



Nachiketanjali

...an offering



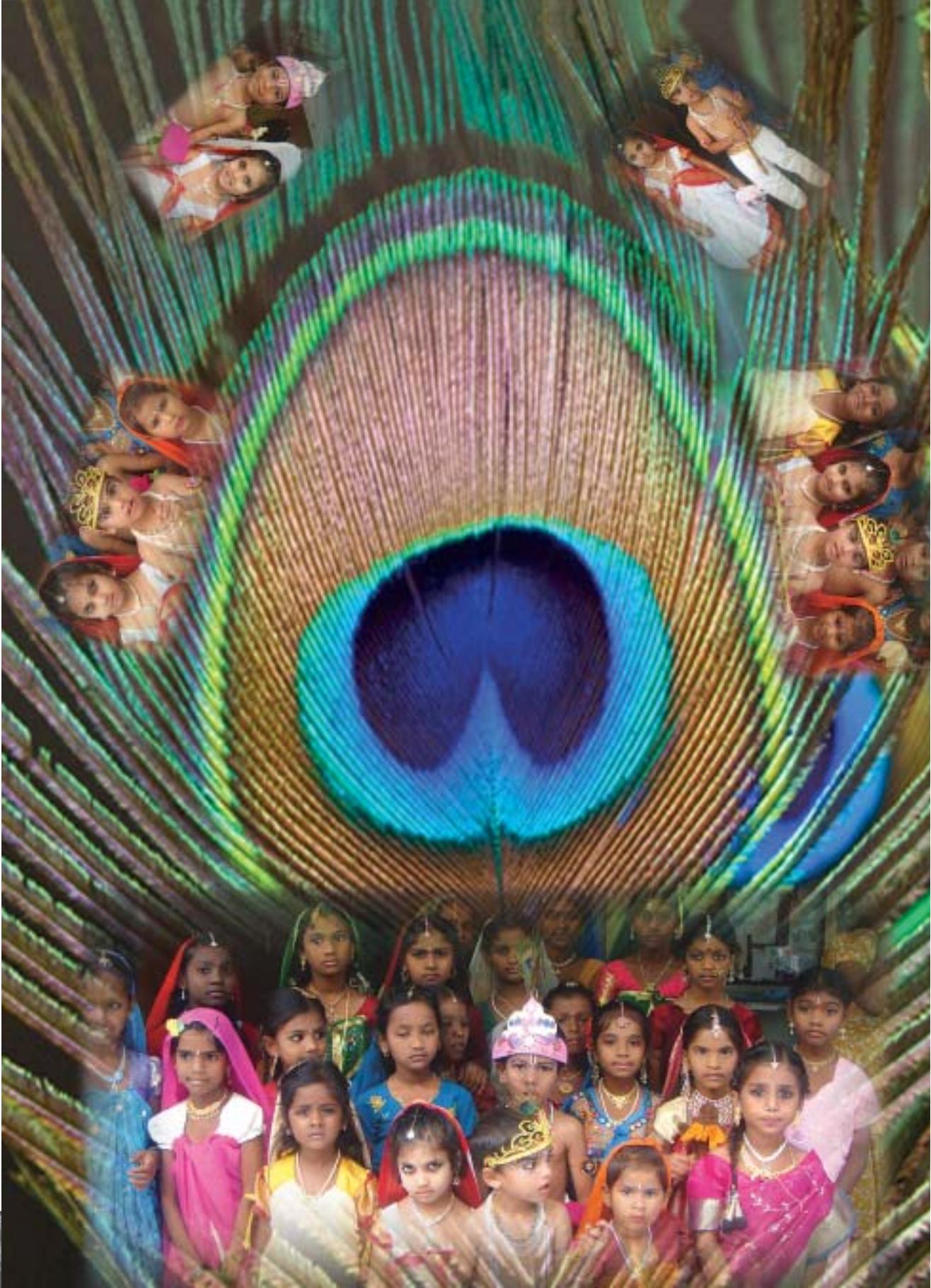
A Journey Into The Spiritual Realm!

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Editor: Subhadra K.



EDITORIAL

Time and again the existence of God is questioned, especially when one goes through a grave phase in life. No one is an atheist for all are the creation of the Lord and repositories of the Grace. In everyone's heart there is a spring of love and that love is God. But we nearly lose faith in God when our prayer demands are not met and there seems to be no relief in the near future. When we are put through all kinds of tests in our lives, we are thoroughly depressed and feel we are deserted by God. But God always assists us. Perhaps our sins are much more horrible so as to cause much more torture than what we are currently undergoing.

Instead of coming up with the question, 'Why God, why only me?' let us understand we have to pay for our past karmas. ACCEPTANCE is the key. We should accept that we are suffering much less than we ought to and that it occurred due to our sins. Let us be mentally prepared to face the consequences. Let us never lose faith in God; for, we need Him now more than ever before. If we can do this, then God is bound to solve our crisis as He always does. Just surrender to His Feet and then see what He does! He would for sure stretch His invisible hands and wipe away our tears. Everything is His will and not ours. Surrender, Trust and Accept!

Our attraction towards God should not be influenced by the fact of fulfillment or non-fulfillment of our prayers. It should be filled with pure bhakthi which flows like river Ganga longing to merge with the sea. We can develop loving devotion when we understand that our soul originates from God. Let us accept Him as the source of all and trust that all exist in Him. Worship Him and surrender to Him with such faith. The day should come when we can sit back and think of all the difficult times with a smile on our face, for we haven't lost our faith in God.

