

Sthita Prajna



Guru Vandana

*samsara-davanala-lidha-loka-
tranayakarunya-ghanaghanatwam
praptasyakalyana-gunarnavasya
vandegurohsri-charanaravindam*

The spiritual master is receiving benediction from the ocean of mercy. Just as a cloud pours water on a forest fire to extinguish it, so the spiritual master delivers the materially afflicted world by extinguishing the blazing fire of material existence. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.

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FROM THE EDITORS :

We welcome the New Year with the words of Paramahansa Prajnananadaji.

“Let us begin this New Year with a new light of love and compassion, with a new understanding of seeing good and doing good. Let this New Year be a turning point in our lives.”

In Message from the Master, Gurudev elaborates on – “Therefore be a yogi”. Prajnanavani talks of the glory of Lord Shiva, the originator of time and the destroyer of time, and takes you to the timeless state.

Myths and Metaphors takes us to the Mahabharata, the inner story of each human life.

“Enjoyment or fulfillment and who experiences?” is the gist of the Yoga Sutra.

The series on Valuable volumes continues with Akshara Tattwa and Jnanasankalini Tantra.

Year 2016 celebrated the beginnings of two new ashrams – one in Texas, USA and another near Sydney, Australia.

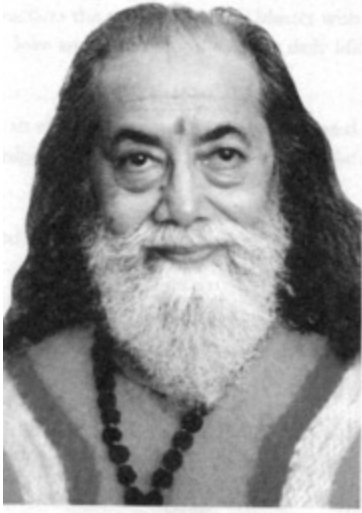
We bring you many messages of the Gurus and news of the ever expanding activities of Prajnana Mission around the globe.

We thank our sponsors for their continued support and wish you all a very happy and spiritual New Year.

MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

TASMAD YOGI BHAVARJUNA

– THEREFORE, BE A YOGI



*Brahmanandam
paramasukhadam
Kevalam jnanamurtim
dvandvatita gagana
sadrisam
tattvamasyadilakshyam
ekam nityam
vimalamachalam
sarvadhishakshibhutam
bhavatitam trigunarahitam
sadgurum tam namami*

“I bow to him, my guru preceptor, the absolute, who is the bliss of Brahman, the bestower of the highest joy, and the personification of knowledge. Shri Guru is beyond

duality, all-pervasive like the sky, and the object of the great Upanishadic statement “Thou art That.” He is one, eternal, pure, steady—the witness of all thoughts, beyond all modification, and free from the three *gunas*. (Guru Gita, verse 111)

The goal, indeed, is indicated by the great teachings of the Upanishads: Thou art That, the One, eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of the functioning of the intellect, who is beyond all *bhavas* (mental conditions) and triple qualities of nature.

brahmanandam
“Transcendental joy,
bliss.”

paramasukhadam
“Real happiness”
kevalamjnanamurtim

“You are merged in knowledge, consciousness, superconsciousness, and cosmic consciousness.”

You are in the conscious state, in the divine abode of the fontanel.

dvandvatitam

“Beyond duality.” You are merged in unity and love.

ekam nityam vimalamachalam

“One, eternal, pure and immovable.”

At present, you do not know that your body and soul are separate: you feel that they are one. This same unity you are to feel everywhere. If you can maintain this state, you will be pure and perfect within a short period.

sarvadhishakshibhutam

“You are witnessing awareness.”

Constant alertness and constant perception of the Self in the gross body is needed. Whatever you are doing, it is really done by Him. In the *Glory of the Gita* (Gita Mahatmyam, verse 4) it is said:

gitasugita kartavya

“Read and practice the Gita nicely.”

Whatever you study in the scriptures should be applied in your daily life. If you only read the Bhagavad Gita or the Bible, it will produce nothing, as it is only theoretical knowledge. Your life should become the Bible or the

Bhagavad Gita. If you only read the menu in the restaurant and commit it to memory, your belly will not be filled, or if you see food in the restaurant - even if it is a huge quantity - your hunger will not be appeased. If you only read the prescription written by the doctor, even a hundred times - your disease will not disappear. You have to practice what is taught in the scriptures. You have to practice some discipline like *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, and *pranayama*. *Yama* is self-discipline. *Niyama* is the practice of values in life, like prayer, study, and purity. *Asana* is control over the movements of the body. *Pranayama* is regulation of the breath. The definition of *pranayama* is given in the Yoga Sutra (Sadhana Pada, sutra 49):

tasmin sati svasa

*prasvasayor gati vichhedaha
pranayamah*

“After mastering the body, one must practice control of *prana* by supporting the motion of inhalation and exhalation.”

It is the rest of *prana*. By controlling your body and breath, you will get taste of

calmness, love, and peace. In Bhagavad gita (4:29) it is said:

*apanejuhvatipranam
paranapanam
tathapare
pranapana gaturuddhva
pranapana parayana*

“Others offer their exhalation (*prana*) as an oblation of external air. Still others offer *apana* (inhalation) as oblation to *prana*, and in this way they stop the flow of inhalation and exhalation. They practice *pranayama* (breath regulation).”

When you are really merged in the Divine, then there is no inhalation and no exhalation, as you are established in the soul. It is said in the Bhagavad Gita (4:30):

prananpraneshujhvati

“You are to offer *pranas* in *prana*. The breath is offered in the tranquil state of *prana*.”

It means that you are merged in the Divine. You have no thoughts, and no inhalation or exhalation. You have offered your life to the cosmic life, and merged with eternity.

gitasugitakartavya

“Read and practice the Gita.”

When you read the scriptures, whether it be the Bhagavad Gita or the Bible, follow it sincerely. Look at its practical aspect. If you can apply to your life the instructions given, then you will be a highly realized person. “Be still, and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46:10) this is the teaching of the Bible. It is the talk of God. Find out how to be still. The body, the breath, and the mind should be kept in harmony, rhythm, and calmness. However, it has not yet become your nature because you are still restless, not peaceful, and you are unable to remain in the divine state. Calmness and peace is your real nature, but you have lost it out of ignorance. You have to regain it through your self-effort.

Arjuna forgot his own identity, and Lord Krishna reminded him of his nature. He is teaching Arjuna, in the Bhagavad Gita, to be established in his true nature of calmness and peace. The entire text is the message for self-transformation through sincere effort:

*parthaya pratibodhitam
bhagavatam narayanena
svayam*

“Lord Narayana himself, is teaching Partha (the other name of Arjuna) to awaken him from the sleep of ignorance.” (Gita Dhyanam, verse 1, Meditation on the Gita)

The Bhagavad Gita is the talk of God. It is the teaching of Lord Krishna to Arjuna. Arjuna, a-rajji-na, although a mighty hero, was in bondage, like the one who is tied with a rope. The negative qualities, or the *kurupaksha*, weakened him, “I will not fight for transformation. I will remain engrossed in my old habits.” You all are in that state and need thorough control over body and mind to overcome the weakness of ignorance. Once this veil of ignorance is removed, then you are free, tied no more, having no bondage. You will be a free bird in the free air. Thou art That. If you feel that this is the talk of God, then you will understand the instruction. In the Bhagavad gita (6:46), it is said:

*tapasvibhyodhiko yogi
jnanihyobhi matodhika
karmibhyauchadhiko yogi
tasmad yogibhavarjuna*

“O Arjuna, I tell you to become a yogi, because yogis are superior to those who lead

a life of penance. They are greater than highly educated scholars of scriptures, and they are even more advanced than people who mechanically perform rites and rituals to ensure the fruit of their work.”

