

Sthita Prajna



Guru Vandana

*Vandeham Sachhidanandam
bhedaatitamsrimadgurum
Nityampurnamnira karam
nirgunamsvatmasamsthitam*

I adore and worship the guru preceptor, who is sachhidananda, beyond all dualities, eternal, complete, formless, beyond the qualities of nature, and established in the Self.

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FROM THE EDITORS :

*Yadevi sarvabhuteshu Matru rupena samsthita
Namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namonamah*

As we celebrate Durga Puja in the month of October, we bring you Gurudev's article on Mother Durga, how she is worshipped and the inner significance of Navaratri- the nine day worship of the Divine Mother in the message from the Master.

Prajnanavani elaborates on Acharya Shankars's Tattva Bodha, on the Nature of Self as *sat chit ananda*.

Myths and Metaphor opens up with the extraordinary story Draupadi, the beloved of the five Pandavas and how she was won in her *swayamvara*.

Law of Karma talks of the power of thought and the importance of living a conscious life of self-discipline and love.

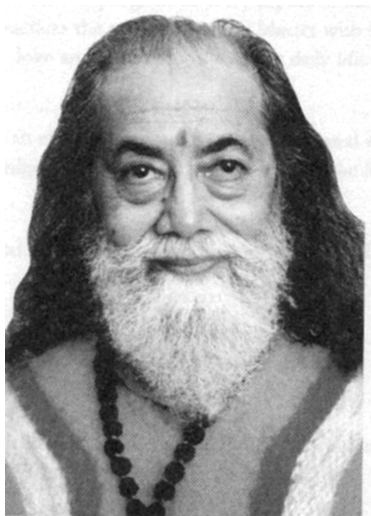
Yoga Sutra of Patanjali dwells on God as the unsurpassable source of all knowledge and the one infinite, formless, absolute, all-pervading source of immortality.

We bring you reports on the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of Prajnana Mission, The 60th Birthday Celebrations of Shri Guruji, the activities of Prajnana Mission and the news of Balashram.

We also bring you the Holy Days Message. We wish all our readers a Happy and Holy Christmas and New Year. We thank our sponsors and look forward to your continued support.

MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

DIVINE MOTHER DURGA



Mother Durga is omnipresent. She is even in every part of your body, your words, vision hearing, breath, and life – in every aspect of life. Mother Durga is functioning in your entire body. Mother Durga is abiding not only in you, but also in your son, daughter, wife, in each living being, in the whole universe, and even in me. She is omnipresent. Perceiving Mother Durga within you, me, and every living being in the world, on this auspicious moment of *Vijaya*, I bow to you. *om durgayainamah*

For billions of lives, we were animals, and even humans of very low nature. All the ancestors, impressions, memories, and actions of these lives are stored in our astral body, in our brain. Without experiencing the living Durga-consciousness within, we are after all the bad things in the lower part of the body. Good memories are also there. The higher aspects of life are also within. These are

sattviksamskaras, or spiritual impressions. Even Mother Durga herself is present within us. But, without first purifying those negative memories, we cannot perceive the manifestation of Mother Durga. It is the reason we pray for our forefathers with ablutions before the worship of Mother Durga. If we can remove all the bad animal qualities from ourselves, then on the sixth day of the worship of the Divine Mother, in the sixth center, we can awaken Mother Durga.

Bodhana means “awakening” Mother Durga.

This is the mantra of *bodhana*, or inner awakening.

*ravanasya vadhardhaya
ramasya anugrahaya
akale bodhayishyami.....*

(O Mother, to kill all of my animal and bad qualities, in the form of Ravana, and to receive the blessings that Rama got, I have started my worship to awaken you at this improper time.)

I have proper knowledge, and I will remove all of my bad qualities, and transform all of my qualities, in realization of Mother Durga. *Akala*, or improper or inauspicious time, means being devoid of a mature mind and intellect. Still, I want to eliminate my animal propensities, the qualities of Ravana. Keeping this courage in mind, I have started my worship to awaken you at this improper time.

Sayanhe bodhanam kuryat: Evening is the best time for awakening, or *bodhana*. For this, we need a specific branch of the wood apple tree (*vilva*), with six joints, and its end, twin *vilva* fruit. These six joints represent six centers inside our spinal cord. In the six centers, there are six nerve plexuses. The bottom center is the *muladhara*. It is

annamaya kosha (the food sheath). This is the center of money. Behind the genital organs is the *svadhisthana* center, or *pranamayakosha* (vital air sheath), the center of physical pleasure. The *manipura* is the center of food and drink.. It is *manomayakosha* (mental sheath). The *anahata* is the center of ego, pride, emotion, doubt, and so on. It is *vijnanamaya kosha* (knowledge sheath). The *vishuddha* is *anandamaya kosha* (blissful sheath), the center of religion and philosophy. If we can bring our spiritual consciousness up to the *ajna* center, then with the dual action of the anterior and posterior pituitary, we can awaken Mother Durga. What is the meaning of awakening in the evening, or *sandhyabodhana*? *Sandhya* means *sam + dhya*, to awaken with good meditation. Evening is significant for meditation. Through continuous meditation, we can awaken Mother Durga. If we meditate continuously in the two-petal lotus, by thinking of Mother Durga, we can awaken her.

After awakening Mother Durga, on the next day, the

seventh day, the real worship starts in the inner sky (*daharakasha*). If you can bring dormant spiritual energy to the seventh center, then all of your senses will go away; you will easily free from mind, thought, intellect, and ego.

On the eighth day, the mind merges with the inner sky of consciousness (*chidakasha*). In this state, the perception of Durga becomes vibrant in the mind and intellect. The light of knowledge dawns within. At that time, all illusion, delusion, darkness, and impurities will try to disappear. The unripe will slowly get transformed.

At the end of the eighth day is *Sandhi Puja*, or worship at the junction of time. At this time, the sacrifice starts. Knowledge becomes super consciousness. Seeing Mother Durga everywhere is the real sacrifice. It is said in the scriptures, *navamyam prabhutam balimkuryat*: (offer profuse sacrifice on the ninth day). Sacrifice does not mean sacrificing animals from the forest in front of the altar. In reality, it is sacrificing animals inside our mind. On this day, whatever arises in the devotee's

mind, it comes from the abode of Durga. Mother Durga herself is awakened. Whatever you perceive through your ears, eyes, and so on, is nothing but Mother Durga. This is the sacrifice. *Balam vardhanam dadati iti bali*: (*Bali*, or sacrifice, is that which gives you enough strength). If you can transform your bad qualities into good qualities, then you become spiritually strong. This is sacrifice. *Purushat purusham koroti iti bali*: If you can transform your human tendencies into God- realization, it is called sacrifice. In this way, you perceive Mother Durga. Otherwise, everything else is meaningless. This is perfection (*siddhi*) in the Divine Mother. Otherwise, people get intoxicated with the drink made from *siddhi*, a special leaf.

The fire ceremony (*homa*), offering of donation (*dakshina*), and a farewell prayer to the Divine Mother (*visarjana*) are also performed on the ninth day. If you can bring your illusion of bodily and worldly attachments to the altar of the Divine Mother, from where all propensities arise, then it will burn illusion, and you will be free. It is the real fire ceremony, or *homa*.

PRAJNANAVANI - THE VOICE OF WISDOM

THE SELF AND ITS NATURE



When asked, “Which is the soul or the Self?” Acharya Shankara replies, “That which is beyond the three bodies, that which is the witness of the three states of existence, and that which is above the five sheaths, is the Self or the soul.” Acharya Shankara defines the soul in two different ways: Initially, he says, “Not this, not this, not this.” Then he says, “This, this, this.” First he defines it by negation, and then he defines it by affirmation. In an earlier chapter, the cultural

analogy of Indian wives not uttering the name of their husband was used to explain the definition of negation. When Mother Sita was asked which man in a group of men was her husband, she repeatedly said “no” to each one and remained silent when they pointed to her husband. Through negation and then silence, she indicated who her husband was. Similarly, Acharya Shankara is saying that the soul is not this, not this, not this, and eventually, after all

other entities are negated, what remains is the soul. All the things that were rejected and negated were tangible, meaning they can be touched, or known.