- Subhadra K.

I am 'I'



*I am 'I', tiny or big
I do not know
But I am 'I'*

*I am 'I', ego or soul
I do not know
But I am 'I'*

*I am 'I', worldly or spiritual
I do not know
But I am 'I'*

*I am 'I', servant or Master
I do not know
But I am 'I'*

*I am 'I', source for hatred or Love
I do not know
But I am 'I'*

*I am 'I', temporary or permanent
I do not know
But I am 'I'*

*But then who am I
I do not know
But I am 'I'*

Every moment we use 'I'. There is no time when this 'I' is not involved. There is no action when this tiny 'I' is missing. In fact we live, we breathe, we eat, we chew, we express, we enjoy, we overproject, this 'I' but without knowing it. Yet we are not very keen to know who this 'I' is.

In the real journey called life, we do have two 'I's. One is external and the other one is internal. This external 'I' is mere reflection of inner 'I' and inner 'I' is the soul, our true identity- the source of everything that exists and beyond. But due to our ignorance we assume external 'I' as the true 'I' and follow it throughout life. Then all our calculations of life, analysis of life and everything that exists speaks only about the external 'I'. And within no time this mere shadow called tiny 'I' become 'real person and eventually personality', left for the entire society to follow...

In this journey called life, mere reflection becomes true object and we invest our whole life and all energies into it, by thinking that one day we will achieve that which is beyond human comprehension. We live an imaginary life with false identity. We indeed achieve imaginary realization and live there forever, thinking that we are permanent. This false realization is enough to damage the whole race, as it is contagious and spreads faster than mind's speed.

Robot can do better work but can never be a replacement for human being. A picture can be beautiful than the person but it cannot be taken for life. We cannot live with a robot or a picture. Yet due to external 'I' we live with all our false identities. Then 'I' becomes the mantra for life. And living with such 'I' is more disastrous than any natural or manmade calamities.

But if we are not accepting this external 'I' as a whole in the journey called life, then the 'I' that is within will guide and make life more precious than a diamond... livelier than life. Then the inner 'I' speaks, whispers, sings and dances. Then doors for the possibilities open up. External 'I' dissolves into inner 'I' and expresses real 'I'.

In this journey called life, even for a moment if this external 'I' becomes silent then real melody begins within. Then inner 'I' plays the mystic flute and spreads music all over. Then the real dance begins in the life. Then external 'I' gets tuned to inner 'I' and life reveals life, soul reveals soul, 'I' reveals 'I'.

- Swami Nachiketananda



Veda is the basis of existence of the universe and Sanatana Dharma. It is an ocean of nectar and wisdom of the ocean. Veda is pure and divine wisdom. The meaning of Sankrit word "**Veda**" means "**to know**", "**Wisdom or Supreme knowledge**". Vedas are not claimed by any prophet or sage. According to Sanatana Dharama Vedas are "**Apaurusheyas**", means in the beginning of the universe, Vedas are directly revealed by Supreme himself. In the state of Samadhi our sages have received this sacred wisdom which is as old as this universe. That's why Vedas are called "Srutis".

Vedas are not mere samskrit mantras; however due to lack of Samskrit knowledge many do not understand the language of Vedas. In fact Vedas discuss the Divine science of the self as well as the universe. It was discovered by Galileo and Copernicus in the 16th and 17th century that earth is spherical, but many Yugas ago, in the oldest veda of **Rigveda**, it is mentioned that "**Bhugola sarvato Vrittaha**" means **the earth is round from all the sides**. Sushrutha is the father of Surgery. Vedas have more advanced science than modern science.

Vedas talk about Astronomy, Medicine, Physics, Chemistry and every science which modern science discusses. The most important aspect the modern science fails to talk about, but Vedas discuss in detail is the soul, the supreme knowledge called Atma vidya or Brahma vidya.

Thousands of years ago our sages have spoken about **Anuvu and Paramanuvu** means **molecules and atoms**. Vedas discuss about

body, mind, and soul. Vedas not only discuss about hell and heaven, but they go beyond and they discuss about the supreme or the higher self.

Today a small child to youngster will express a wish to go overseas to pursue his/her higher education. Hardly there are any people who show interest in learning Vedas or joining a Veda patashala. Because knowledge of Vedas certainly does not fill our stomach and it doesn't produce a man of money. But vedic education makes a man of character or a perfect human being. If you want to see a developed nation, there is no powerful tool than the Vedic education. Modern education's ultimate aim is money. In this modern age, even a highly educated person is committing many crimes and involving in many evil acts. Example: corruption in every field of life.

But the aim of Vedic education is supreme knowledge or the discovery of truth.

From many Yugas we have been imparted Vedic knowledge by our ancestors. But today in this modern age people hardly pay attention to Vedic knowledge. Bramhins were thorough in Vedic knowledge, and it was considered the responsibility of a bramhin to pass on this rich and Vedic heritage to the next generation. But today because of livelihood many bramhins have turned to different professions and fields. If you ask any bramhin parent to join their children in Veda Patashala, they wouldn't do so. Because, many parents think about the livelihood of the child but not the life of the child. Here 'brahmins' do not just mean brahmins by birth. Brahmin is not some sect according to Varna vyavastha and Bhagavat Geeta. Brahmin is not a caste, it is a nature. Varna vyavastha is misunderstood and misinterpreted by many people. But the varna depends upon the person's nature rather than biological birth in some particular caste.