The Lord said to Arjuna, “Be a yogi.” Yogi means feeling that your body and soul are united. The body is perishable, and the soul is imperishable. You are the soul, immortal and free — only temporarily in the body.

There are many paths and disciplines of yoga. One is Kriya Yoga. In the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali (Sadhana Pada, sutra 1), Kriya Yoga is described as follows:

*tapah svadhyayah
eshwarapranidhanani kriya
yogah*

“Self discipline, self study, and surrender to God is Kriya Yoga.”

Be a practical person in spiritual life. Let your every action be an offering. In this verse, the Lord says:

tapasvibhyodhiko yogi

“A yogi is far better than a *tapasvi*, the person following austere practice.”

Ritualistic people give the oblation of *ghee* in the external fire. It is only external worship. But the yogi offers the oblation of inhalation and exhalation to the real soul fire inside the cranium. This is *tapasya*, or penance. Constantly, you are to watch the Self. If you do not give the oblation of breath to the divine fire in the soul, then immediately your body will be dead. The fire of the power of God is in the seven centers, as seven lights in the body. Give oblation to each center through your daily activities.

jnanibhyobhi matodhika

“A yogi is better than a person of mere knowledge.”

Theoretical knowledge, or book information, is not true knowledge. Real knowledge comes through direct experience. If one thinks, prematurely, that he knows everything without the real experience, he cannot be realized. If you are climbing up the coconut tree and half way up you let go, then you are bound to fall. Go and climb up the tree, sit and cut the coconut, drink its water and enjoy. Only then you will be the knower of the Self.

karmibhyaschadhiko yogi

“A yogi is superior to one who is a man of action who is busy with many activities.

People practice Karma Yoga, helping other people. It is good, but in helping, if you develop ego and pride, then you have achieved nothing. A yogi is free from ego. He sees the presence of God in all. The real yogi, who always watches God in every step of his work, is far better than others. You should keep your attention focused and be united with God in all activities, and then you will get peace, joy and bliss. In all work, you are to feel that you are the soul, activating through the body. Any work you are doing, it is done by Him.

tasmad yogi bhavarjuna

“O Arjuna, be thou a yogi.”

Be always in the state of yoga, or union. You are never separated from God, as the wave is never separated from the ocean. You are always united with God, in love. Feel that constant union and live in this state. The next verse (6:47) says:

*yoginam apisarvesham
madgatenantaratmanah
shraddhavan bhajateyomam
sameyukta tamomatah*

“Among all the yogis, those whose mind is ever fixed in Me, who are extremely devoted to Me with unflinching love and loyalty, who maintain implicit faith, and who practice meditation with single-minded devotion, are My favorites.”

Love is the supreme state. Practice with love. Feel love within. God is love. God can be easily experienced with love. Among all yogis, one who is emerged and saturated in the soul, perceiving the power of God within, will feel the divine ecstasy, joy and love.

Shraddha is love and faith. Maintain deep love for God, gurus, and scriptures. Through love and faith, practice a life of yoga and discipline. It will give you real transformation and spiritual attainment. Do not waste time. Love God from the core of your heart, then you will be the best among yogis.

There are many types of yogis: *japa* yogi, remembering God through chanting; *mantra* yogi, those who love God through the use of mantras; *tantra* yogi, those trying to perceive God through some special practices; and there are others. But the real yogi is one who is always absorbed in God. He is always united with God, in thoughts, words, and deeds. Be a person of faith and devotion. Practice with faith, and develop more love and devotion. Be united with me, with love and devotion. Love is the bond. Love is the force of attraction for ultimate union. From joy you have come, in joy you are living, and in joy you are to return. This means that you can always be in divine joy, but it depends upon your practice and perception.

PRAJNANAVANI - THE VOICE OF WISDOM

THE STORY OF MARKANDEYA



*Om trayambakamyajamahesygandhimpushthivardhanam
Urvarukamivabandhananmrityormukhiyamamritat*

In ancient India, there was a sage named Mrikandu. He was a great *rishi* who spent his time in meditation, prayer, and study. His wife was named Marudvati. For a long time they had no children. In India, especially at that time, being childless was considered inauspicious; thus, they both prayed to Lord Shiva, who is called Ashutosha, because he can be pleased easily. Lord Shiva appeared to them and said, "I am pleased with you,

Mrikandu and Marudvati. Tell me your wish." When they expressed their desire to have a child, the Lord said, "Do you want a hundred sons who will live for a long time but will all be foolish? Or, do you want one very intelligent son who will live for only sixteen years?"

They at once said, "Lord give us that one intelligent son even though his life will be short-lived." Lord Shiva said, "Good! You shall have him." In due time, they were blessed

with a son. He was named Markandeya (son of Mrikandu). The boy grew to be very intelligent and handsome. When the young boy came of age, the *rishi* initiated him with the sacred thread. Markandeya learned the Vedas and *shastras* (scriptures) easily. Everyone liked him because he was exemplary in every manner. Moreover, he was also extremely dear to his parents and others.

As the boy was nearing his sixteenth year, the *rishi* and his wife were becoming increasingly sad. One day, Markandeya asked his father, "Father, why do you look so sad?" The *rishi* said, "My child! What shall I say? When Lord Shiva gave you to us, he said you would live only sixteen years. You are now about to reach that age. How can we bear to lose you, as we will, at the end of this period?"

Markandeya said, "My adorable father! Is that the reason? Lord Shiva is very kind to his devotees. You yourself told me that. I have read in the Puranas that he has saved many from death before. I shall, therefore, worship Lord Shiva day and night from this day

forth. He will surely save me too!" Rishi Mrikandu was very happy to hear his son say this. He blessed his son, and the mother also hugged and kissed him.

Markandeya built a *shiva lingam* on the seashore and started worshipping Lord Shiva morning, noon, and night. He meditated, chanted mantras, sang *bhajans*, and often danced in joy.

On the last day, Markandeya was about to do his worship. And as per his destiny, the messengers of Yama came to take away his soul but failed to approach him as he ceaselessly repeated Lord Shiva's name. Then Yama himself came riding in on a buffalo. He was holding a noose in his hand. He said to Markandeya, "Stop your chanting! Young boy, your life in this world is over. Be ready to die!"

Markandeya refused, warning Yama that he was committing an offense against Lord Shiva. Yama, however, proclaimed that not even Lord Shiva could stop him. The angry and agitated Yam assumed a fearsome form and threw his noose to capture Markandeya,

who embraced the *shiva lingam*. Markandeya was not afraid and clung to the *lingam*, as one clings to one's mother.

When the noose touched the *lingam*, Lord Shiva emerged from it and struck Yama with his trident and kicked his chest, killing the lord of death. Sages, gods, and other beings appeared to praise Lord Shiva, who blessed Markandeya to remain a youth of sixteen for seven *kalpas* (eons). He became one of the eight immortals through divine grace, like Ashvatthama, Bali, Vyasa, Hanuman, Vibhishana, Kripacharya, and Parshurama, who are still present in their forms.

Since there was now no one in the world to take beings to their death, Mother Earth became burdened. The earth, the celestials, and Markandeya invoked Lord Shiva to revive Yama. Once again, Lord Shiva touched Yama with his foot, bringing him back to life. Yama worshiped Lord Shiva to atone for his mistakes. He also promised never to touch Lord Shiva's devotees. It is only Lord Shiva who has absolute authority on his devotees.