A seeker might say, “You said, ‘Not this, not this, not this.’ I accept it, but what is the soul really?” Thus, the next question arises:

atma tarhi kah?
Saccidanandasvarupah -
 What is *atman*, the soul? It is
 of the nature of *sat-chit-*
aananda (existence,
 knowledge, bliss).

Knowledge can be of three categories: *pratyaksha*, in which it is perceived directly through the eyes, through sense perception; *paroksha*, in which it is derived from the experience of others; and finally, *aparoksha* in which it is based neither on sense perception nor on the experience of others. *Aparoksha* is Self-knowledge; it is one’s own experience, which is derived neither through one’s sense organs nor from books and talks of others. It is immediate knowledge. Whatever information you are collecting from this book, for example, is *paroksha*; it is indirect way of understanding. Whatever you have seen in this

world until now is *pratyaksha*; but it is not truly real. Suppose when you first saw a person, you thought the person was so nice; a few weeks later, however, you realized the person was not so nice. Even knowledge based on your own direct sense perception can be misleading. Thus, *pratyaksha* is not always true; sometimes it can create illusion. Whatever knowledge we have until now about our body, the world, and people is either *pratyaksha* or *paroksha*, but is not *aparoksha*.

Suppose I ask, “What is water?” You might list some of the qualities of water: pure water is liquid, clear and transparent, colorless, odorless, and tasteless. By nature, water is cool. If it is hot and you remove the source of heat, it will again cool down. Now, even if I describe the qualities of water, unless you see water, it will be very difficult to understand what it really is. These qualities would help you to form some ideas, but they are not the real knowledge.

There are two ways of describing the qualities of the soul: *tatastha-lakshana* and *svarupa-lakshana*. *Tatastha-*

lakshana refers to observation through the senses or the mind. It is a way of describing the difference between the ever-changing world of things and the never-changing, constant divine soul. This world has a beginning, and one day it will come to an end and disappear. All worldly things are similarly caught up in the flux of change, they come and disappear. However, one who remains separate from this world, and stands constant, is a witness to the ever-changing world, or one who never changes and just observes and looks at the changing world is the divine soul. It means being the witness and observing. This approach says the soul is not the body, not the mind, not the senses, not the five sheaths, not the five breaths or *pranas*, and so on. Whatever ultimately remains after all negations is the soul. Observation creates a distinction between all changing phenomenon like the physical body, which ultimately dies and goes back again to the earth, and that which never changes nor dies, which is the soul.

The other way of describing the qualities of the

soul is *svarupalakshana*. *Svarupa-lakshana* is knowing one's own nature or knowing the real nature of the soul in itself, first with understanding, and then with experience. It is understanding the real nature of the soul without any comparison. In *tatasha-lakshana*, it is compared and contrasted with others — the body, the mind and so on. In *svarupa-lakshana*, one comes to know the real nature of the soul. Acharya Shankara says *sat-chit-ananda-svarupah*, which means the *svarupah*, or the real nature of the soul, is *sat-chit-ananda*. If I ask you what an apple is, you will give a description that it looks like this — in fact, many descriptions of an apple can be given. We hear in the realm of observation, and we observe from a distance. *Tatastha* means looking from a distance. But what is the real nature of an apple? To experience it to some extent, one should really hold it and taste it, using the senses. Similarly, what is the real nature of the soul, the *svarupa-lakshana*? We first need to understand and then experience that the real nature of the soul is *sat-chit-anandasvarupah*.

Further questions arise about *sat*, *chit*, and *Ananda* - What is *sat*? *Sat* is that which remains unchanged in the three periods of time.

The simple translation of *sat* is “existence,” “reality,” or “truth.” Thus, the question is what is existence, reality, or truth? Reality or truth is that which never changes. It never undergoes any modification; it is eternity without any variation. It is not like a chameleon that changes color to protect itself. Thus, Acharya Shankara says that which is always remaining is *sat*. Time is like a river, a continuous flow. When it is a continuous flow, in reality, there is no past, no future, and no present. But, for our convenience, we say yesterday, today and tomorrow. When we are situated in the mundane world — the world of relativity the world of behaviour, the world of action—we say there is *kalatraya* — past present, and future. *Sat* is that which exists in three periods of time. Let us consider the example of a printed book. Before being a book it was a paper. If the book is torn apart, it again becomes paper. It was paper, it is paper, and it will be paper.

So relatively speaking, paper is the ultimate reality in the object we call a book. Paper existed before the book form came into existence, it exists in the book during its temporary existence, and it will exist after the book form is gone. Existence is that which in reality remains before, during, and after creation.

Before attaining this physical body, we existed in some form. We did not come from nothing, and when the gross body dies we will exist in some form. That which remains in us before birth, during this life, and after death is *sat* — I am that, I am *sat*. I am immortal; I existed before birth, I am at present, and will exist after death. So, I have no death; I am deathless. If I am *sat*, then I was, I am, and I will be; I am eternally present. If I am *sat*, then I have no death, I have no birth.

Scriptures explain this concept with reference to the notion of space or *akasha*. Think of the space enclosed within a house, within its four walls and roof. Is this space any different from the space that is outside the house? After constructing a few mere walls and a roof, we say this is a

house or that is room. However, there is no difference between the space inside and outside of the house. The same vast space that was completely open yesterday is merely enclosed and partitioned because a house is built today. The outer space is vast, but it is only apparently enclosed within the boundaries of walls and a roof. We have built the house for our use; otherwise, the inner space and outer space have no difference. The relationship between God and the individual soul can be compared to the space everywhere and the space enclosed within the walls of a house. The individual soul is like the space within the boundary of the walls, the body wall, and when the real boundary is gone, then inner space and outer space become one. If we break down the walls and the roof, what happens to this space inside the house? Nothing happens. It was, it is, and it becomes the same space. Nothing has changed. Similarly, the soul is *sat*. *Sat* is eternally existent. If the soul is eternally existent, I have no death, and I have no birth. I have no fear of death because I have no death.

Anything that comes in time will go in time. Sorrows have come to us and they will go. Difficulties have come and they will go. Success has come and it will also go. Some pleasures have come and they will also go. Nothing is permanent except that which remains through all the three periods of time, which is *sat* — reality, existence, truth. *Sat* can be considered that which has no beginning, no end, no birth, no death, no decay, no degeneration — it is free from all these changes.

The soul or the *atma* is the reality, the truth. It existed in the past, exists presently, and will exist in the future. The body changes; you have no change. The mind changes; you have no change. Intellectual abilities change; you have no change. Circumstances change; you have no change. Health changes; you have no change. The body is changing, people are changing, but you as the soul are changeless, and that changelessness is *sat*. *Sat* means immortal and changeless.

Consider this: the five elements—earth, water, fire, air, and space — existed before the

birth of a human body. These five elements in some form or the other became a body; it presently exists and after the death of the body, the five elements will go back — earth to earth, water to water, and air to air. These elements do not perish. So are we merely these five elements, and nothing more? The answer is no. The second quality of the soul differentiates us from the mere elements. You, as the soul, are not only *sat* or existence, but also *chit*, or consciousness.

Then it is asked:

citkim? Jnanasvarupah

-What is *chit*? It is of the nature of absolute knowledge.

What is *chit*? What is consciousness? The definition Acharya Shankara gives is *jnanasvarupam*, *Jnana* means “knowledge” and *svarupah* means “in the form of.” Thus, *chit* means “knowledge.” *Chit* is the essence of knowledge. Since you have some knowledge about yourself, about anything happening around you, including knowledge of your body, you can say that you know your body. For example, your body is this many years old, it is of a particular height, or it is a healthy or a sick body.

