w a m i Duttasarananandaji of Pathmeda was present at our Surabhi Yajna and Govata

Pathasala events at the Gurukulam. He is the main support and example for the Gosamrakshana and related projects that our ashram is undertaking. Duttasarananandaji said he was extremely happy to be present in the land of Jagannath on the auspicious occasion of Surabhi yajna followed by the Inauguration of the Govatsa pathasala a couple of days later. Surabhi yajna also happened to be on the day of Ganga avataran and included Bhagavat charcha and Gosamrakshana talks. The following is an excerpt from his talk on that occasion at our ashram.

“*Satsang* is of utmost importance and the ultimate tool in the life of a sadhaka for the realization of God and Truth. *Satsang* can be of four different levels or grades.

The first one is where the *satsang* is held in the presence of God and we have the great blessing of holding it in Jagannath dham .( the land of Lord Jagannath)

The second level of *satsang* is to think of God realized people and to be able to serve them. This also is fulfilled for this occasion as it

is taking place in an ashram in the divine presence of Paramhansa Prajnanananda and his great lineage of Masters.

The third type of *satsang* is one in which men of pure hearts walk towards God and truth in the association of godly men whom they can imitate and follow. This condition is also fulfilled as there are several such inspiring holy personages present here from different ashrams who can be examples whom we can imitate and follow.

The fourth level of *satsang* is *svadhyaya* or scriptural study like of Ramayana, Bhagavatam and Upanishads which is also not lacking as there is the presence of Prajnananandaji and Malukpitadhipati who is considered a personification of scriptures and whose voice is considered the voice of God.

It is a great blessing and this type of rare combination of all levels of *satsang* came together only by the Grace of Sri Radha Krishna , and Go mata ( Divine mother cow).How much advantage each one of us will take of this auspicious time without wasting

a single moment depends on ourselves.

The purpose and the main goal of Goyajna and Govatsa patha sala , is the purification of nature or *prakriti* which has been polluted . The five elements that the parkriti or nature is made up of – the earth, water, fire , air and ether have all been subjected to this pollution. They have all been poisoned. This is the result of the ignorance, greed and the selfishness of the human being for short term gains.

India where for thousands of years a pure God conscious lifestyle was followed from birth to death and from early morning to retiring at night and has set an example for others to follow and realize, is now subject to this deplorable conditions. The mistake is our own. *Prakriti* is sattvic and auspicious. It is the result of our own wrong life style that has caused this. If this is not corrected the whole world would be doomed by the poison in the air we breath, the food we eat and the water we drink. All the elements will be there but will be so heavily poisoned resulting in incurable diseases

affecting all beings of the whole universe if this process continues.

The purpose and goal of Surabhi Yajna is to renew of the purity of the *Prakriti*.

We all claim to be god conscious people, following dharma and god in all our activities both material and spiritual. Even in wars people were following dharma. The Mahabharata war was fought in the dharmakshetra/ kurukshetra. Even for waging a war a sacred place was chosen where you can get sadgati if you perish. In every moment of time and place we want to experience God.

Paramahamsaji (Prajnananandaji) talked of pure *go gavya* offerings to Lord Jagannath. If the food offered to God is pure then the rest follows.

We know the story of Pandavas faced with having to feed sage Durvasa with a large retinue of saints when they themselves had already eaten and their wife Draupadi had also finished her meal and washed the Akshaya patra which will not yield any more food once she has eaten. Durvasa had gone to the river

for a bath and would soon be back for lunch and they might be cursed if food is not ready. At the time Lord Krishna appeared, saying he was hungry and wanted some food. When Draupadi appraised him of the situation, the Lord said look again in the vessel and she found a small particle of food. Lord Krishna ate it and Durvasa and his whole retinue experienced the joy of being fed a sumptuous meal and were not hungry anymore.