Markandeya went home and fell at the feet of his parents. They embraced him and wept with joy. In time, Markandeya became a great *rishi*, who to this day, continues to live on earth.

A prominent Purana is attributed to Sage Markandeya, and a small part of it is popularly known as ShriShriChandi, or the Devi Mahatmya. Many people believe that Sage Markandeya lives in Puri. At the time of dissolution of creation, when there was only water everywhere the sage had seen the Lord floating on a banyan leaf as BalaMukunda. In Puri, there is a temple of Lord Shiva named Markandeshwara, and a holy pond near it bears witness to the sag's presence.

The Inner Meaning

The name of the father, Mrikandu, is derived from *mrigasyakandu*, which means one who has desire for knowledge and desire for immortality. Marudvati is the mother, whose name implies love for *marut*, the air or breath. Their child was Markandeya, the though or desire of Mrikandu, which was nothing but immortality; hence, one who

loves immortality or attains immortality is Markandeya.

We should also understand the meaning of the incident in which Lord Shiva saved Markandeya. The child followed the advice of his parents and led his life accordingly. Eventually, he was saved through the power of Lord Shiva's grace (*anugrahaShakti*), which lovingly descended upon this special child who attained the state of immortality and liberation while living. Consequently, he was no longer bound by *kala* (time). He had attained oneness with Lord Mrityunjaya. Lord shiva manifested to defeat Yama and became angry with him because he had the audacity to

encircle the *lingam* with his noose. This indicates that Lord Shiva is beyond death, and thus time has no influence on him. He is the originator of time (Mahakala) and destroyer of time (Kalari). Time is Yama, and to go to the timeless state is the grace of Lord Shiva. There is a beautiful prayer (*MahamrityunjayaStotram*) to Lord Shiva:

*Om mrityunjaya mahadeva
trahimam
sharanagatam
janmamrity jaravyadhi
piditam karmabandhanaih*

“O Mrityunjaya, the great *deva*, protect me, I am at your shelter. I am suffering from births, death, old age, diseases, and the bondage of my own karma.”

Mahamrityunjaya Mantra

*Om trayambakamyajamahesugandhimpushthivardhanam
Urvarukamivabandhananmrityormukshiya ma mritat*

We worship the fragrant, three eyed Lord Shiva who nourishes us. May he liberate us from the bondage of death like the Urvaruka fruit (which separates effortlessly from the vine). May He not let us turn away from immortality.

THE BIRTH OF PARAMAHAMSA YOGANANDA A LIFE OF LOVE AND LIBERATION

Love is often a topic for discussions, but is love merely a word? Can love be possessive or selfish? Is love no more than sacrifice? Love is inner fulfilment. Love is a manifestation of purity, divinity and liberty in every step of life, in every moment of time. Love is the experience of our divine nature. Love is the supreme purifier. Love transforms life. Love never fails.

“One who jumps into the ocean of love dies and survives at the same time”, sang a poet-saint in divine ecstasy. When immersed in real love one’s ego dies, but one lives in purity and perfection. That love can conquer everything is not a mere way of saying, but it is widely exemplified through the lives of great saints, exceptional souls as Paramahansa Yogananda, a great gift of God to Humanity. His life and teachings, through his writings and his divine messages, still thrill the hearts of people with love and devotion.

Born on the 5th of January 1893, during a chilly winter, at the foothill of the Himalayas in the holy city of Gorakhpur, he came to warm not only the lives of his own parents, but also of mankind. Mukunda, later known as Paramahansa Yogananda, became a spiritual dynamo known throughout the world. Bhagavati Charan Ghosh and Gyana Prabha Ghosh, his devoted parents, whose lives had already been transformed through the divine touch of Shri Lahiri Mahasaya, were instrumental in providing an environment for the evolution of the body, mind and spirit of this child.

Bhagavati Charan Ghosh led an honest, strict and disciplined life. Gyana Prabha was an extremely pious lady with a kind and tender heart, which kindled the spark of love in the life of the child Mukunda. This type of environment and opportunity fulfils the declaration of the Lord in the Bhagavad Gita VI/42, that a yogi, a spiritually advanced soul,

is born into a family of yogis, getting ample opportunity for self-evolution and advancement.

THE PROPHECY

Shri Lahiri Mahasaya whose life was a symbol of the integration of action and renunciation, was the guru and guide of Bhagavati and Gyana Prabha, It is a customary tradition in India to offer one's baby at the feet of the guru for blessings and purification. The divine parents took Mukunda to their beloved guru when he was just a baby, Lahiri Baba held him lovingly in his arms and blessed him with spoken and unspoken words. Shri Lahiri Mahasaya was a divine touchstone with transforming powers. It is an old legendary belief that a touchstone can

transform ordinary metal into gold, so when the divine guru is that touchstone, through the power of his divine love and grace, disciples are transformed.

This great yogi, with deep insight and intuition could easily see the past, present and future. He looked at Mukunda's eyes and forehead and forecast, "This is not an ordinary child. He is blessed with supremely divine qualities. He is here with a great mission to fulfill. One day, this child will become a spiritual engine to carry many seeking souls to the feet of the Lord, with love and care". The prophecy of this great divine guru proved to be true and his blessings were always with Mukunda throughout his life.

The Science of Kriya Yoga

Kriya Yoga is a simple, psychophysiological method by which the human blood is decarbonized and recharged with oxygen. The atoms of this extra oxygen are transmuted into life current to rejuvenate the brain and spinal centers. By stopping the accumulation of venous blood, the yogi is able to lessen or prevent the decay of tissues; the advanced *yogi* transmutes his cells into pure energy. Elijah, Jesus, Kabir and other prophets were past masters in the use of *Kriya* or a similar technique, by which they caused their bodies to dematerialize at will.

ParamahansaYogananda

(Autobiography of a yogi Chapter: 26)

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR 2017

Loving and Divine Soul,

Let the choicest blessings of God and the masters be upon all of you. I take this opportunity to pray for you as we prepare to celebrate Christmas and welcome in the 2017 New Year.

Time flows like a river. The water in the river is sweet. If this water is not used, it ultimately flows back to the ocean and becomes salty. Time is precious and does not wait for anyone. If we do not use it, an opportunity will slip from our hands. Our beloved Shri Gurudev often said, "Opportunity must not be neglected, for it may never return." But what do we really do every day? Our precious time and talent, our minds and memory, although precious, are we using them for our evolution? This precious time will not come back to us again. It flows back to the timeless spirit or into a state of death.

We choose the quality of our lives and relationships. We have the freedom to use our God-given opportunities to make

our lives useful for ourselves and for others. Unfortunately, many of us abuse this treasure. A beautiful verse in Sanskrit describes human nature with a beautiful comparison:

sadgunah gunam icchanti
dosham icchanti pamarah
makshikah vranam
icchanti madhum icchanti
bhramarah

"As flies seek filthy things or pus, and bees search for a source of honey in flowers, people with vices look for faults in others, while noble and good people always see goodness in others."

Let us reflect upon our lives and find out what kind of people we are. Are we good or bad? What are our minds like — flies or bees? Do we try to find faults in others or do we see goodness in all?

The answer will reveal what kind of life we are leading. A faultfinding nature is a great vice and we should eliminate it. It is a virus that can bring a host of miseries into life.

Seeing good in others is the door to see God in all. It is possible only when we become good and do good to others.

This year, from 5 January 2017 to 5 January 2018, we will celebrate the 125th anniversary of the birth of our great Gurudev Paramahansa Yoganandaji who always emphasized that we should be free from finding fault. We should transform our lives with the beginning of this new year.