You can say something about your body because you have some knowledge about it. If the body is the object of knowledge, who is the subject of the process of knowing? Who or what is it that knows? Is it the mind that knows? Is it the sense organs that know? It is not the mind or the sense organs.

To know the mind, there is someone within who says, “I know my mind; my mind is not well today.” Or for instance, “I know my intellect; it is not working today” or “I know my memory; as I age, my memory is slowly becoming weak.” Who is this “I” saying that “I know”? It is the quality of the soul in the form of consciousness; it is aware of and conscious of everything. The simple logic of consciousness is this: the “I” who is conscious is different from the “object” that it is conscious of. For example, if I say, “I see the book,” then I am the subject and the book is the object, and that which I see, the object, is different from me. Now, is the desire to know, such as “I want to know, I want to study the scriptures,” the desire of the soul or the desire

of the mind? If the soul by nature is consciousness and knowledge, the soul has nothing to know. Then if the soul has nothing to know, who wants to know? It is our mind, intellect, ego, and memory together, creating an idea of incompleteness within, and because of the sense of incompleteness we always want to know. When we know a bit more, we feel content. The sense of ignorance, the sense of incompleteness, is because the four inner instruments — mind, intellect, ego, and memory — keep us always thinking that we don't know, and we want to know. One who is completely in the nature of consciousness has nothing to know.

It is said in the “DakshinamurtiStotram” (3) that a guru only sat under a banyan tree and did not speak, *gurostumaunavyakhyanam*: “the guru silently instructed.” *Shishyastuchhinasmshayah*: “All the doubts of the disciples disappeared.” The disciple is established in knowledge. Just imagine the qualification of the guru as well as of the disciple in this situation. As is the guru, so is the disciple. Only giving

an indication is enough; there is no need to speak so much. We speak a lot because we think that through words we can communicate more. And sometimes when somebody is not talking, we are worried or concerned why that person is not talking and we want to know what happened. We do not know how to understand through silence. However, through silence we can communicate more. That is why prayer is the art of communicating with the Divine with words, and meditation is communicating with the Divine in silence. Meditation is no thought, not a single word. Both are methods to communicate, but when we pray it is difficult to pray continuously with words — just like we cannot sing continuously. But in silence we can communicate much longer, and it is such a peaceful way of communicating. Those who know, those who have command over language, can communicate with a few words.

There is a beautiful saying, a proverb, in the Bible: “When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise” (Proverbs 10:19). When you talk too

much, sometimes you speak utter nonsense and create confusion and unhappiness. When words are many, mistakes are many. On the contrary, when words are few, mistakes are few; and when there is no word, there is no mistake.

If the student is worthy of receiving knowledge from the teacher, knowledge comes even through silence. If the student is ready, he or she can learn and receive much more than through mere words on instruction, “Why did you do this? Why are you not doing this?” So much energy is lost in talking and saying, “Do this, do that.” In this situation, the students are not ready. If we do not work to improve our abilities to receive, to widen our path of understanding, then we are not yet ready to know. We can discuss for hours and hours together over the telephone or type or write pages and pages of e-mails or letters, but it does not really communicate much; just a simple look can communicate more.

The soul by nature is consciousness and is complete knowledge. Thus, the soul has no incompleteness of “I want

to know”, because the nature of the soul is incompleteness. In essence, we are absolute knowledge. Ordinarily, people think “I want to know, I want to know who I am. I want to know what this is.” However, Acharya Shankara says that is not really what you want to know — you are knowledge.

Now, let us return to the inner instruments of mind, intellect, ego, and memory. None of these is knowledge itself, but all are the objects of knowledge. Who is it that says, “Today, my mind is restless, my mind is sad, my mind is now working?” You are the subject, and for you, the mind is the object. You can observe the play of your mind. You are the witness of your mind. You can tell whether your mind is peaceful or restless, loving or agitated today. So mind is the object, and I am the subject. I know my mind, so I am different from my mind. In this manner, the mind, intellect, ego, and memory become objects of knowledge and the knower of them is none but the soul.

Thus, *chit* is consciousness or knowledge, and this knowledge or consciousness is the inherent

quality of the soul. The soul is conscious of everything, but it is not involved. It is aware of its difference from all entities that are temporary. Just as a candle can see itself by its own light, so can the soul. The soul is self-luminous. The soul is Self-knowing. To know this Self you do not need anything else. To know “who am I” just go within. You do not need any other means because the soul is knowledge itself. The soul is consciousness itself. To know who you really are, you are to go deep into meditation. *Chit*, or consciousness, helps us have knowledge of everything, including knowledge of itself.

Understanding these first two qualities (*sat and chit*) or two natures of the soul, we understand that we immortal and pure consciousness, and we are conscious of everything, but we are detached. The third quality is *ananda* or bliss.

a n a n d a k a h ?
Sukhasvarupah -What is *ananda* (bliss)? It is of the nature of absolute happiness.

What is *ananda*? What is bliss? The teacher replies it is *sukhasvarupah*: “by nature it is happiness.” The simple meaning of *sukha* is

“happiness.” *Kha* means “space” and *su* means “closer”; thus, closeness to space brings happiness. Shri LahiriMahashaya said *sukha* consists of two syllables: *su* and *kha*. *Su* means “beautiful” and *kha* means “space and Brahman.” Both together are happiness. Space is the element in the *vishuddha* chakra, the throat centre. The elements of earth, water, fire, and air are located in the lower chakras. The higher you go, the more refined your spiritual visions and experiences become. The lower you are, the more limited your visions and experiences are. From the throat to the fontanel are five levels of *akasha* or space. Thus, the higher you go in space, the level of happiness increases. According to Shri LahiriMahashaya, the second meaning of *kha* is Brahman; so it metaphorically means being closer to God. The experience of being united with God is the highest experience of bliss. The closer you are to God, the more you experience happiness and joy. It is just like the fact that the closer you sit to a fire, the more you experience warmth. When you go away from God,

it is *duhkha*, or unhappiness and sorrow.

Ananda is in the form of, or in essence, perennial happiness. *Ananda* is continuous happiness. Suppose a child becomes happy when it gets a toy or candy, but this happiness is conditional on receiving it. Now the toy is broken and the child is crying. The happiness is gone. If I give you a toy today, will you be happy? You will say that you do not need a toy. When you were a child, you got so much joy and happiness from a toy, but now you do not get happiness from that same toy; your toy-happiness is gone. When you went to school, you got happiness or joy from reading books. But when you grew up, you were no longer interested in those books. Suppose you got joy and happiness from spending time with a friend. But then you found that this friend is the cause of a lot of trouble, and so you do not want to be near him. So, the same object that was giving joy to you once upon a time, is not giving joy anymore. This is conditional happiness. The happiness is not really in the toy; it is in your

acceptance. If joy was an inherent quality of the toy, then it would always give joy to both the child and an elderly person; but it does not have joy. So where is joy? Where is happiness? Joy and happiness are the nature of the soul. When you feel a sense of completeness, that bliss is manifested.

How do we know that happiness is our nature and that is the nature of the soul? Every day analyze when you are really happy. Every day there is a period of time when you are really happy; it is when you sleep. Suppose you are enjoying food, and then you bite into a chili you get tears in the eyes and water in the nose and the joy of food is gone. You go to work cheerfully in the morning, but then something happens in the office and you are sad or frustrated. In the wakeful state, we experience both pleasure and pain. In the dream state also, the dreams may be painful or pleasurable. But in deep sleep there is no pleasure and pain. Paramahansa Yoganandaji said sleep is the greatest teacher. God teaches us a valuable lesson during deep sleep, but

when we get up, we forget the teaching. What is the teaching? It is to be continuously happy. It means to be peaceful. How to be peaceful? Through the art of meditation; and God teaches how to meditate during deep sleep. Suppose you try to meditate. Even if you try, your mind will be going here and there. But remember, every night your mind is so focused during sleep that do not have a sense of anything. Every night you go to that state. Even if two or more people are sleeping in the same room, during sleep there is no sense of two or many. You go beyond everything — body consciousness and world consciousness; nothing exists. Every day you go there. Consciously when you try to meditate, you find that your mind is not cooperating and restless. In sleep, the mind is obedient. That is why Yoganandaji said that during the state of deep sleep, we learn a lot, but when we get up we forget. Deep sleep and deep meditation are very close to each other; however, one is in ignorance and the other one is in knowledge. Deep sleep is ignorance, deep meditation is knowledge. In

deep sleep you get happiness for a few hours continuously, and this happiness is because of the close proximity of the soul, which itself is in the form of bliss.