By birth, no one becomes a Brahmin, Kshyatriya, Vysya and Shudra. Valmiki and Vyasa Maharshi are great examples. He is a real Brahmin, who has thirst for supreme knowledge.

This divine knowledge is classified into 3 branches. They are: 1. Moola vedamantras

2. Bramhangranth 3. Upanishads.

1. Moola veda mantras classified into four Samhitas. They are 1. Rig Veda 2. Yajur Veda 3. Sama Veda and 4. Atharva Veda.

To receive this wisdom, our Rishis have given us the Darshana Shastra in the form of aphorisms. "*Drishyate anena iti darshanam*", the meaning of Dharshanam is "*through which one can perceive the true essence of the object*".

In the world, the smallest creature to the human beings, go through three types of pains; Adhyatmik, Adi Daivik and Adi Bhoutik. Everyone in the world tries to be free from the sorrow but somehow many will not be free from it. The man throughout his life runs behind something by thinking that it might give him sensory enjoyment and happiness and frees him from the cloud of sorrows. But at the last moment of life he discovers that, on what he spent his entire life was completely wasted and gone with the wind. The man's achievement finally, couldn't give him the happiness, instead gave misery.

Example: Lottery

There are four aspects of Darshana

1. Heiy: What is the true form of misery?
2. Heiy hetu: Where from this misery arises and the true reason of it?
3. Haan: What is the manifestation or the state of the misery?
4. Hanopaye: What is the remedy to overcome the misery?

To shed more light on these aspects, to find out the root cause and other dimensions there are three other aspects mentioned by our sages:

1. **Chetana Tatva (Jiva or Soul):** Who suffers from misery? The sufferer of the misery.

What is the true nature of him? If the misery is the true nature of the Jiva, he wouldn't have attempted to free himself from the misery. This conveys that it is the Tatva, the Jadata and misery is not the very nature of the Jiva. It is the pure Atman. It is the Chetana tatv. When man realizes his Chetana Tatva or soul, then he gets the answer for third question. Realization breaks misery into thousand pieces.

2. **Jada Tatva (Nature):** The opposite of Chetana Tatva another Tatv also needs to be accepted. The nature of it is misery, from where the misery takes birth and that which is completely opposite to Chetana is Jada Tatva. Misery is the nature of the Jada tatva but not the nature of the Atma. The complete wisdom about Jada Tatva and Chetana Tatva is **Hanopay** which mean the tool of destroying misery.

3. **Chetana Tatva (Supreme):** After accepting Chetana and Jada Tatva, it is needed to accept that the first Chetana Tatva is Sanukula and the Jada Tatva is completely opposite which means where there is complete knowledge. Chetana Tatva is full of wisdom, which is ever knowing, ever pervading and ever powerful; every moment where you experience the knowledge and ignorance, that which is the ocean of knowledge, from where the Jiva gets the knowledge and becomes free from the Jada tatva and ignorance. When one becomes ever free from misery he gets the answer for **Haan** and **Hanopay**.

To understand all the questions of Heay, Hetu, Haan and Hanopay, in Dharshana Shastra all these aspects of Chetana, Jada and Chetana tatva have been explained in the form of small aphorisms. These six Darshanas or Shaddarshanas are very important.

They are 1. Mimamsa 2. Vedanta 3. Nyaya 4. Vysheshika 5. Samkya 6. Yoga

- **Swami Shivanandamayi**





Direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna- Swami Brahmananda

Swami Brahmananda known as Rakhala Chandra Ghosh in his pre-monastic life was born on January 21, 1863 in a village near Calcutta. His mother was a deeply spiritual woman who chose the name Rakhala in honour of the cowherds, who were Krishna's companions as a boy. Rakhala was a childhood friend of Naren (Swami Vivekananda) and since He was a gentle and shy boy was drawn to Naren's boldness.

Since He was treading the path of spiritualism, His father out of fear for His son's future, got Him married at the age of sixteen. He was a reluctant bridegroom but accepted His father's decision. But it was His bride's brother who introduced Him to Sri Ramakrishna who was instrumental in His renouncing the world.

Sri Ramakrishna had several visions prior to the arrival of Rakhala and when He set eyes on Rakhala He recognised him as the boy of his visions. In one of His visions, Mother Kali had placed the boy in His lap and hence He was regarded as Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual son. One day, Sri Ramakrishna said to Naren, "Rakhala has the keen intelligence of a king. If He chose, He could rule a kingdom." Naren spoke to the other disciples about Rakhala's greatness and declared, "henceforth, we shall call Rakhala our king." Rakhala came to be known as Raja.

After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna the brother monks stayed together in abject poverty in Baranagore and made it their monastery. Rakhala also wandered widely around India and had some of the greatest spiritual experiences in Vrindavan.

In 1895, He returned to Calcutta and rejoined His fellow disciples. In 1897, Vivekananda returned home from His trip to America, and Swami Brahmananda was the first to welcome Him. Vivekananda touched Brahmananda's feet, quoting from the scriptures, "the Son of the Guru is to be regarded as the Guru Himself." Smiling, He in turn touched Vivekananda's feet and said "one's elder brother is to be revered as one's father." The money He collected from the American devotees was handed over to Brahmananda as He felt that Brahmananda was the real owner.