Let us begin this new year with a new light of love and compassion, with a new understanding of seeing good and doing good. Let this new year be a turning point in our lives. Let us all use our precious time to make ourselves divine and ultimately make this beautiful world a real paradise.

Wishing you all a prosperous and spiritual New Year.

With Love,
Prajnanananda



RBTC at Hariharananda Gurukulam

Teachings of the Masters

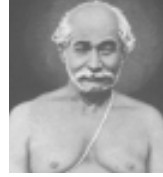


“To renounce the world is not easy. Wherever man is, the world clings to him.”

Mahavatara Babaji

“There is not work without desire Work which is duty bound is also born of some desire.”

Lahiri Mahasaya



“The endless, eternal supreme Self lives equally in all, and never perishes with the body. The ignorant and unrealized allude to it as death.”

Swami Shriyukteshwar

“When your body is steady and straight, your breath will become rhythmical and your life will be beautiful.”

Sanyal Mahasaya



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

Paramahansa Yogananda

“Whatever pressing engagement a person might have, if is able to sit silently for a while, he will get great strength.”

Swami Satyananda



“In every moment perceive unity in diversity and diversity in unity.”

Paramahansa Hariharananda

“Love is based on faith and trust. Love increase as faith becomes stronger. Doubt is a breeding ground for difficulties. Where there is love, there is no place for doubt. When we have pledged our trust in God, love gives us the strength to face all the challenges of life.”

Paramahansa Prajnanananda



MYTHS AND METAPHORS

MAHABHARATA

THE CHILDREN OF PANDU AND DHARITARASHTRA



The Five Pandavas

Pandu and Kunti had three children: Yudhishtira, Bhima, and Arjuna. Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Pandavas, was calm and quiet, peace-loving and balanced. *Yudhi* means “battle,” and *sthira* means “calm, tranquil, well composed, or undisturbed.” In the battle of life, the one who is calm and not disturbed is Yudhishtira. One who sees the good in all is Yudhishtira. Yudhishtira is in the throat center, representing sky or ether, which is always undisturbed and tranquil. Excellence in the throat center

means being religious and philosophical.

Bhima means “ferocious,” “powerful,” and “the place of wind,” in other words, the breath. Who is powerful in this body or in our lives? It is Bhima, breath, the son of Vayu (air, wind). The breath in each human being is the son of air. The heart is the place of emotion, which is of the air element. The real strength in us is the breath. Breath is our beauty, strength, brainpower, memory, and wealth. When the breath is restless, our entire life is turbulent. When there is no

breath, there is death. Bhima is present in the heart center, in the form of breath. When anger comes, we become ferocious. In order to remain in a state of peace, joy, and love, the ferocious wind or breath must be controlled.

In the heart center, emotions should be harmonized. Emotions should neither be suppressed nor expressed. Suppressed emotions may result in an explosion or emotional breakdown. People tend not to like it when emotions are expressed. When someone is always angry or sad, people do not like to be near that person. Hence, the only solution is to neutralize emotions by meditation and right action. One should meditate and find out why something has happened. If it is something that one cannot change, accept it. If it is something that can be changed, be strong and change it. For everything, there is a time. So have patience. The farmer is cultivating today to reap the harvest in due course. If there is a disaster, like a storm, he may not get the harvest. But he did his best, and without being heartbroken, he will try again the next time. What

cannot be changed has to be accepted. One can accept with a smile or with a tear. When smiling at a trouble, the trouble is not a trouble anymore. When you cry in trouble, it becomes manifold and unbearable. Emotional balance is excellence in the heart center. Have a good heart. If the heart is full of ego, hatred, jealousy, anger, and hypocrisy, it is diseased. Remember: weak people become angry or upset easily.

Arjuna has many names, the least common of which is Dviti Krishna. *Dviti* means “second.” So Arjuna was Krishna, the second. Krishna is dark and Arjuna is fair. The relationship between the two was close because of their nature and understanding; they were truly good compliments to each other. They loved to be together even in many difficult situations. If Krishna is the object, then Arjuna is the image. The image cannot exist without the object. Without Krishna, Arjuna has no existence and without Arjuna, Krishna could not manifest his greatness. Because of this, Krishna became the chariot driver of Arjuna on the battlefield of the Mahabharata.

In the navel center is *agnitattwa*, or the fire principle. Arjuna is in the navel center, representing the fire element. Another meaning of Arjuna is “no rope” (*a*, meaning “no,” and *rajju*, meaning “rope,” a symbol of bondage; *na* means “no”). Although he is free, he thinks he is in bondage. We are free if we think we are the soul. But we always think that we have so many responsibilities, and we are bound to so many things. If the soul leaves the body, where is the responsibility? Work with a sense of detachment and watch who is helping you to work; then, you are free. Do not be attached to work only, always forgetting God.

Next to breath, the body’s second most important need is food. Through food we are attached to the body. In truth, we are all *arajju* (not bound). But we do not realize our freedom and believe we are in bondage. We are all free, but we think; “I am limited. I am in bondage. I am unhappy. I am impure. I am sad.” All these are words of limitation or bondage.

Once in a *gurukulam*, a young, new disciple was

assigned to take care of the cows by his guru. He took the cows to the forest, brought them back, and tied all of them with ropes to the poles, except for one cow for which he had no pole or rope. Since he could not let it roam free, he was at a loss to know what to do. The guru was passing by, and seeing his dilemma, suggested tying the cow with an imaginary rope to an imaginary pole and then observing it. The cow behaved exactly like the other cows, even though it was free. The disciple exclaimed that the cow was a fool to think it was bound. To which the guru replied that the cow is like a human being, who is essentially the soul and is really free, yet thinks he is in bondage to many things, such as money, sex, food, ego, and intellect. The soul is ever free, pure and divine, eternal and immortal, and we should realize that we are the soul. As long as the soul remains in the body enjoy this life but with a sense of detachment. Swami Shriyukteshwarji always used to say, “Be compassionately detached and roam in this world like a lion.” But, instead, we are passionately attached just like Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita was attached.

Madri was the mother of Nakula and Sahadeva, the other two Pandava brothers. *Na* means, “no,” while *kula* is “the embankment, the boundary, or the limitation of a river.” Thus Nakula is means “boundless or endless flow of water.” Nakula is the symbol of energy in the sacral center of the spine that represents endless sexual desire of passion. In the sacral center, there is water. Hence, because Nakula (the endless flow of water) is there, it means that sexual joy has no limits. God made man and woman to continue His creation; the purpose of procreation was not for sensual gratification. In nature, the animals mate only to have offspring. They have a mating season and are more bound by natural rhythms than humankind. Humans are more turbulent, restless, and irregular in behaviour. Humans have no specified season for enjoyment, and their relative freedom or will and choice most often merely increases their restlessness. But if this center is properly controlled, one can attain excellence. Sexual desire is a procreative energy that can be used for a creative purpose, but people do not know how to use this energy. Instead, they spend

a lot of time and energy searching for something that can never satisfy them.

The name Sahadeva consists of two words: *saha* and *deva*. *Saha* means “with,” and *deva* means “vacuum or space.” In the bottom center, the earth element is present; with earth and vacuum, all material prosperity is possible. Essentially, all material prosperity is nothing but dust. Everything we possess — A house, a car, or a gold bar — everything ultimately comes from the soil. Even the body is made of dust. Like the Christian clergymen often say while burying a body, “From ashes to ashes, dust to dust.” Whatever worldly possessions or material prosperity is in this world, it is because of earth and vacuum (space). In truth, material desires are not bad, but they do need to be regulated. It is good to have material excellence, but if you forget God in the process, then it is bad. Sahadeva, the youngest Pandava brother, symbolizes material and worldly propensities in the coccyx (bottom center) of the spine. Needless to say, many people work hard to get material prosperity. However, another way to get material prosperity

is to meditate more, and through that one prospers materially. When one meditates, one leaves everything. Nevertheless, one attains material prosperity, even though one is not meditating for it. There are two outlooks: one is to work hard during the week in order to get money and have a luxurious and comfortable life. Another is to meditate with the objective being self-development and realization, and through that, material excellence will come. One does not desire it, but it comes.