Happiness not in the object, but within. However, we forget the happiness is within, and we think it is outside. Happiness is our true nature; this inherent nature never changes and is unconditional. The brightness of gold is unconditional because it is its nature. Happiness is the nature of the soul and it is unconditional, beyond time, and continuous. *Sukha* also means a formless and infinite state, the formless state of happiness.

Then Acharya Shankara says:

*evamsaccidanandasvaru
pamsvatmanamvijaniyat* -
Thus, one should know oneself to be of the nature of existence, consciousness, bliss.

Acharya Shankara explains clearly the nature of the soul; it is *sat-chit-ananda*, without death, without limitation, full of knowledge, and blissful. Each one of us is the soul, without death, full of knowledge, and blissful. Let

that knowledge be firm within you; do not forget it. He said to know what you are — know it clearly, know it completely, know it with conviction, without any doubt.

However, having this knowledge is not enough. Even if I say that you are the soul, that you have no death, and that you are immortal, and then I give a pinch, you will feel pain. Who is feeling this pain? You. If the soul is in the nature of bliss, the soul is the nature of continuous happiness, then there is no sorrow. But when you are pinched or scolded, what happens? Knowing is one thing, but realizing is different. That is why it is said, know it clearly or realize your Self, your real form: *sat-chit-anandasvarupah*. Understand completely what you truly are. Only theoretical knowledge is not enough.

In the Bhagavad Gita (11:54), there is a line that Gurudev used to quote *jnatumdrashtum cha tattvenapraveshtum cha parantapa*: “O Slayer of enemies! O Arjuna! First you know, then you see, and then you be.” The three steps are I knew, I saw, and then I

became. The first step is that we need to know. We come to know through discussion, through understanding: “I know this is the nature of the soul.” But that is not enough. That is why in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (2:4:5), Rishi Yajnanvalkya said to Maitrayi, his wife, *atmava are maitreyi*: “O Maitreyi, my beloved, “Listen to it, reflect upon it, and try to experience it through you deep meditation.” Realize within: I am not this body made for five elements; I am not this body of five sheaths; I am not this mind, ego, intellect, or memory; and I am not this ignorance. These are all coverings on me. I am *sat-chit-ananda*. I am the soul. I am immortal. Once I experience it with my eyes closed or try to understand that this is my own nature, then when I open my eyes what should I see? What is this outside world? Is it different from me? I understand the concepts of the body and the soul, but how to correlate myself to the outside world?

Acharya Shankara gives the definition of the soul by first saying what we are not, and then saying what we are. He

said, “I am not the body, the mind, three states of existence, the five sheaths”; and then he said, “I am immortal, I am existence, I am pure consciousness. I am knowledge, I am bliss.”

When you switch on a flashlight in a dark room, you can see many things. At the same time, the light of the flashlight helps you to see the flashlight itself. The meaning of this example is that the consciousness of the soul helps us perceive everything in the external world, including itself.

When we are conscious of everything outside and we are conscious of “who am I”, this is Self-knowledge. Ordinarily, people are conscious of everything outside, but they are not conscious of who they are. A realized being is conscious of the outside and conscious of the inside: knowledge of the external world and knowledge of the Self. The awareness of the inner world and the awareness of the outer world are closely related, and both are the quality of the soul.



Birthday Celebration at Hariharananda Gurukulam

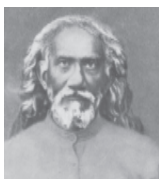
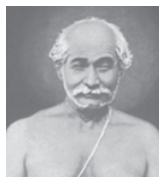


“The door of Kriya Yoga is open only to earnest seekers and sadhakas.”

Mahavatara Babaji

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

Lahiri Mahasaya



“Everyday do regular svadhyaya coupled with meditation and study of spiritual books and scriptures.”

Swami Shriyukteshwar

“Keep your mind always in tune with the scriptures and the teachings of the Masters.”

Sanyal Mahasaya

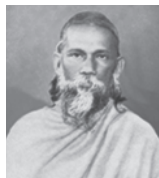


“The first rule in prayer is to approach God only with legitimate desires. Pray for their fulfillment, not as a beggar but as His child”

Paramahansa Yogananda

“Never accuse others of their mistakes. If a person has only one good quality out of 100 then try to see that good one not the 99 bad ones.”

Swami Satyananda



“The Mind is lord of all senses, but breath rules the mind. So breath-control will lead you mind-control and liberation.”

Paramahansa Hariharananda

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

Paramahansa Prajnanananda



MYTHS AND METAPHORS

MAHABHARATA

STORY OF DRAUPADI



Draupadi was yet another child of Drupada. Draupadi was named after her father. She had a few names: Yajnaseni, born from *yajna*, or fire ceremony; Panchali, daughter of the kingdom of Panchala, and Krishnaa. She was an unusual girl. Although she was not very fair in complexion, which is why her name was Krishnaa, meaning darker, she was exceptionally beautiful and intelligent. She learned all the branches of knowledge efficiently from her father.

The time came for the youthful Draupadi to marry. The tradition was to hold a

swayamvara in which princes from all over the world were invited. The young woman could then choose someone, or a special test could be administered to find a husband who was efficient. In Draupadi's *swayamvara*, here suitor had to pass a special test before he could marry her. He had to look at the reflection of a small fish on a fast rotating disc. He then had to pierce the left eye of that fish with his arrow by looking at the image in the water pot. The image was not very clear because the disc was constantly moving. Young princes from all over the world assembled. Sometimes

the opportunity was also given to young *brahmins* if the princes could not succeed. The Kauravas had also come. Karna, the eldest son of Kunti, who was conceived from Lord Surya's blessing and grew up with the chariot driver, had also come with a hope. All who assembled tried their best, but nobody could see the fish. Karna stood up, and although it was known that he would be able to do it, there was a rumor that he was not a *kshatriya*, nor even a *brahmin*, because nobody knew anything about him except that he was a chariot driver's son. Therefore, how could someone of that status marry the princess? It was not possible. Karna was humiliated. The five Pandava brothers were sitting there incognito. They put on the attire of *brahmins* so no one would know who they were. At that time, there was a murmuring among them, whispering that Arjuna should go forward without revealing his identity. Arjuna took the bow, looked into the water, and saw only the left eye of the fish, nothing else. He saw neither the fish nor the disc. This was because of Acharya Drona's training and Arjuna's practice.

All young princes, warriors, and even *brahmins* were present in the celebration. But no one could reach the goal except Arjuna. Let us reflect upon what our goal is. The real goal is to change ourselves. The goal is not food or a comfortable stay. Some people in ashrams complain there are too many mosquitoes that create a distraction for their meditation. However, the goal should always be clear and in front of us. Ordinarily, we deviate from our goal because we cannot see the goal. Here Arjuna saw only the goal, nothing else. Shri LahiriMahashaya said, "If your goal is clear and steady in your front, remember, you are progressing on the path of liberation." Hence, the goal should be clear, and one should never forget one's goal.