Lord Jagannath should be offered *Go gavya*. The whole universe is the presence of Lord Jagannath. Just like the Sun is not separate from the Sunshine the Lord of the Universe is not separate from the Universe. If the Lord gets *go gavya* every one gets the result.

If *Pancha gavya* are used in the proper way the purity of earth can be restored and the earth can regain its lost energy. Similarly the other elements can also be purified. Water is known for its *rasa*. *Gomutra* has been referred to as the best *rasa* and has been called *jal*. With *Go mutra* water is purified.

The poisonous particles in the air are destroyed and the

sattvic nature of the air is increased by the mere presence and touch of the cows. By coming into contact of the body of cows that are well taken care of and are content the air is purified.

Fire can regain its purity by the *Go ghrita* , the ghee that is offered as oblations into the fire .

Through the breath and the vocal sound of the cow the sky is said to be purified. By applying *gomaya* the earth is purified and disinfected. The mind and intellect are purified by eating milk products of Cow as milk , curds and ghee.

There are many physical and health benefits but even more are the spiritual benefits which we can get by restoring *Gomata* and *Govamsa* to the former position that was given during vedic culture. *Go upasana* is a great spiritual *sadhana*. In many *sadhana*'s the *sadhak* ( the seeker) goes towards the *sadhya* ( goal) but through *go seva* the *sadhya*(goal) comes towards the *sadhak* (seeker).

I pray to Lord Jagannath of Puri to give inspiration to all to use *go gavya* in each house and for *go gavya* to be offered

to all gods of Jagannath mandir and eventually be extended to all temples and gods all over India.

Let all *govamsha* young and old, healthy or not healthy be taken care of well. Let there be proper use of dairy from the milk yielding cows and let there be proper use of *gomaya* and *go mutra* from those not yielding milk. Let all *Govamsha* be happy and content.

I conclude my talk surrendering to god and Gomata.”

### **Gokalyan Odia magazine**

A Odiya magazine was inaugurated in the presence of Paramahansa Prajnanananda at Sri Ramachandra Bhavan, Cuttack. Guests included Babaji Bipin Bihari Das, Swami Aseemananda Saraswati, Baba Radhacharan Das, Manorama Mahapatra and Guruprasad Mishra to name a few. Prof Bhabani Das Editor of the magazine coordinated the program.

**Guru Purnima 2014,**

**At Hariharananda Gurukulam**

Prajnana Mission celebrated Guru Purnima in memory of the great sage

Maharshi Veda Vyas and also to honor all Gurus belonging to all lineages. The celebrations were held from 10<sup>th</sup> July to 12<sup>th</sup> July at Hariharananda Gurukulam, Balighai, Puri in the divine presence of our beloved Guruji Paramahansa Prajnananandaji. Swami Shuddhanandaji, Swami Samarpananandaji, and Swami Achalanandaji were also present during the celebrations. People came from various states like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. A total of about 1,500 people congregated on the premises of Hariharananda Gurukulam during the celebrations.

Guided meditations were conducted each day for all the participants in four different languages (English, Odia, Hindi, and Telugu). Guruji personally answered the queries of kriyavans regarding kriya techniques, problems in personal lives and doubts on scriptural studies in the Q&A sessions

during the seminar. Baba's discourses covered the evolving of Guru Parampara beginning with Lord Narayana. The essence of his Guru Purnima talk stressed on faith in Guru and that whatever comes from guru is direct message of God for which Guru is the medium.

Several interested guests were initiated into Kriya and taught the technique. Guru Paduka puja followed by a fire ceremony and new book releases took place on Guru Purnima day at the Guru Mandir. There were also four new monk initiations on Guru Purnima day. Yogacharya Shakuntala Pandya Ma became Swami Samtruptananda Giri, Smt. Jayanti Padhi became Swami Shashwatananda Giri, Sri Padmalochana Padhi became Swami Sampurnananda Giri and Sri Vashisth Baba became Swami Svatantrananda Giri. The celebrations culminated with Mahaprasad for all devotees.