On May 1, 1897, Vivekananda called a meeting of the monastic and devotees in order to put their work on an organised basis. It was thus that the Ramakrishna Math and Mission came into being and Swami Brahmananda was made the first President of the Math from its inception and held on to the post for the remainder of his life.

He was a great administrator of the Mission's activities, but his first priority was spirituality and social service came second. His focus was only to realise God and then serve God in mankind. He said, "Keep at least three fourths of your mind in God. It is enough if you give one fourth to service."

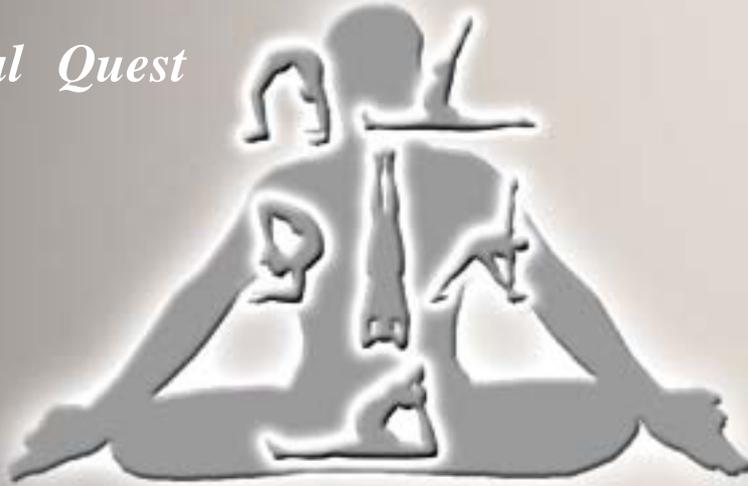
He was very particular about the source of the donations and was particular not to accept from all and sundry. Once a rich man wanted to renounce and offer his entire fortune to the mission. But Brahmananda refused citing the reason that the person was acting on impulse and would regret his offer later.

He was not quick to judge people and would deal with the offenders in the Math directly. He would however be stern in his rebukes and subject monks and senior disciples to public humiliation, especially when he regarded them as having exceptional qualities and wished to train them for difficult duties.

He also said it is good to laugh everyday. It relaxes the body and the mind. He was also without fear and had the power to make the atmosphere of a place vibrate with his spirituality. He spent most of his later life in a state of high spiritual consciousness, coming down from it only in order to teach and help others. He began to have the vision of Ramakrishna almost every day; not only seeing him but also talking to him.

He left his mortal body on April 10, 1922 and there was no coma at the end, his eyes were brilliant and his last words to his disciple were, "Do not grieve; I shall be with you always."

-Compiled by Geetha K.



Without doing Asanas and Pranayama can we realize our true nature?

Ans: Yes! We can realize our true nature although we are not doing asanas and pranayama. Yogarshi Patanjali gave a certain guideline to awaken the hidden potential within. He talks about Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. He says unless we are not practicing Yama and Niyama it is highly difficult to tread the spiritual path. But if we understand the philosophy given by Patanjali and follow any one of Ashtanga Yogas – eight limbs of yoga, we are bound to reach the highest pinnacle of life called Samadhi.

When we look at any step with awareness, we will come to know that each step is unique in nature, yet completely tuned with all other steps. If we are able to follow one, all other steps happen on its own. No matter whether we have read it or not, no matter whether we have practiced it or not; automatically Asanas, Mudras or Pratyahara take place in one's life. We just need to begin sadhana.

Patanjali takes us to the door of 'Self Realization' step by step. Therefore sometimes it is essential for sadhakas to follow the set guideline under expert guidance of Guru. A qualified Guru is necessary in this journey. If we try on our own, just by reading something or listening, it may cause severe problems to us and harm the society as well. So it is better to get proper guidelines and work on our energies systematically.

There are people, following certain traditions and promoting yogic practices without expecting anything in return. Their lives are based on purity, simplicity and spirituality. They live for the welfare of society and without creating any negative repulsion they disappear silently. Undoubtedly, rare are those spiritually evolved souls, but if we have sincere longing to find them, they are bound to come and guide us.

They say in the spiritual journey we need to drop everything. They also say that once we start treading the spiritual path sincerely, everything gets dropped on its own. Even the name of God will be forgotten completely. Then what remains is the soul- ever pure entity dwelling within and without our true nature.

There are people who never practice anything, yet are spiritually qualified and authentic, because in them yoga is happening due to their unique karmic cycle. They are born yogis. Their every action is mudra, their every outward action is pratyahara and their every shallow or deep breathing is pranayama. Their very soul breathes, speaks, sings, dances and writes...

When we want to take refuge in life, such souls are the best option than anything in the world. Kubera's wealth is unique but nothing compares to the vastness of knowledge and the richness of experience of such souls.

- Swami Nachiketananda

Swamiji answers questions from the seekers. Questions are welcome from everyone. They can be e-mailed to nachiketananda@gmail.com



Bhakti and Saranagati

“Oh Lord, take my love and let it flow in fullness of devotion to Thee;

Oh Lord, take my hands and let them work incessantly for Thee;

Oh Lord, take my soul and let it be merged in one with Thee;

Oh Lord, take my mind and thoughts and let them be in tune with Thee;

Oh Lord, take my everything, and let me be an instrument of Thee”.