The Chameleon Did Not Forget His Goal

In India, even nowadays, there are chameleons. When I was working in Rourkela, I saw a chameleon. One day, he would come as a beggar, the next day as a monk, then later as a doctor with a stethoscope and a syringe filled with vaccine, explaining that it was the government's order that he treat

the people with the vaccine. His play was so real all enjoyed it, but people did not know that he was a chameleon. He changed his role every day. He moved on to the market and at the end of his play, he begged for money from the shopkeepers, who knew that he was chameleon.

Once, such a chameleon came to a kingdom. He played his role so beautifully that the king asked him, "Can you play the role of a holy man, a monk?" He agreed and took some time to grow a beard. Soon after, a holy man appeared in the city. No one knew that it was the play of a chameleon. People went to him. He was very peaceful. He sat with eyes closed and whenever he opened his eyes, he did not look at anybody. He was very loving and detached. He just silently sat blessing people. In time, more and more people came to him, including the king. The king came with royal gifts of gold, diamonds, and gold plates as an offering to the holy man. He offered all these at the feet of the holy man and said, "I come to offer my love to you on behalf of my kingdom. My kingdom is blessed to have you. Please take this little offering."

The holy man smiled and said, "O King, temptation is not good. Do not show all this to me. Take it back and use it for the betterment of mankind. I am a person under a tree. I do not need all these things."

The king was highly impressed. After a few days, the monk disappeared. Everybody was sad. The next day the chameleon came to the king and asked for money. The king asked him why he was asking for money. He said, "You wanted me to play the role of a holy man, which I did. It was me to whom you bowed down."

The king asked, "If so, then why did you refuse to take the gold and jewels I wanted to give you as an offering?"

The chameleon said, "If I had taken it, I would have broken the vow or the role of a holy man because it would have shown my greed. The king then gave him some money for playing the role so nicely."

The purpose of telling this story is to demonstrate that we should not forget our goal. If the goal is clear life is beautiful. Arjuna saw the goal clearly.

Keep the Goal Clear in Front of You

There is a story from the life of Shukadeva, the son of Sage Vysadeva, about keeping awareness of the goal. Sage Vasudeva sent his son to King Janaka to study under him. Shukadeva asked, “I am a *brahmin* and a *brahmachari*. Why must I go to a king to study? You are such a great sage and also my father; what is a king going to teach me?” Sage Vyasadeva said to his son that Janaka was not an ordinary king and he could learn a lot from him. Reluctantly, Shukadeva went and had to wait for a few days to meet the king. After a few days of waiting, King Janaka wanted to test Shukadeva. He gave him a bowl of oil and said, “Carry this bowl of oil on your head, walk in the city, and come back. The bowl is filled to the brim and not a single drop of oil should spill.” To make it even more challenging, King Janaka had ordered that there be music, dance, fanfare, fireworks, and all entertainment on the royal streets. King Janaka intended that this entertainment would distract Shukadeva’s mind and that how

would spill the oil. Shukadeva completed the walk and King Janaka asked, “What did you see in the city?” Shukadeva said, “I saw nothing but my oil bowl.” That is what the goal is. With such a clear goal and blessings of his concentration, Arjuna could win in the *swayamvara* and become a source of joy to many, as well as misery to some.

Draupadi, the Beloved of the Five Pandava Brothers

In the *swayamvara*, Arjuna proved himself as the successful archer and he won Draupadi; however, something strange happened. The five brothers returned home with Draupadi. Before telling Mother Kunti what happened, they said, “Loving mother! We have brought a new and good thing.” Without any further inquiry, she instantly said they were to share it with each other. Mother Kunti did not know where they had gone and thought surely that they, as *brahmins*, had gone to beg for food. So when they said they brought back something special, the mother, thinking it to be some food, said to share it with each other. Mother Kunti was

special, as she never spoke a lie in her life.

In yogic practice, there is a *siddhi* known as *vaksiddhi* (perfection in the utterance of words), which is a special yogic attainment. If a person speaks truth continuously for twelve years with a special prayer, he or she attains this *siddhi*. Whatever is uttered out of the mouth becomes true. If one says, “Be healed,” one will be healed; “Be prosperous and successful,” one will be prosperous and successful. *Vakshiddhi* means perfection in speech. Kunti said, “Share the special thing with each other. The next moment she came to know that it was not something to be eaten, but rather, it was a beautiful young lady, and none but a princess. But Kunti said to share their treasure with each other. Was it possible? How can a woman marry five men?

In human history, one man can marry a few women, but five brothers marrying one woman is an unusual incident. There was a big conflict about whether or not it was possible. There was a great debate and discussion. It is said that wise people including Sage Vyasa-deva, agreed that it was

possible to marry in an exceptional case. Thus, they had an agreement. They would all marry separately and Draupadi would stay with one brother for one year and during that time others would respect her as a sister-in-law. The next year she would stay with another brother. There would be a special ceremony called *agnisnana*, a purification through fire, so she would be just as pure as before. During those days, it was accepted, and there were no demerits in doing this. Draupadi became the beloved wife of the five Pandavas. But for our spiritual understanding, we will not think of it as an external marriage; it is an inner marriage.

Inwardly contemplate on the goal of your life. The goal is not worldly pleasure, name and fame, or comfortable living. Keep the supreme goal burning in your heart and mind. Do not change your goal again and again. Be strict, committed, and devoted, “I will try my best.” It is said, “If you go one step, the Divine comes ten steps toward you.” But you have to take one step. The Pandavas always kept the goal clear in front of themselves. The goal

was not an ordinary goal; it was a goal of love, goal of real friendship with all in all possible ways, and ultimately, friendship with Lord Krishna. Pray from within. Watch and love your every breath. Every moment, in every footstep, think, “What

am I doing? Am I conscious of my goal and my life?” Obstacles are many and deviate us from our goal. Never allow worries to deviate you. Emotion and ego bring deviation. Let us be strong and stable.

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Sri Guruji's 60th Birthday Celebrations at Dhyana Mandir Pattamundai

VALUABLE VOLUMES



THE LAW OF KARMA

BY PARAMAHAMSA PRAJNANANANDA

Thought Power

We do not realize it, but this mental action, the power of thought, is very strong. Consequently, if we cultivate good thoughts, inspiring thoughts, positive thoughts, it not only transforms our lives, but the positive, inspiring, good thinking will create a powerful energy all around us. When we think a good thought, this positive thought can be transmitted in a moment's time and generate a positive effect on the person we are thinking about. Prayer is like this. If someone is sick or suffering, if we close our eyes and think of that person, pray for that person, pray for recovery, even from a distance, there is an effect – because we all are one.

One power of God is within all of us and positive thoughts travel much faster than any other form of message.

As you may have already concluded, thinking badly of others also produces an effect. It creates a negative thought, a negative impression in the other person. A story about Akbar, a Mughal emperor in India, and his minister Birbal illustrates this. One day Akbar and Birbal, who were very good friends, were having a discussion. Akbar asked Birbal, "Do you know how much my subjects love me?" Birbal's response was short and to the point. He said, "The people love you as you love them." This world is nothing but a mirror, an echo. If you shout

in a valley, "I love you," the echo will resound many times "I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you." It is like a mirror. If you smile in a mirror, the image will smile back. If you look unhappy, the image will look unhappy. If you are restless, the image will look restless.

Akbar asked Birbal to verify his statement. A few days later when Birbal and Akbar were walking together, they saw an old woman carrying firewood on her head. Birbal said to Akbar, "Think something about this old lady." So, Akbar thought, "These old people are parasites on society. They continuously need more. Since they are like parasites they should be taxed more." No doubt he was thinking about the woman in a negative way. Akbar and Birbal were incognito that day; thus they were able to approach the old woman without being recognized. Birbal looked at the woman and said, "Akbar died."

Immediately the old woman sharply replied, "Akbar died. So what! Taxing people! Enjoying people's money! Living in luxury while so many old people are suffering their

whole lives, carrying firewood and working hard. Let him die! What does it matter?"