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***Visit our web site:***

***www. prajnanamission.org***

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## AROUND THE WORLD

### **Gurupurnima**

Gurupurnima was celebrated at all ashrams with Gurupaduka puja , Fire ceremony, special worship , meditation, seminars and discourses.

Our Joliet Ashram, Kriya Vedanta Gurukulam Celebrated Guru Purnima along with their foundation day with an Interfaith Conference. An extraordinary panel of spiritual leaders from Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism gathered to discuss on the topic “Acts Of Compassion”. The topic of discussion also commemorates the 40th year anniversary of spiritual master Paramahansa Hariharananda’s travel to west. The event attracted over 170 citizens from various local communities. A lively Q&A and free flowing discussion followed after the presentation. Swami Atmavidyananda Giri presented vote of thanks and closed the conference with a call to become compassionate to “our fellow beings, to our family and friends, and finally to our own self.”

### **Birthday Celebrations of Baba Prajnananandaji**

With great delight residents and Kriyavans celebrated the 55<sup>th</sup> birthday of our beloved Guruji Paramahansa Prajnanananda who has dedicated his life to carry forward Gurudev’s mission and ideals. The day started with a regular meditation schedule at 5 AM. As is the practice during special days, Gurupaduka puja and fire ceremony were performed at Shri Guru Mandir from 9 AM to 12 noon. After the fire ceremony the participants meditated seeking the blessings of God and Gurus. More than 100 people partook afternoon Prasad.

It is a practice for disciples to do Neta Bandha in the evening at the top of Shri Mandir (Jagannath Mandir), Puri on this day to celebrate the birthday of Shri Guruji. People from Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, and Puri congregated at Shri Mandir to witness Neta Bandha. Praying for Guruji, Kriyavans sponsored for lighting a ‘deep’ inside the sanctum sanctorium of Shri Mandir for the whole day. In

the evening at Shri Mandir about 150 people partook Mahaprasad.

All ashrams and centers around the globe celebrated the Birthday of Baba Prajnananandaji on August 10<sup>th</sup> with special worship, meditations, Seminars, discourses and satsang and prayers for Baba's continued spiritual guidance.

### **Annual Fall Retreat and Foundation Day, Mother Center U.S.A September 17-24**

The Annual Fall Retreat at the Mother Center was well attended by national and international participants. Swami Atmavidyanandaji conducted the retreat along with Yogacharya John Thomas Baba and the resident monks and Brahmacharis. Swami Atmavidyanandaji conducted the classes. The six day retreat of several guided meditations, and inspiring discourses intensified the practice of Kriya disciples. September 22<sup>nd</sup>, the foundation day was celebrated with special worship and meditation and discourses.

### **New Ashram to Be Inaugurated At Denver, Colarado**

**Plans are in progress to inaugurate a new ashram at Denver in early October.**

## **NEWS FROM AUSTRALIA.**

### **Paramahamsa Prajnanananda's visit**

Australia Kriyavans were blessed to have the divine company of Paramahamsa Prajnananandaji and Swami Atmavidyananda Giri from 7<sup>th</sup> May till 11<sup>th</sup> May 2014. The five day Retreat was held at the Vision Valley Retreat center, close Sydney. Located on a National Park, the retreat center provided participants the opportunity for quiet contemplation in a serene and natural setting.

### **Mind Body Spirit Festival of Sydney**

The Kriya Group of Sydney participated in the Mind Body Spirit Festival of Sydney which is one of the biggest new age festivals in Australia for a third time. More than 500 people visited our stall during the 3 day event. Many have expressed their desire to know more about Kriya Yoga and many of our publications were sold.

### **The Annual Kriya Program of Australia will be held from Sept- Oct 2014.**

The program is scheduled to commence on the 14th September 2012, specific dates at different locations please refer to the website [www.kriya.org.au](http://www.kriya.org.au)

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