I'm not aware of the author or origin of this beautiful prayer but as a child, we chanted it every day in school during assembly. At that age, the only thing that was running in my mind while saying it was not to miss out any of the “Love, hands, soul, mind and everything” and to say it in the right order!

I remembered the prayer after all these years and thought how wonderfully it sums up the essence of true devotion. Most of us think that devotion is something that we exhibit before the various images in the shrine, by chanting slokas and prayers or sitting for Dhyana for a few minutes. We all remember someone from our lives, who seem very devoted in the puja room but once out of it, the person's interactions through the day do not indicate any true transformation. This is not to judge someone else's progress but to use it as a pointer for reflection. Also, don't we catch ourselves praying ardently only in times of dire need and despair? And at other times our longing and love for the Lord is half-hearted?

True devotion (Bhakti) and surrender (Saranagati) is a full time Sadhana. It's almost as if we have to “learn or practice” loving and surrendering to the Almighty. Seeing everyone as embodiments of the Divine is the first step. And then follows, offering up every action through every faculty that we possess– the mind, body and soul. Why should we do this at all?

In Hindu culture, the flowers symbolize the offering of love and the fruits symbolize the offering of ‘fruits of action’. This is what we take to the deity when we go to a temple. When I offer my **emotions** (love) to others around me with the thought of offering it to the Divine in them, I face little disappointment when relationships fail. There is no feeling of insecurity, jealousy, possessiveness and all other pitfalls that accompany human love. When I offer my **actions** (hands) to the world around me with the thought of serving Him, I can work with full zest and yet be unfettered when things go wrong. When I offer my **mind** with its myriad thoughts, both good and bad, at the feet of the Almighty, I don't need to make efforts to purify myself as it happens on its own. In everything that I do, if I only consider myself as an instrument, my ego is refined and ripened to the right extent. Thus true freedom and joy is experienced as a result.

I believe that, Meera bai, Surdas and other saints we hear of, were not “blessed” in any special way to have such deep devotion. They developed it through “practicing the presence of God” and learning to love Him, in their many lifetimes. So if they can, we can too, with our own effort. The Lord says, “If you take one step towards me, I will take 100 steps towards you”. Let us be encouraged by this assurance by our Heavenly father and the Divine Mother.

I have also noticed that the more effort we make on this front, the more expansive we become and the more courage we acquire to face life. Spiritually inspiring lives have all displayed extraordinary courage in the face of any adversity. Let us make our effort to live our lives more fully by imbibing that courage bit by bit.

St Teresa of Avila gave the following admonition, as it is called;

'Let nothing disturb you;

Nothing affright you;

All things will pass but God changes not.

Patient endurance brings you to victory

Once you have God you want nothing more

God alone, God alone, God alone is all we ever need.'

- Harini Nandakuru

Truth of Life

I always wondered, 'Why me?' Many a times felt that I was punished for no reason and for no mistake of mine. Grumbling made it tougher for me to digest the truth of life or rather the secret of life. At a point of time, I felt that there was no reason for me to live. Time revealed *the secret of life*; life gets better as you understand it through experience. It is like a candy you chew, the more you chew, the sweeter it gets. Experiencing life and understanding its essence is all what one lives for. You carry your *karma* which solely becomes the purpose of your living.

Once, Krishna and Arjuna were walking in a village and Arjuna asked Krishna, "Oh Lord! I wonder what it means when people say that *karma* is the thread of life. Can you please explain?" Krishna remained calm for a while; and as they walked, they saw a hen lay an egg. Krishna asked Arjuna to go and whisper his question to the egg; when he did so, the egg broke and died. Arjuna was bewildered at that. He insisted on Krishna explaining the mystery behind all that was happening. Krishna spoke nothing in reply but walked quietly. Soon, they reached a place where lay a cow and a new born calf beside her. Krishna asked Arjuna to ask the new born calf, the same question and Arjuna did as told. When he asked the calf what he was told to ask, the calf died; and this time Arjuna was shocked to see what happened. He was awestruck and asked no more questions but walked with Krishna. When they reached the palace of the kingdom, Krishna told Arjuna that a baby was just born in the palace and he insisted that Arjuna should put his question to the new born baby. This time, Arjuna was hesitant because previously when he asked the egg and the calf the question, they died and if anything happened to the inheritor of the kingdom, he knew he wouldn't be spared for the world. Taking the God's name, he walked in and asked the baby his question and the baby spoke and Arjuna was amazed at that. The baby said, "Oh Arjuna! Having seen the outcome of putting forward your question, if you are surprised to hear me speak, I shall explain what it means. First, when you approached me, I was an egg and when you

asked me how *karma* became the thread of life, I wished to answer but the realization about life in me, brought me to



cease and take a better form of life. When you approached me for the second time, again I wished to answer but the realization that *karma* i.e., the deeds I perform in my *janma* is what becomes the thread of life brought me to cease and be born in this royal family. The third time you asked me this question, I was mute but when you spoke, I started speaking and this makes me feel better because I am always the chosen one. Whenever you spoke to me, you took the God's name and that got me better every time. I realized that I was the chosen one by the God. Every time you asked me how *karma* became the thread of life, I was performing my *karma* and getting better by descending His command of trying to explain you. I performed my *karma* and that became the thread of life. Every time I gained birth as an egg, a calf and a mute child, I asked myself 'Why me?' And every time God sent you to me because I was the chosen one; and now, I don't ask myself 'Why me?' Because I know I am blessed by the God. That is the truth of life and that shall always remain the truth of life!" After the discourse he had from the child, Arjuna came out, fell on Krishna's feet and thanked Him for the immense intellect He had brought in him.