Akbar was shocked, "O God! I had bad thoughts about her, and now she is uttering exactly what I thought, without any direct communication. But perhaps it was just a coincidence. Let us see what others say."

Next they saw an old man cutting grass. Birbal again told Akbar to think something about the man. This time, taking a different approach, Akbar thought, "In this day and age old people still have to work too hard. We should establish some form of charitable relief for all elderly people. They have given so much to society since they were young. Surely they should be given a reward!" And he went on thinking like this.

Birbal then said to the old man, "Have you heard the news that Akbar died?"

The old man had tears in his eyes, "Akbar died? Why did God take him so young? God could have taken my life, given it to Akbar. God could have taken me. We are of no use, but he is such a kind-hearted man!"

Our Words Say What We Are

Be careful what you think. In our minds we think about people in many ways. We think of many incidents in many ways. Take care of your mind. Take care of your thoughts; take care of your words. Do not speak unnecessarily, do not use words unnecessarily.

During the time I stayed with Gurudev I did not speak much. Sometimes Gurudev remarked to others, “You know why he does not talk? His words are very valuable.” At other times he would say to me, “You are a miser with your words.” Once when I was not replying to his question, he said, “Say yes or no, or at least nod your head. Do you have spondylitis? I thought you were sweet and humble.” One day when I did not answer his question he asked, “Do you want to follow your guru or not?” Hearing this, I could no longer remain silent. However, my inner feeling always was, when he knows everything, why should I speak. A saying in Sanskrit states, “As long as a fool never opens the mouth, he is wise.” When we open our mouths, we disclose who we truly are.

A wise man was traveling to many places. While traveling, he heard about a man in a village that the villagers thought was very wise; he was treated with great respect. When the traveling wise man met the man in the village, he bowed to him with humility. Wise people are humble, without ego, not stubborn. The other man, surrounded by the many villagers who considered him very wise, thought, “He is bowing to me.” The traveling Wiseman asked the village wise man, “*kastvam*,” which means “Who are you?” The so-called wise man in the village was really ignorant and did not know anything. But the poor villagers thought that everything he said was something great. When asked, *kastvamkah, thvamkastvam*: “Who are you?” the foolish man, not knowing the meaning, not even the Sanskrit language, thought the wise man was asking whether he knew the alphabet. So he replied, “*kastvam, khastavam, gastvam, ghatstvam...*” — he went on repeating the alphabet like this. Immediately the wise man understood the problem and

left. So long as a fool never opens the mouth, he is wise; once he opens the mouth, everything is revealed.

Physical Action

Kayika (physical action) is expressed through the sense organs. God gave us the senses for evolution and growth, not for downfall. Thus, we should use them wisely. Since we have two eyes, we should walk with our eyes open. Gurudev used to say that if our eyes were open, we would have no problem while walking; we would reach our goal. The eyes exist to help us; they were given to us so we could see. However, Gurudev also stressed that we should try to open the third eye, which gives us the divine sight of intuitive understanding.

When referring to those who prefer not to speak, Shriyukteshwarji used to say, “God has provided a mouth for speech; dumbness (muteness) is not spirituality.” We should know the art of proper expression. We should speak sweetly and intelligently. Properly expressing Truth will help others evolve. Speak that which is good and beneficial and love God in every sense organ.

A Sanskrit saying says, “Serving the Lord (*Hrishikesh* – Lord Vishnu, the Lord of the senses) through a healthy use of the sense organs is true devotion.” Every sense organ can be used to serve the Lord in creation.

God created many varieties of pleasures for human beings and we have many choices. But our action through the sense organs should be for the betterment of creation.

Sant Kabir said:

*ankanamumdu kana
narumduh kaya
kastanadharu*

“Let me not close my eyes nor close my ears. I do not have to torture my body.”

*herinayana me
jahantahandekhun tera
rupaniharun*

“O God, bless me with a state that with my eyes open, wherever I look, I will be seeing Your beautiful form.”

Swami Vivekananda used to say, “You are searching for God in the temple, in the mosque, in the church or synagogue. You are trying to

find God in heaven but don't you know that in your presence, right in front of you, in a multitude of forms, God is standing?"

There is a beautiful Hindi devotional song, "O devotee, God is standing at your door as a beggar; fill his begging bag." This song has a very beautiful message. It teaches that the Divine is standing in front of your door. Fulfill His wish and see God in all. There is a saying: "If you cannot see God in all, you cannot see God at all." Live in the presence of God, use every sense organ – the physical actions of seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting – to perceive God within and without.

"When you speak, speak well; sing the song of God. Thus speaks Kabir. If the mouth is not able to sing the song of God, The name of God, that mouth is full of dust. If the ears cannot hear good things, God's glory, they are not ears, they are the holes where a snake lives."

Live Intelligently

Use every sense organ wisely. We perform *kriyamana* karma continuously

day and night, with the mind and internal organs, with our words when we communicate, or with any sense organ. Remember, *kriyamana* karma is always propelled by desire. *Kriyamana* karma not only produces an instant consequence, but part of the karma remains as an impression that will bear fruit in the future. We must be very careful about *kriyamana* karma, the present actions of daily life. We must live conscious lives of self-discipline and love. In the following chapters, we will discuss other aspects of karma: how it affects our lives, how to be free from the fruit of actions, and how to be liberated.

Take a moment and pray:

O God, You have given me human birth. You have provided me a good mind and intellect. You brought me into this beautiful world. O God with this body, senses, and mind, activities take place. I am the soul living in the body, but I have forgotten it. Instead, I have become attached and identified with the body. The functioning of the organs, mind, and intellect became my own actions. I thought, "I am doing this, I am

doing that” because I forgot Your presence, I forgot to love You and to remember who I really am. O God, through Your grace, with good company, from the instructions of the masters, through the practice of meditation, slowly I am realizing who I am. I am understanding how to be compassionately detached. O God, bless me. I am trying, but again and again I forget. Forgive my forgetfulness, my Beloved. Give me more strength and calm so I can live breath to breath, moment to moment, with love and devotion. O God, I am Your child, help me to grow. It is Your creation; it is Your body; it is Your mind everything is Yours. What can I claim as mine? When the breath stops, I will leave everything. Bless me, O God, to live in this world and perceive *akarma* in karma, inaction in action. O Divine, please bless me. O beloved Masters, please guide me in daily life.

A song in Bengali dedicated to the Divine Mother says, “O Divine Mother, everything is Your wish. Egotistically, I say, ‘I am doing, I am doing.’ With Your wish, everything is possible. O Divine Mother, this world is strange. A powerful elephant gets stuck in the mud and is unable to move. But through Your grace, a lame person can walk across a mountain. I am the instrument, You are the operator. I am the house, You are the householder. I am the chariot. You are the chariot driver. O Divine Mother, drive me to the divine goal.”

Whenever you pray to God, pray with love, sincerely from the heart, and pray with simplicity. God the Mother is so kind and compassionate. The Mother’s love knows no bounds. A little call from our heart will invoke, attract, pull Her to rescue and protect us, to lift us up, to give us all that we will ever need.

THE YOGA SUTRA OF PATANJALI

Sutra 25

*tatraniratisayamsarvajna-
bijam*

Word Meaning

tatra – there, in Him; *niratisayam* – *nih* + *atishayam* – to the extreme, without limit; *sarvajnabijam* – seed of omniscience

Translation

In Him is the unsurpassable source of all knowledge.

Commentary by Shri LahiriMahashaya

The seed of omniscience is inherent in the Lord. When one is absorbed or merged in Him, one attains omniscience. This is otherwise known as *kashtha* (complete steadiness in the Lord)

Metaphorical Explanation

To define the special identity of the Lord, this sutra explains the glory of the Lord. Everything that is born is limited to time and space, is finite in nature. Subject to conditions of time and space, this objective world is finite, limited, and

perishable, meaning it is prone to decay and death. God is one, infinite, formless, absolute, all-pervading, and the source of immortality. The Upanishads declare that God is beyond the play of nature and the ultimate abode of all.