Thus, these five Pandavas are the children of knowledge that abide in the five chakras. What does this mean? It means one who is a seeker must be knowledgeable and moderate in the use of the money center, sexual center, food center, heart center, and throat center, for the evolution in life and attainment of success.

The Kauravas

Dhritarashtra was blessed with one hundred children from Gandhari. The eldest son was Duryodhana and the second was Duhshasana. One of Dhritarashtra's sons from his other wife, Shaivya, was named Yuyutsu, who later

left the Kauravas during the battle of the Mahabharata and joined the Pandavas. *Yuyutsu* means "desire to fight" (with evil). Gandhari also had a daughter whose name was Duhshala. The Pandavas, the sons of Pandu with Kunti and Madri, and the Kauravas, the children of Dhritarashtra and Gandhari, were cousins.

The Pandavas and the Kauravas

The Pandavas were born in the forest and the Kauravas were born in the palace in the city. The city is a symbol of restlessness, temptation, and negative ideas and thoughts. The forest is the symbol of calm, nature, purity, and knowledge. Being born in the forest, the Pandavas lived in hermitages in the company of *rishis*. During those days, saints and sages typically lived in the forests. John the Baptist lived in a forest. Likewise, Moses spent much time away from society and cities. In Indian mythology, hundreds of seekers went to the forest in quest of the experience of divinity. Even children were educated in the forest. Growing up in such an environment naturally led the five Pandava brothers to cultivate many

virtues and good qualities. Gurudev used to say, “Good company will make you good, and bad company will make you bad.” A person is affected or influenced by his or her company; the company one keeps has a strong and lasting effect.

Impact of company

We inherit many qualities from the company we live with. For instance, if we live with good company, we will get many good qualities; if we live with bad company, we will get bad qualities. When I lived in India, I would sometimes go to a coal mining area to attend spiritual programs. On my first visit, I wore my usual white clothing and kept another clean set in a bag. A friend who had accompanied me also wore white, but he did not have extra clothes with him. By the time we reached the program site, our clothes were mostly black from the pollution and coal dust. In the same manner, if you live in a bad environment, bad things will stick to your life. Your white clothes will become black. Spiritual life is like white clothes. When one wears white

clothes, one should be careful where to sit and where to go. With ordinary clothes, the dirt is not as prominent. But with white clothing, even a little dirt appears to stand out. So be careful!

If we are not careful of the company we keep, we will be in trouble. “Company does not just mean people, television, internet, or the books and magazines we read. It also refers to the type of ideas that accompany us. Earlier in the Introduction, we related the full story from the Bhagavatam about a *rishi* who was meditating in the company of a deer and thus became a deer in his next life. He was just serving, helping, and nurturing the deer, but the attachment was too strong.

The Pandavas were raised in the company of *rishis*, saints, and sages in a very conducive and spiritual atmosphere. On the other hand, the Kauravas grew up in prosperity and comfort, in a palace with servants. Indeed, the effect of the environment is strongly visible in the personalities of the Pandavas and the Kauravas

THE YOGA SUTRA OF PATANJALI

Sutra 18

Perceivable Objects are the Result of the Triple Qualities of Nature

*prakashakriyasthitishila
bhutaindriyatmaka
bhogapavargartham
drishyam*

Word Meaning :

prakasha – light, illumination; *kriya* – activity; *sthiti* inertia, steadiness, stability; *shila* - nature, having the qualities; *bhuta* – elements; *indriya* – sense organs; *atmakaa* - consisting of, being of the nature; *bhoga* – experience; *apavarga* – emancipation, liberation; *artha* - for the sake of; *drishyam* – the seen, knowable

Translation :

The knowable is of the nature of illumination, activity, and inertia, consisting of the elements and sense organs; its objects are for experience and emancipation.

Commentary by Shri Lahiri Mahasaya

What is the nature of the visible objects? Whatever is visible is because of the qualities of illumination (*sattva*),

activities (*rajas*), stability (*tamas*), and the elements related to sense organs creating attachment [involvement] or non-attachment [emancipation].

Metaphorical Explanation

This sutra explains *drishya* (perceivable, knowable objects) again. For an easy understanding of the nature of *drishya*, this sutra can be split into three parts:

prakashakriyasthitishila — of the nature of illumination, activity, and inertia

bhutaindriyaatmaka — consisting of the elements and sense organs

bhogaapavargartham —for experience and emancipation

Prakashakriyasthitishila (of the nature of illumination, activity, and inertia)

Prakasha is light, illumination, and cognition of luminosity and intelligence. *Prakasha*, or illumination, is also the experience of existence. It gives the taste of something that is for the time being. This is the quality of *sattva*. *Kriya*, here, means

“activities.” Every activity relates to a colored thought. First, a thought arises; then, it is colored with liking or disliking. Finally, the action comes. This is *rajas*. *Sthiti* is “steadiness,” “inertia,” “stability” or “material existence.” This is the nature of *tamas*.

In short, *prakasha kriyasthitishila* refers to the triple qualities of nature. Thus, this statement explains that the triple qualities of nature are the inherent properties of every object. When any *drishya* arises, or anything is known at that time, there is existence of something, some speciality or activity and steadiness of that object. So every visible object is the result of the triple qualities of nature. For a detailed understanding, please refer to the Bhagavad Gita, chapter fourteen, which is known as the “Yoga of Discrimination of the Triple Qualities of Nature.”

***Bhuta indriya atmakam* (consisting of the elements and sense organs)**

Bhuta means gross and subtle elements. *Indriya* means the sense organs, but here, it includes five organs of action,

five organs of perception, and four inner instruments (the mind, intellect, memory, and ego). The *bhutas* are also present in the spinal centers as well as their modification in the gross and subtle bodies. These *bhutas* (elements) and *indriyas* (the sense organs including the mind and other inner instruments) are the visible objects of the soul. When one says, “My mind is restless or not working” or “My memory is gone,” it presupposes that there is one who is the seer of the mind and memory; that is the soul.

Bhogaapavargartham (for experience and emancipation)

Bhoga is derived from the verb *bhuj*, which means “to eat,” “to enjoy,” “to rule,” “to govern,” and so on; therefore, *bhoga* is eating, enjoyment, ruling, and governing. *Apavarga* is from the root verb *apavrij*, which means “to avoid” or “to avert.” *Apavrijyatesamsaramuchyateanena kriyavasanasaphalyamokshya*: “That which makes one free from the world by bringing an end to all activities is real success.” This is nothing but *moksha*, emancipation, final

beatitude, completion, or fulfilment.

Thus, in short, all visible objects, which are basically the play of the triple qualities of nature, consisting of gross, subtle elements, the sense organs including the mind, the intellect, memory, and ego, are only for two purposes: enjoyment or experience and fulfilment or liberation.

All this play of the drama of life is possible because of the soul. In creation, because of *purusha*, *prakriti* creates all visible phenomena. It has practical uses, but it is not essential for substantial existence. This creation or visible existence appears

because of ignorance. The embodied being, out of ignorance, experiences this world — the visible objects including the body and mind — as real. For this reason, it passes through miseries. But the sage in this sutra emphasizes that all of these objects and the visible world are for the play and freedom of the soul.