Now, ask yourself 'Why me?' And start performing whatever is being asked of you by God and you shall know the purpose of your living and the truth of your life. Remember! Life always gets better when you still perform the task with utmost diligence even though you feel it is difficult to heed. Take his command and start your day. Remember! You are the chosen one.



I love writing poems, stories and songs; compose them and sing. All I can write is about life because that is all I can experience.

Ramya Manasa Kandala
1st Year Undergraduate Student
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Yuvanjali

Every Hindu who has tasted the fruits of this world must give up the latter part of his life, and he who does not is not a Hindu and has no more right to call himself a Hindu. We know that this is the ideal- to give up after seeing and experiencing the vanity of things. Having found out that the heart of the material world is a mere hollow, containing only ashes, give it up and go back. The mind is circling forward, as it were towards the senses, and that mind has to circle backwards; the Pravritti has to stop and the Nivritti has to begin. That is the ideal.



Let me tell you again that you must be pure and help anyone who comes to you, as much as lies in your power. And this is good Karma. By the power of this, the heart becomes pure (Chitta-Shuddhi) and then Shiva who is residing in every one will become manifest. He is always in the heart of everyone. If there is dust on a mirror, we cannot see our image. So ignorance and wickedness are the dirt and dust on the mirror of our hearts. Selfishness is the chief sin, thinking of ourselves first. He who thinks, "I will eat first, I will have more money than others, and I will possess everything", he who thinks, "I will get to heaven before others, I will get mukti before others" is the selfish man. The unselfish man says, "I will be the last, I do not care to go to heaven, I will even go to hell if by doing so I can help my brothers." This unselfishness is the test of religion. He who has more of this unselfishness is more spiritual and nearer to Shiva. Whether he is learned or ignorant, he is nearer to Shiva than anybody else, whether he knows it or not. And if a man is selfish, even though he has visited all the temples, seen all the places of pilgrimage, and painted himself like a leopard, he is still further off from Shiva.

*Source: The Complete Works of
Swami Vivekananda Vol.3*

From My Heart

Crying crying for millions of miles,
My eyes overflowing with tears,
Indicating the happiness I have lost.
Depression in my heart never dies,
Ever in my heart lies the mistake I have
done.
Always pricking my heart for the mistake I
have done.
For every second I feel I have done
something wrong.
For every minute I feel I had done nothing.
Crying heart says why should I cry?
Why should I fear? Says my feared heart.
Why should I hesitate? Says my heart with
hesitation.
Why should I get angry? Says my angry
heart.
MY HEART SAYS BOTH.
I feel it is wrong as well as right.
What should I believe? Thinks my mind
What should I trust? Says my rolling tear
What should I listen? Says my ear
What should I speak? Says my tongue
My nose inhaling the every act I have done,
I may be wrong and I may be right;
I am confused.
I feel both. What can I do?
Crying with depression.
My eyes stopped crying,
My ears stopped listening,
My mind stopped thinking,
I am in silence.
Feeling every second of my heart.

*M.Sai Harathi, IX Standard,
DAV BDL Public School*

It feels good, for once

They told me,
Don't dream of things that cannot be
Don't look beyond what your eyes see
Don't even think you can be free

So I sat still,
Against the window grill,
My knuckles white,
Eyes shut tight.

This is how it's always been,
And nothing more than black I've seen
Until today, when I finally break free
No more of their ways, no more of their rhymes.
My life is now all mine.

I burst through the front door, out into the open. I
trip, fall and hurt myself.
But it feels good.

It is winter now, and spring will soon arrive. My skin
tastes the wet snow. My hair feels the icy wind
ruffle it. I can still see naught from under the
blindfold. But for once I know, and for sure I know,
I'm free.
It feels good.

Breathing harshly, my feet sinking in the snow, I
make my way across the garden. I bump into a
tree. My trembling fingers gauge its bark. It's rough,
scaly and cold.
But it feels good.

My hands make their way up a slender branch. At
the very end of it is something soft. It's a flower,
not yet in full bloom. It seems to reach out and let
my fingers caress it.
Yes, it feels good.

All of a sudden, from nowhere, two tears ooze down
my eyes. I feel them staining the blindfold, moist
and heavy. They're tears of blood.

The years of darkness and fear seem to converge
into this one moment, breaking through the shackles
of time. They fall out as soft tears as my eyes gently
bleed. It pains a little. But it feels good.

All it took was one decision in one moment of light.
I'm free now.
Oh, yes. It feels good.

- *Avinash Agarwal*



Avinash Agarwal is a student of St. Xaviers College, Mumbai and has a deep flair for writing. He has written many thought provoking essays.