He is the source of all knowledge. Here the word *bija* is used, which literally means “the seed” or “the cause.” *Yenabinaya tnabhavati tat tasyakaranam*: “Without which that cannot happen; that is the cause or seed of it.” For example, without the parents, a child cannot be born. The parents are the source or seed of the child.

Sarvajna is omniscience, all-knowing. In the Bhagavad Gita (chapter 15), *kshara purusha* is described as *jiva*, or the individual, one with limited knowledge. *Akshara purusha* is Ishwara with unlimited knowledge, but Purushottama is the Supreme Self, the source of infinite knowledge. He is above all duality.

O Seeker! All the achievements in life except Self-realization are perishable. Seek the imperishable. It is the glory of God. Meditate, pray and surrender to the Lord. In every breath feel the presence of the omnipresent and omnipotent Lord. Through real surrender, all doubts will disappear. Your mind will be peaceful.

People without an understanding of the spirit of yoga and spiritual life look for *siddhis* (yogic powers) and a lower grade of supernatural

achievement. They think *sarvajna* (omniscience or all-knowingness) means that reading others' minds and thoughts is a sign of spiritual advancement.

O Seeker! Do not run after all these magical powers. It will not give you supreme bliss. It might bring name, fame, material gain, and a low grade of satisfaction. Let God be the goal. Let God be the way. Live up to this standard. Surely you will find divine grace and experience Truth.



Birthday Celebrations at Sydney

STORIES TO LIVE BY

LESSONS FROM THE GRINDING STONE

There was a king from Punjab, named Ranajit Singh, who was known as the lion of Punjab. He was a very generous, honest, and popular ruler, who always served his people. This king had a fondness for collecting jewels and loved to show his treasury to all the palace guests. As you know, people tend to like showing others what they own. When we have a nice house, we invite people over, not so they will pray and bless the house to be a temple of peace and happiness, but so they will appreciate how nice the house is. If people do not praise it, we conclude that they are jealous of us. We prepare a nice dinner for our guests and expect that they will say it was delicious, and if they don't, we get upset.

We want to exhibit our possessions, like, for example, the king who had the habit of inviting people to his palace to show them his jewels.

One day a monk visited the palace and the king promptly

displayed the jewels to him. The monk politely asked the king how much benefit he was gaining from the stones and whether he was earning any wealth from them while they were sitting in the treasury. The king thought for a moment, then said that the stones actually cost him money because he had to hire someone to guard them. "You must come to my house," said the monk. "I will show you my precious stone that gives me many benefits and does not cost me a thing to maintain. For your stone you spend, for my stone I receive."

The king became curious and thus stated he would love to see the stone. So he went with the monk to his small cottage. When the king saw there was no door on the cottage, he wondered what kind of stone the monk had. And when he walked inside, he became even more curious, because the room was almost empty. "Where is this precious jewel?" said the king. With great joy, the monk pointed to

an old grinding stone. He then told the king that the stone not only gave him flour everyday, it also taught him many beautiful things about life. Now you may wonder what anyone could learn from watching a grinding stone. However, when the monk observed the stone, he saw that the unmoving stone steady like *purusha*, God; whereas the moving stone was always changing like *prakriti*, nature. Our nature changes — one moment we are happy, the next gloomy. Constant change is also a quality of the natural world outside. One is God and the other is Mother Nature. One is changeless, and the other one is constantly changing. Where are we? We are in between, like the wheat that is ground by the grinding stone. The *prakriti* and *purusha* are grinding us. What will be ground? The stone below has a small stick that rotates. The wheat that is closest to the center will not be crushed. It is the wheat at the periphery that gets crushed. The stone teaches us that one who

remains in the center, one who is centered in life, one who loves the center (divinity), will not be crushed, will not be troubled, will not be put into difficulties; but will instead remain as is. One who deviates from the center will be crushed. We can have some possessions, a nice house, a nice car, but we should not be possessed by these things. Otherwise trouble will begin, and fear will come. Be fearless, be free. If there is wealth, all is well and good, and if nothing is there, all is still well and good.

When Saint Francis was a young man, living with his parents, he wanted to give to the poor. His father, who was wealthy, was upset about this and severely beat him. This was the relationship between them because of wealth. Possessions meant more to the father than his own son. Be careful. Where there are wealth and possessions, there is fear — the fear of losing them. Possessiveness is nothing more than fear.

SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF PRAJNANA MISSION

Prajnana Mission celebrated its 25th year of anniversary in Cuttack on June 30 and July 1. Gurudev Paramahansa Hariharanandaji advised Shri Guruji to purchase a property in Cuttack. Subsequently, the property was bought in the beginning of January 1993 and on the Saraswati puja of that year the *bhumipuja* (ground-breaking ceremony) was performed. Later that year on May 17 the Ashram was inaugurated in a very humble manner. It was from this Ashram that Shri Guruji traveled to the West in 1994 and in 1996 Beloved Gurudev sanctified His presence in the Ashram by staying for two weeks.

The celebrations were held in Shaheed Bhavan in Cuttack on June 30 and July 1. The chief guests during the celebrations were Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb, Pujya Swami Aseemananda Saraswatiji Pujya Swami Suddhananda Saraswatiji, Sant

Purna Prakashji, and Padma Shri Tulasi Mundaji.

The celebrations included art and elocution competitions for school children, public lecture on Kriya Yoga, Kriya Yoga initiations and guided meditation, and public meeting to highlight the activities of Prajnana Mission. An exhibition was organized displaying the various kinds of activities of Prajnana Mission. A souvenir '*Yogarudha*' in English and '*bujhunabujhupadh Gita*', a small booklet inspiring the students to take up study of Gita, were released during the celebrations

For the art competition, the theme for the junior group was,

The water-drop playing on a lotus petal has an extremely uncertain existence; so also is life ever unstable.

For the senior group, the theme was,

Only the association with good people alone can

*save you as a boat to cross
the sea of life*

For the elocution
competition the topic for the
junior group was,

For One's Freedom and
For the Well-Being of the World

For the senior group the
topic was,

That is the path, walked
by the realised master

Prizes were distributed
for the winners during the art
and elocution competitions.

Many people were
involved in the initial stages of
the foundation of Jagatpur
Ashram. All these people
selflessly served the cause of
God and Gurus for many years.
Shri Gururji felicitated nearly 27
of those people worked
tirelessly.



Birthday Celebrations
at Temple of Harmony - Chicago

IN HONOR OF SHRI GURUJI PARAMAHAMSA PRAJNANANANDAJI'S BIRTHDAY

"The Guru actually emerges from within. When genuine search takes effect, his genuine manifestation is bound to occur; it cannot be otherwise. The One, assuming Himself in the shape of the Guru, of His own accord brings about His manifestation or becomes manifested."

- from *Matri Vani* of Shri Anandamayi Ma

Similarly, our beloved Gururji Paramahansa Prajnanananda entered into our lives as an answer to the yearning of our own souls to have the loving care and guidance of a real master who could lead us to the Divine Goal.

Shri Anandamayi Ma repeats the word "genuine" for a particular reason. That which is genuine is authentic, true.

In our spiritual search we come to understand that it is our sincerity and humility that open the inner door to welcome the true *sadguru* into our lives to show us the path to realization.

Through our genuine desire, we have come to this noble path of Kriya Yoga. Its unbroken line of realized masters has culminated in the form of our Gururji as a testament to their promise.

We can all remember when Gururji came into our lives as a birthday of sorts, and a new beginning of spiritual renewal to face life's challenges with courage and love. Each one of us can recall how he inspired and continues to inspire us to grow more, serve more, practice more, meditate more, forgive more, be more disciplined, and have more love for all of God's marvelous creation.

His example, love, and instruction are a catalyst for us to bring out our own best qualities, and a golden opportunity to develop and correct shortcomings.