O Seeker! Look at this changing world. Look at your own body, senses, and even the inner instruments of mind, intellect, memory, and ego. All these are seen: the objects of experiences. But it is the soul, the indwelling spirit, which really experiences. This is your real nature. Realize it and be free.



Balashram Children's Day

THE STORY OF UNGRATEFULNESS

Those who are ungrateful not only fail to recognize the love and help of others but they do not also see the contribution of others in their lives; as a result their thinking, speaking, behaviour and all activities become primitive, rude, and inhuman. Indeed, they even go against the common law of nature, that of giving and receiving. They do not hesitate to hurt someone who has been immense help to them in the past. In other words, it is a betrayal nature. If we look at human behaviour, we can often find such an attitude in many people. Not only does one not accept the role of others in the success of one's life, one sometimes actually goes against the person who helped them and even does harm to him or her. Story of Ungratefulness.

Human beings are considered to be the best in God's creation, but are we?

Are you a grateful or ungrateful person?

The following is a modified story from Kalidas, a famous Sanskrit writer, poet, and dramatist. One evening as nighttime was descending a thick hush permeated the air as a young man was passing through the forest. The footpath he was following was slowly vanishing in the darkness and he was fearful of wild animals. But, just as fear begets fear, he took a few more steps and unfortunately came face to face with a tiger. In an effort to save his life, he quickly climbed a tree. However, the hungry tiger patiently waited under the tree, hoping it would soon enjoy a good feast. Now just because that man was stuck in a tree, does not mean it was the end of his misery. Earlier, a bear had already taken shelter in the same tree and now the man started counting his troubles from both ends:

one was the tiger on the ground and the other was the bear in the tree. The bear was more kind and caring than the tiger, and it said to the man, “You seem to be scared and tired. Please do not be afraid of me. There is danger below. You can take rest and I will keep watch over you and when you get up, I will sleep and you will guard me.” Trusting the bear’s words, the man felt assured and slept. Seeing this, the tiger tried to convince the bear, “Look, we are both wild animals and we live in the same environment — we should help each other. That man is my prey and I am hungry. Push him down and I will be happy and you can go your way.” But the bear replied, “I have given my word to the man. I cannot be ungrateful. Not only that, that man has faith in me and now he has even taken shelter

under me.” Saying this, the bear refused to agree with the tiger.

However, the tiger was not willing to lose hope and give up, so it waited for the opportunity to get its tasty feast. After some time, the man awoke, and according to their agreement, the bear went to sleep. So, next the tiger began trying to persuade the man, saying, “You are tired and exhausted. How long will you be waiting like this. You can push the bear down and I can eat it and then you can go to your home joyfully.” Hearing this, the man agreed to the tiger’s plan and tried to push the bear from the tree. But the bear was sleeping while holding the branch with its pointed nails. Thus, it did not fall down, but instead cursed the man and reproached him for his ungrateful nature.

VALUABLE VOLUMES



SHABDA BRAHMAN THE SOUND AS GOD

It is said that during the *pralaya*, the universe was dissolved in its cause and remained a dormant potentiality. When the *avyakta* – the unmanifest was about to manifest; first an inarticulate sound known as *shabda brahman* was produced that was identical to the *avyakta* and was likewise omnipresent.

DIFFERENT STATES OF SOUND

When a speaker with the help of his breath makes an effort to intone the *shabda brahman*, which in fact is Brahman itself, this becomes the seed of speech, which is *para-vak*, or the Supreme Speech. The root and the source of all talk is the *para-*

AKSHARA TATTVA

AND

JNANA SANKALINI TANTRA

BY PARAMAHAMSA PRAJNANANANDA

vak or the Supreme One. The *para* sound is not different in difference languages. It is the unchanging primal substratum of them all, the potential (*karana*) state of sound, source of the universe.

When the *para-vak* is joined to the mind and becomes somewhat active, it is experienced within as a most subtle and highly ethereal form before expression called *pasyanti* (the visible). This inner talk, arising in the brain, is easy to change and regulate and is clearly visible to those who are contemplative and meditative. This is *pasyanti*, the visible inner talk.

When the *shabda brahman*, the inner sound reaches the *anahata*, the heart, it unites with the *buddhi* or the

intellect and becomes the subtle *madhyama* that is more perceptible than *pasyanti*, but not audible to the physical ear. According to many it creates an emotional change, as it remains influencing the heart, which is the middle of all centers. Every talk, before it manifests as sound, remains ingrained in the heart, first as a thought and then as an emotion. This is *madhyama* or the intermediate stage.

When the sound ultimately rises to the vocal organs, it gets articulated as the uttered audible word called *vaikhari*. The thought that comes out of the mouth, through the articulation of the tongue in the mouth is *vaikhari* – the manifested one. This is the audible sound that is heard by others. It can give pleasure or pain; *vaikhari* and *madhyama* are perceptible either through the expression of speech or through the expression of the face.

The stages of *para*, *pasyant*, *madhyama* and *vaikhari* are the result of evolution of *shakti* (energy) in the living body, manifested through the thought and the word.

SOUND AND IMAGE

Sounds are vibrations and can give rise to forms, because every name is always associated with a form or feeling.

There have been scientific experiments to prove that sounds can produce shapes and specific notes can give rise to distinctive forms.

A definite note, uttered at a certain pitch, can produce a specific form. This is the basis of *mantrayoga*. *Mantra* is the divine power of God manifesting through sound.

POWER OF SOUND AND NAME

Sound has tremendous power. With sounds, ideas are created in the mind. When a name is uttered, immediately a form comes to mind, which has a corresponding sound and meaning, i.e. *shabda* and *artha* are inseparable.

When the name of God, which exists in eternity, is heard or repeated, it produces God-consciousness in a purified mind. When the mind is restless, the repetition of the name of God, or singing the glory of God, quiets and appeases the mind. God is

described as *dhyaganamyam* or that which is realized through meditation.

WORD IS GOD

In the Bible it is said, “In the beginning there was the Word. That Word was with God. That Word is God.” This is the first verse of John, first Chapter. What can we understand from this verse? The first manifestation of God’s love was through sound, the eternal sound that we hear during meditation. This is the primordial sound. We cannot ordinarily hear it because of the external noise that covers the sound. The Hindus call it the sound of *OM*. The Moslems call the sound of Amin. The Christians and Jews call it the sound of Amen. These are

different names for the same sound. Sound is a form of energy. When that energy is manifested in a grosser form, then it becomes creation.

In deep meditation, to hear the divine sound, the *OM* sound, from which the world originated, exists and in which it will eventually dissolve, gives us the greatest inner peace and joy and purifies our mind.

The purpose of *akshara* is to bring inner peace and joy ceaselessly. Thus in the practice of spiritual life, one should balance every word as well as every thought carefully, so that it will bring inner peace, love and wisdom, leading us ultimately to experience the Absolute.



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JNANASANKALINI TANTRA

THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN

SHIVA AND PARVATI

Verse 42

devi uvaca
aharakankshatekosau
bhunjate pivate katham
jagrat svapnasushuptauca
kovasau pratibuddhati

Translation

Devi asked, “Who is the one who needs food, how does one eat and drink, who is aware of the wakeful, dream, and deep sleep states?”

Metaphorical Interpretation

The Divine mother enquires about the intake of food and nourishment for the body and the three stages of awareness of the spirit.