Road to Happiness

This world is nothing but a group of people living together. Togetherness comes through the relations we maintain with each other. We are born alone; live with our family throughout our lifetime. Does that make us a complete human being? The answer is no. Whether you like to maintain relation or not with your own people that doesn't matter much, whether you enjoy the relation or not is also irrelevant, because you are bound to your own family through responsibility and it is your dharma to support your family. Living and staying with your own people will not make you sustain forever. Our parents teach us virtues, good habits, obedience from our childhood. They do it for our development. Our duty is to implement them at different stages of our life. Good virtues include good relations, relation with yourself will make you understand yourself better and relation with people around you will make understand world better. We are all dependent on each other for some reason or the other. Acknowledging this aspect and realizing that every other person is as important as ourselves will bring happiness to us. Relation with yourself would help in knowing strengths and weaknesses and relation with others will bring success in your career and recognition in the society. A student learns faster if he maintains a good relation i.e. better tuning with his teacher. A businessman flourishes in his field if he maintains a better relationship with his customers. A professional will succeed in his respective field, if he maintains a better relation with his clients. A good friendship with likeminded people will bring contentment in our lives. Similarly good relationship with colleagues and superiors will bring laurels in the line of employment. Every success or failure revolves round the relations. Most of the relations are built and continued on the principle of give and take. If any favour in business is done, in turn he should also reciprocate in the same coin, else the business may not last longer. It is saddening to note that the people are also trying to maintain relations on the principle of give and take. If the other person is of no use to them they are simply discarding them. Gratitude is seldom noticed in relations. Using people for our selfish deeds and avoiding them later is also one of the present trends. The relations last long if they are formed on the lines of good faith, mutual respect and admiration, last but not least, expecting nothing in turn. Doing things in a detached manner is one of the best ways of maintaining relations in the long run. There are some people, though they don't meet regularly they have tremendous mental tuning. One can easily tell about other; what he is trying to convey without a single word being uttered.

The relations normally run on four aspects: 1. Necessity 2. Similar hobbies 3. Identity crisis 4. Attraction. Any human relation outside our family is based on necessity. Necessity is the mother of invention. The invention of a new relation must bring succor to disturbed minds. The accountability ruins the relations in no time. 'I have done this to you and you must do this to me' will only bring the relation to the brink of failure from where the return to normality is impossible. Relations are meant to console each other and it provides a soothing effect to broken hearts. Necessity is always subjected to prevailing conditions. If they are not met the relations may come to end. The necessity if converted into interdependency will make the relation

survive forever. From dependency to interdependency is the success mantra for a trusting relationship. It would bring relaxation. It is termed as the best relation where each one is accepted as they are, no one tries to impress upon the other and one's own entity is not lost. Similarity in hobbies is another character that makes the relation gel together. It is said that birds of a feather ruffle together. Likewise the people with same mindset come closer easily. A sports lover does not understand the subtleties that had gone into the literary work of a writer. It will be appreciated by people who have the habit of reading or writing. These types of people enjoy a rapport among themselves. Mutual admiration will bind them strongly. Identity Crisis is also a trait of relationships that brings people together. These people are normally a frustrated lot. They always look for a shoulder to keep their heads on and cry. Ever ready to pour their heart out in front of anybody who tends to show some sympathy. It is a temporary relation that may not last long, once they find a better person or opportunity, they bid adieu to the earlier relation. The only complaint they always have is that people are not recognizing them and not showing any concern towards them. These relations are very fragile in nature. They are living complaint boxes. Attraction is a beautiful facet of all the relationships. We can say it is the shortcut to a successful relation. As we all know, people of opposite sex get attracted to each other, so easily. Beauty is a temporary phase, as the time rolls on the beauty may be lost. We say inner beauty is the real beauty, but relations based on attraction normally begin with physical beauty. If that attraction does not get deeper and remains superficial, it will not withstand the test of time. A matured mind alone knows the importance of inner beauty. It is the attraction of a friend that makes us remember him always. Attraction means not physical, it is his or her attitude, thoughts and lifestyle. Friendship is considered as one of the best relationships for this reason. If he is a good friend, he will bring a good change in you. Though he is not related to you by blood or by family, he influences your life. A friendship is defined as an unconditional love between two souls. The relations will last long on this principle alone. An unconditional relationship should be termed as the zenith of relationships. Till today no one could invent a sure success formula for great human relationships. **But here are a few tips that help us maintain a better relation with people around us:**

1. Six important words – I admit I made a mistake
2. Five important words – I am proud of you
3. Four important words – What is your opinion
4. Three important words – If you please
5. Two important words – Thank you
6. Most important word – He / She
7. Least important word – I.

Relation innately has a meaning re – elated, to experience let us get related to each other for a better and peaceful haven.

- M. Koti Rajasekhar
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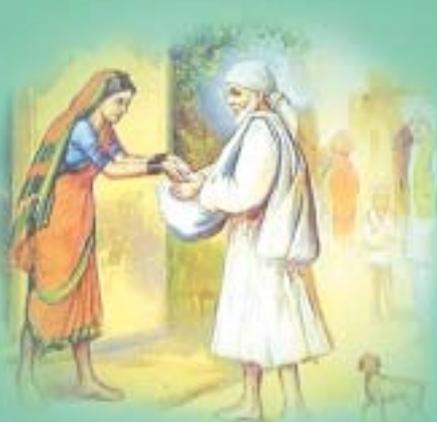


The Invitation

My visit to Shirdi was long overdue. I had been insinuating myself about not making the time to visit Shirdi. Perhaps, my intent was not sincere enough to invoke Baba's invitation. Is Baba only in Shirdi and not in your heart... my inner voice questioned me many times. I knew the answer well... He was, is and will be with me always... everywhere and anywhere. But whenever I visit Shirdi or any other religious place, I feel energized and my connection with 'Him' becomes very clear... rather without any disturbances and interruptions. Finally, I got my call two weeks ago. "He, who calls, makes all the arrangements to come and seek his blessings."