As Shri Gurudev would say, "Opportunity must not be neglected, for it may never return."

So it is fitting that we, on this auspicious day, take the

opportunity to gratefully and humbly re-invite Gururji into our hearts and renew our determination not to stop until we reach the Divine Goal. Through the guidance and blessings of this great soul

and the force of our divine lineage, we can successfully reach the purpose of life itself; to know that we are “God in Human Being, Human Being in God.”

FORTHCOMING PROGRAMME

- October 21 – 27 : Balashram Treak
- November 1 – 4 : Kriya Yoga Retreat at Silvasa
(Near Daman)
- November 26 – 28 : Geeta Jnana Yajna at Dhenkanal
- December 1 – 3 : Punyatithi Aradhana in Balighai
- December 4 – 6 : Geeta Jnana Yajna at Baragarh
- December 8 – 9 : Teachers’ Workshop on Moral Education
- December 20 : Geeta Jayanti
- December 24 : Long Guided Meditation (Christmas)
- December 25 – 27 : Geeta Jnana Yajna at Sambalpur
- December 29 – 30 : State Level Geeta Chanting Programme
at Balighai
- December 31 : Long Guided Meditation
(New Year’s Eve)
- January 3 – 5 : Annual Programme at Kolkota
- January 6 – 8 : Geeta Jnana Yajna at Bhubaneswar
- January 9 – 11 : Geeta Jnana Yajna in Cuttack
- January 13 – 20 : IIKYS
- January 19 – 21 : Geeta Jnana Yajna at Puri

DATES TO REMEMBER

October - December, 2018

- October 9-19 : Durga Puja
- November 7 : Deepavali
- December 3 : Mahasamadhi day of Baba Hariharanandaji

60TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS OF GURUJI

The 60th birthday of our beloved Sri Guruji, Baba Prajnananandaji was celebrated at all ashrams in India and abroad with special worship and meditation, cultural programs and satsangs.

Hariharananda Gurukulam

Sri Guruji's 60th birthday celebration at Hariharananda Gurukulam on 10th August 2018, started with meditation at 5 am. *Pooja* and *Havan* at Sri Gurumandir started at 9 am and continued till 11 am.

Swami Gurukrupananda Giri, President, Prajnana Mission and Swami Achalananda Giri, Secretary, Prajnana Mission inaugurated the Blood Donation Camp at Hariharananda Charitable Health Centre (HCHC), Balighai, Puri at 9 am. 42 people including ashram residents donated blood. Members of Kriya Yoga Dhyana Kendra, Puri were actively involved in organising the blood donation camp. They also planted few plants in front of HCHC on the sacred occasion.

'*Neta Bandha*' – hoisting flag at the top of Sri Jagannath Temple (*Neelachakra*) praying to Lord Jagannath for the long and healthy life of Sri Gurujee was held at 5 pm. It was followed by *satsang* where few monks spoke about the life of Sri Guruji. Around 200 disciples from Puri, Cuttack and Bhubaneswar were served Mahaprasad at Sri Mandir

Birth day celebrations at Matruashram, Pattamundai Dhyana mandir and Bandhapada (Birthplace of Sri Guruji).

A three-day program from 14th to 16th August (following Hindu almanac) was observed to commemorate guruji's 60th birthday with the active participation of Matruashram and many of our monks from Prajnana Mission. The events included special worship, meditation, satsang and Sadhu Bhandara at different venues including the birthplace of Guruji. On 14th August there was Akhanda Dhyana in Matru Ashram. On 15th Srimad

Bhagavata (Gopa Lila) patha in MatruAshram. On 16th from 8 to 10 am - Guru Paduka Puja and havan in Hariharananda Dhyanamandir, Pattamundai. From 10 am to 2 pm – Rudrabhisekam was performed in Ramesvar Shiva temple, Bandhapada. In the lunch time there was Narayana seva in Dhyanamandir. In the evening there was Satsang and Sadhu Bhandara in Dhyanamandir. close to 100 eminent monks from different parts of Odisha congregated to participate in the auspicious event. The program concluded with over 1500 people from the local areas taking prasad.

Durg Ashram

On the evening of 10th August 2018, 200 disciples assembled in the Ashram, to celebrate the 60th Birth Day of our beloved Guru Paramahansa Prajanananandji Maharaj. Several disciples from Raipur also joined to participate in the special occasion.

The program opened with devotional bhajans and songs followed by a special meditation. Invited guests spoke on the life and teachings of Guruji. As a mark of the 60th birthday a special arati was performed with 60 lamps which was followed by cake cutting and prasad. Initiation program was held on the 11th and 12th.

Americas and Europe

Mother center USA and our other ashrams – Temple of Harmony, Temple of peace, Temple of compassion and Temple of Divine Love in Sao paulo, Brazil celebrated the birthday of Sri Guruji with great love and reverence with special prayers, worship and meditations and acts of charity and service.

Australia

Australia celebrated the 60th birthday with a 3-day program, both at the ashram - Kriya Vidya Mandir and also in the city of Sydney.

ACTIVITIES OF PRAJNANA MISSION

Gurudev's Birthday at Habibpur

A grand program with great coordination and thorough planning was organized by the Kolkata Kriya Yoga committee members with initiative of Hariharananda Matruashram to celebrate the 111th birthday of our beloved Gurudev Baba Hariharanandaji and Matru Jagaran Shibir at Gurudev's birth place in Habibpur. This program included travel, processions, discourses, initiation programs at Gurudev's birthplace and was attended by the monks and yogacharyas of the Mission. Disciples from all over India attended the program.

Sri Guruji in Residence

While in residence in India, Sri guruji had participated in the celebration of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Jagatpur Ashram, International Yoga day celebrations and Gurupurnima celebrations at the Gurukulam. Programs included also hectic travel to many districts in Orissa addressing students at several colleges.

State Level Gita Chanting Competitions

The inauguration of State Level Geeta Chanting Competition "**Geeta Sugeeta Kartavya**" on 12th Chapter (Bhakti Yoga) of Bhagavad Geeta in Odisha by Prajnana Mission was held on 5th August 2018 at Talcher, the Thermal City of Odisha with the participation of 135 students from different schools and colleges. We have planned to conduct the Geeta Chanting Competition in more than 100 cities of Odisha, to take the holy Geeta and its message to the student community. The grand finale of the competition will be held at Hariharananda Gurukulam, Balighai, Puri on 29th & 30th December 2018.

We plan to reach 10,000 students who will chant 12th chapter of the Bhagavat Geeta by heart. Please find some photographs of the competitions held in the month of August at different places.

In **HCHC, Balighai** new Ayurvedic OPD inaugurated in September, every Tuesday for the public.

BALASHRAM NEWS

New Admissions

In the month of May-2018, 25 boys and 25 girls from different districts of Odisha were selected and admitted for the new academic session 2018-19 in Nursery.

Participation in state and national level competitions

Balashram students participated in state level and national level competitions held at different venues in April, 2018 in connection with World Art Day and won special prizes and certificates. Champarani Murmu and Mandui Soy had participated in State Level tribal sports Competitions held at Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar.

Two of our students were selected for All India Radio audition for singing and one student for tabala playing. The students participated in the elocution competitions held as

part of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of Prajnana Mission in June and won prizes.

Celebrations at the school

Balashram celebrated the birthdays of Kriya yoga masters – swami Shriyukteshwarji and Paramahansa Hariharanandaji with great enthusiasm with talks by students, teacher and other dignitaries and cultural programs.

On 10 th August 2018, the 60 th Birth anniversary of Beloved Sri Guruji Paramahamsa Prajnanadaji was celebrated inschool in a grand manner. The function was held in meditation hall with an eveningprayer, followed by Arati by the principaland Guru Vandana.

On 15th August 2018, the 72 nd Independence day was celebrated.

Visit our web site:

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

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