The word *ahara* derives from — a-hriyae-iti — meaning ‘what one takes in’ or ‘consumes.’ Ahara is therefore translated as ‘food.’ A human being consumes food for nourishment, but thoughts and ideas are also considered food for the mind. One experiences the world through the five senses of perception: sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste.

Breath can also fit into the category of food, since we need to take in oxygen to survive. *Ahara* interpreted in a broad sense, means that food is necessary for the body, the senses, and the mind.

Every day an individual passes through the three stages: *jagrata* (the wakeful state); *svapna* (the dream state); and *sushupti* (the state of deep sleep).

Jagrata (the wakeful state) — all three bodies, gross, astral, and causal are active and awake.

Svapna (the dream state) — the gross body is at rest, but the astral and causal bodies are active.

Sushupti (the deep sleep state) — in this state of ignorance only the causal body is active, the gross and astral bodies are asleep.

Verse 43

ishwara uvaca
aharam kankshate prano
bhunjate hutasanah

*jagrat svapna sushuptaucha
vayusca pratibuddhati*
Translation

Ishwara said, “Prana (the life force) needs food and eats and drinks through hutasana (the digestive fire). Vayu (the breath) is aware of the wakeful, dream, and deep sleep states.”

Metaphorical Interpretation

In this verse Lord Shiva further elaborates on the question raised by Parvati:

Prani is a ‘living being’ — *pranamastiyasyasah* — means ‘one who has the life-energy is a living entity.’ Thus, *prani* encompasses humans, animals, and plants. Food, in some form, is essential to all living beings, only a dead entity, one without *prana* (the life-force) feels no hunger.

Hutasana is a name used for ‘fire’ consisting of two parts — *hut* and *asana*, i.e., ‘the cry for food.’ *Hutasana* is therefore a ‘fire that creates a desire for food.’ In the Gita (15:14), *Vaisnavara* ‘the digestive fire’ is mentioned; this gastric fire becomes active due to the pranic energy functioning in the navel center.

Lord Shiva explains that at every stage of existence; breath is a necessity. Whether in the wakeful, dream, or deep sleep states, breath is the active and motivating force in every living being.

Verse 44

*devi uvaca
kovakaroti karmani
koyalipyati patakaih
kovakaroti papani
kova papaih pramuchyate*

Translation

Devi asked, “Who is doing the action, who is committing mistakes, who is causing sinful acts and how are they redeemed?”

Metaphorical Interpretation

This question has elementary as well as subtle components. In this verse, the Divine Mother asks about karma, food and bad; *pataka*, *papa*, as well as how to be freed from *papa*.

Karma literally means ‘action,’ but in the context of the Hindu system karma refers to volitional activities, — physical, vocal and mental — in words, deeds, and thoughts. The science of Physics maintains that each action has

a potential result, so does karma. Each karma has an inevitable result. One needs to be watchful of one's action. Some consequences are immediate, others remain dormant and manifest in future lives.

Pataka is derived from the word *patana*, which means 'downfall'; *pataka* is therefore 'that action which brings downfall and disgrace to a person.' Literally, it is translated as 'a mistake' but sometimes the word is used to refer to something stronger, like 'sin.' In the Manu Smruti (11:54) it is said,

*brahmahatya surapanim
steyam gurvanganagamah
mahanto patakanyahu
samsargasca pitaih sahad*

Manu Smruti 1/54

"To kill the wise, to drink alcohol, to steal, to enjoy or cohabit with the guru's wife, are (all) considered heinous activities. Even association with people who commit these (acts) is as deplorable as *pataka*."

Papa means 'sin.' A mistake is committed out of ignorance, but if a mistake is repeated again and again, it becomes a sin. In essence, to

forget the truth of life is a catalyst for mistakes, misery, and sin.

Verse 45

*içyara uvaca
manah karoti papani
mano lipyate paakaih
manasca tanmaya bhutva
na punyam na ca patakaih*

Translation

Ishwara said, "Mind commits mistakes and causes sinful acts, When the mind is in God-consciousness, it is free from virtue and vice."

Metaphorical Interpretation

Lord Shiva replies to all queries with one answer, "It is the mind." The mind is the cause of all activities, good or bad.

In the Amritabindu Upanishad (mantra2) it is said,

*mana eva manushyanam
karanam banhdha
mokshayoh
baddho hi vishayasaktah
mukta nirvishayam smriiah*

"Mind is the cause of bondage and mind is the cause of liberation. A mind grossed in the material world is in bondage and a detached mind is in the state of liberation."

Every human being has three faculties: physical (body), psychological (mind), and spiritual (soul). The body dies but the soul remains ever pure. The mind can be dirty or clean; while a debased mind brings misery, a pure mind brings peace. All spiritual practices and spiritual disciplines are geared to obtain inner purity, calmness of the mind, and ultimately, liberation. When the mind is immersed in the state of divinity, it is beyond virtue and vice. In the state of liberation the mental components like virtue and vice become irrelevant. The word *tanmaya* is made up of *tat* or ‘that’ and *maya*, which here means ‘saturation’ or ‘absorption,’ i.e., ‘a mind saturated in divine love.’ Once the mind has reached this elevated state, it can only perceive Brahman.

Verse 46

devi uvaca

*jiva kena prakarena
sva bhavati kasya ca
karyasya karanam bruhi
katham kim ca prasadhanam*

Translation

Devi asked, “How does jiva (the individual soul) become Shiva (the universal Soul)? Please

explain what is the cause of action, which is the effect, and how is it accomplished?”

Metaphorical Interpretation

Parvati asks about *karya* (action), *karana* (cause), and the means to become realized. The very essence of spiritual life is the journey of *jiva* to be Shiva — the individual’s absorption into the Divine. This is the goal of every individual’s life.

Verse 47

ishvara uvaca

*bhranti baddho bhavet jivah
bhrantirmuktahsadasivah
karyamhi karanam tvan ca
purna-bodha visishyate*

Translation

Ishvara said, “Jiva is bound by delusion, and when free from delusion he becomes Sadashiva. Karya (effect) and karanam (cause), is you. This is realized through complete awareness.

Metaphorical Interpretation

Ignorance of the true nature of one’s Self — ‘Who am I?’ — is the cause of suffering. Freeing oneself from this ignorance also shatters the egocentric separateness from the Divine.

Ignorance has a two-fold effect:

avaranashakti
veiling power,

vikshepashakti
projecting power.

Ignorance covers up Truth, projecting a completely distorted idea of reality. To explain the effect of ignorance or nescience, Vedic scholars give the example of a rope in the darkness appearing as a snake. The rope appears to be a non-existent snake, creating fear in the individual's mind. In this situation, not to see the rope is the veiling power of

ignorance, but to see the snake in the rope is the effect of the projecting power of ignorance. With the light of inner wisdom fear of the snake vanishes, and the rope is seen for what it really is. When ignorance, the cause, is eliminated one becomes free from individual egoistic awareness. Knowledge is the source of all cause and effect. When one is established in Self-knowledge, one realizes that all actions and causes are nothing but God. This is known as complete awareness. 'I am the body' fades and the liberated seeker realizes, 'I am Shiva, *Shivo'ham.*'



Newzealand Program

VIJAYA DASHAMI MESSAGE

Let the choicest blessings of God and the masters be upon all of you. I take this opportunity to pray for you during the celebration of VijayaDashami, the Day of Victory on 11 Octo., 2016.

After nine days of worshipping the Divine Mother, the tenth day is called Vijaya Dashami, the Day of Victory. What is real victory, true success? It is not material success or having power or authority over others; instead, it is the victory over inner vices and weaknesses as well as the manifestation of love, kindness, and compassion for all living beings. Many times we complain about our workload and our responsibilities. But as the children of God we have tremendous potential to love and serve unconditionally, to be worthy instruments of the Divine. Only one thing is needed — to increase our potential. A beautiful Sanskrit verse explains how we can increase our potential:

*koti bhara samarthanam
kim duram vyavasainam
ko videsha sa vidyanam
kah parah priyavadinam*

“Can there be too much responsibility for a capable person? (One who is capable can handle anything.) Can any distance stand in the way for a business person? (A business person can go anywhere to achieve success.) Can any land be foreign for a well-educated person? (A well-educated person considers the entire world as home.) Can anyone be an alien to someone who knows how to speak with love? (A person with love has no distinction or discrimination.)”

We should be capable of handling every situation with inner balance and love. We can resolve many difficult situations not only for ourselves, but also for others. Let us increase our capability every day.



Annual Sports Day at Balashram

14TH MAHASAMADHI DAY MESSAGE

Loving and Divine Soul,

Let the choicest blessings of God and the masters be upon all of you. I take this opportunity to pray for all of you as we celebrate the *mahasamadhi* day (*punyatithiaradhana*) of our beloved Gurudev. Already fourteen years have passed. Remembering his life and teachings will inspire seekers in time to come.

The masters do not live for themselves; they live for the entire creation. This is beautifully described by Acharya Shankara in his epoch-making book *VivekaChudamani* (The Crest Jewel of Discrimination) in verse 37:

*shantamahantonivasantsanto
vasantavatlokahitamcharantah
timahsvayambhimabhamravanjanan
ahetunaanyanapitarayantah*

‘Good souls, calm and magnanimous, do good to others like the spring does. Having crossed the dreadful ocean of birth and death, they help others cross the same without any motive whatsoever.’

We are the children of the guru–preceptors. They are

calm and magnanimous. As their children, we should live with calm and magnanimity. But in reality are we doing this? Our beloved Gurudev often said calmness is godliness and that we should be calmly active and actively calm. How often do we really practice this? Are we magnanimous? Are we loving and forgiving? Are we generous?

The masters are like the spring. When spring arrives, new life arises in plants, birds, animals, and humans. Everywhere there is a new vibration of life and love. We should try to bring this into our lives and also our families when we invoke the masters to lead and guide us.

The world is full of vices. If we are not careful, we can become trapped in lives of misery that will end in the cycle of birth and death. But the masters have crossed this dreadful ocean of the world twice. They return to the world after realization, which is very rare, to help sincere seekers along the path of emancipation.

They have compassion for all. They accept and welcome all difficulties. They wish only to serve all with love and help everyone cross the ocean of the world.

Every time and place is blessed with great masters. We were fortunate and blessed to have lived with such a great master. Many had direct and indirect experience of his love and compassion. But time has wings and constantly slips from

our hands. We must make the best use of time. Shri Gurudev advised that we should not waste even a single breath without remembering and thanking God.

On this special day, let us make a new resolution to be better people in every way. Let us seek his love and blessings so they can manifest in our lives. Again, I offer my love to all of you and wish you all-round development.

With Love,
Prajnanananda



Mahasamadhi Day Celebration at Australia Ashram

DAY OF THANKS GIVING

Before practicing giving thanks in daily life, we must first learn the art of giving. To live and to survive, we all depend upon others — not only humans depend on others, but also plants, animals, the five elements, and especially Mother Earth. For example, we consume oxygen day and night, but in return what benefit do we provide to the environment? Rather, we pollute the environment by emitting harmful elements through our industries, the use of vehicles, consuming different forms of mineral oil, and destroying forests. It is our duty to plant more trees to provide more oxygen for all animal life. This is the art of giving. If we have more clothes and others have less, we share our surplus with others. It is the art of giving. The hands that give are always higher.

Love gives and forgives.
Selfishness gets and forgets.
We should learn to love and serve, give and forgive..

A beautiful verse in Sanskrit emphasizes the best behavior in daily life:

*upakaroparodharmahparartham
karma naipunyam
patredanamparahkamahparro
moksha vitrishnata*

”Doing good to others is the best religion. Serving others is the real skill. Helping the needy is the best desire to cherish, and freedom from desires is true liberation.”

We normally try to be good and nice to ourselves and our own people, but we should be ready to do good to anyone in every possible way. A maxim states: “Help ever, and hurt never.” We should serve and love without any expectation. A smile on our faces and readiness to help and serve should be our true religion. Creation is filled with enough suffering and misery, so we have great opportunity to serve and love.

Serving with love, caring with compassion, smiling with tenderness and purity is the real thanks giving. Thanks giving is not just a formal way to express our gratitude, but a practical lifestyle of maintaining readiness to serve and help.

Our hands and feet should be ever ready to help others whenever needed. Our lives should be useful for others. These actions sanctify life.

While the ordinary mind is infected with innumerable desires, we should always be content and cheerful. Contentment is extremely rare. It is a state of freedom from the desires that bind us to the world and worldly life.

Since ancient times, the great masters have directed humankind to develop values and virtues. When we cultivate values, our lives become useful and successful. Let us learn it and practice it.

I offer my love and best wishes on the occasion of Thanksgiving Day. Let our daily lives be enriched by giving thanks.

With Love,
Prajnanananda



Temple Construction at Bishindipur Ashram

ACTIVITIES OF PRAJNANA MISSION

After a hectic tour of the ashrams abroad Paramahansa Prajnananandaji is in residence at the Hariharananda Gurukulam in Puri.

The Gurukulam is a scene of many activities and is filled to capacity with residents, disciples –both national and international.

The 7th Residential Brahmachari Training Course that started at the end of October 2016 is in full session and will continue through the month of February. 2017

The Mahasamadhi Seminar of Gurudev Baba Hariharanandaji was celebrated on 2nd, 3rd and 4th December with many new initiations, special worship and meditations in the divine presence of Baba Prajnananandaji. Countless disciples and devotees paid their respects and received the blessings of Gurudev. There were discourses by Guruji, talks on the Life and teachings of Gurudev and question and answer sessions.

The Holy Christmas and New Year were celebrated with much festivity and long meditations.

Annual Gita Jnana Yajnas are in progress at several ashrams and centers of India.

The Intensive International Kriya Yoga Seminar will be held from 14-20 of Jan 2017.

125th Birthday Celebration of Paramahansa Yogananda - This Year is also dedicated to celebrate the 125th birthday of our great Guru Paramahansa Yoganandaji beginning from 5th of January 2017 through January 2018, in all our ashrams and centers around the world.

H a r i h a r a n a n d a Balashram is progressing well with many academic and extra curricular activities and recently celebrated Children's day.

Resident Monks in the New Australia ashram

The Australia ashram at Castle Hill near Sydney is flourishing well. The annual

initiation programs in Australia and New Zealand were held from August through December with Swami Gurupriyananda Giri.

Gurupriyananda Giri and Swami Sarvatmananda Giri. More programs are planned in the different centers of Australia and New Zealand.

Now with two resident monks – Swami

DATES TO REMEMBER

January – March, 2017

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| January 5 | : | Birthday of ParamahansaYogananda |
| Jan 14-20 | : | IJKYS |
| Jan 18 | : | Mahasamadhi of Bhupendranath Sanyal |
| Jan 20 | : | Birthday of Bhupendranath Sanyal |
| Feb 1 | : | Saraswati Puja |
| Feb 24 | : | Maha Shivaratri |
| Mar 7 | : | Mahasamadhi of Yogananda |
| Mar 9 | : | Mahasamadhi of Shriyukteshwar |
| Mar 13 | : | Holi Festival |

Visit our web site:

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