We took off to Shirdi in SVR Travels bus which was very comfortable. Almost at the crack of dawn, we alighted the bus at a hotel 2kms away from the main temple in Shirdi. After ablutions, a hotel van was supposed to drop us at the main entrance of the temple. As we waited for a pick-up on this cool, cloudy day with mild breeze spreading the sambrani incense of Baba at the reception of the hotel, my mind, like the, sky was clouded with thoughts of Khandoba temple and Baba's darshan.

In Sai Baba's Satcharitha book, Baba would always ask his devotees to visit the Khandoba temple; the presiding deity; an incarnation of Shiva, before visiting him. Earlier, I had made many trips to Shirdi, but never visited the Khandoba temple due to lack of time and more so out of lethargy. But during my last read of 'Satcharitha', my mind kept dwelling on the Khandoba temple consistently. I promised myself that during my next visit to Shirdi, I would definitely visit the Khandoba temple. Here, now as we sat in the van, I hoped to visit the Khandoba temple. As the van swiftly moved through the highway, my eyes focused on the guava trees lined on either side of the highway. Oh! I wished I could take some guavas as Prasad for Baba as he loved guavas.



Within five minutes, the van screeched to a halt. And lo! We were standing right at the entrance of the Khandoba temple. That was the drop off point from where we would be taken on foot by the hotel staff to the entrance of the main temple. Was it a coincidence that the van stopped at the Khandoba temple? But my inner self knew better... it was no coincidence... when you long for something sincerely, Baba has to fulfill it and will do so. I was so overjoyed that Baba had heard me through. We had a darshan of the Khandobha lord. Then we picked up Prasad enroute to the main temple.

Hoping that there was not too much rush, we entered the queue complex in the main temple. The line moved in smoothly. Within 15 minutes, we stood face to face with bleary eyes and blank minds trying to comprehend 'Guru's' presence. As Baba welcomed us with open arms... we embraced him gently with our bare souls and it seemed to be like eternity. His darshan quietened the agitated senses and there I stood almost non-existent to everything. As the crowd was less, we were allowed an uninterrupted 'Connection' with the 'Guru' for sometime.

After, the blissful darshan, we left the temple premises to visit Dwarakamaayi. As I was walking, I saw a lady selling guavas in a basket. Her guavas were almost sold out except for a few. I rushed to her hoping to get at least some to offer as 'Naivedyam' to Baba during our Aarti visit. I grabbed the last few... surprisingly seven in number. Ah! Now I was so thrilled that Baba had heard me again. Another coincidence... But, how many

coincidences? Ask him with your heart, and Baba like a mother will bestow it on you again and again.

We had a wonderful darshan of Baba's Aarti and I got a chance to offer the guavas as 'Prasad'. I offered his creation... The guavas... to himself. What a paradox! My heart whispered:

***OM Jai Jagadish Hare, Sai Jagadish Hare
Bhakt Janoke Sankat, Daas ganoke Sankat
Kshn Me Door Kare, Om Jai Jagdish Hare***

Sai, you remove the difficulties of your devotees and your servants in a second. Om Jai Jagadish Hare!

***"Tan, Man, Dhan Sab Kuch Hei Tera,
Sab Kuch Hei Tera***

***Tera Tujh Ko Arpan, Tera Tujh Ko Arpan,
Kya Laage Mera."***

Om Jai Jagdish Hare

Sai, this body, this soul, and this money are all yours. I offer to you what is yours. Om Jai Jagadish Hare!

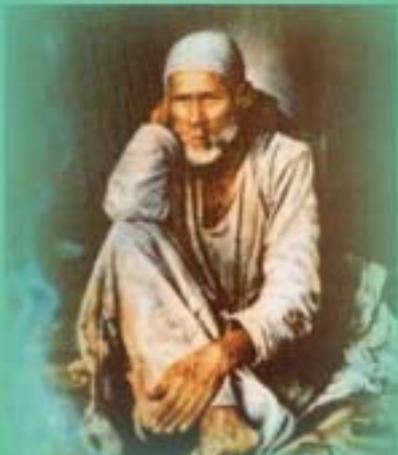
As Baba's face gleamed with the light from the Aarti, the darkness inside and outside me, faded. I thanked Baba again with all that I had in me for 'THE INVITATION' he had given me.

**"HE WHO CALLS, MAKES ALL THE
ARRANGEMENTS TO COME...**

RECEIVES YOU...

AND THEN SHOWER HIS BLESSINGS."

- K. Anuradha Raju



Mahavakyas

Mahavakyas are the great sayings that occur in Upanishads. Each Mahavakya is associated to one of the four Vedas and presents the essence of the entire Veda as a statement. Mahavakyas can serve as utterances that are capable of destroying ignorance when mediated upon. They can be best understood when meditated on in a still and silent mind. Just because they are "Mahavakyas" they need not be accepted blindly. But they rather be reflected upon until their meaning is validated as an experience.

Prajnānam brahma

Aitareya 5.3, Rig Veda
"Brahman is knowledge"

Ayam ātmā brahma

Manukya 1.2, Atharva Veda
"The Self (or the Soul) is Brahman"

Tat tvam asi

Chhandogya 6.8.7, Sama Veda
"Thou art that"

Aham brahmāsmi

Brihadaranayaka 1.4.10, Yajur Veda
"I am Brahman"

"Brahman is knowledge" (***Prajnanam Brahma***). Our discernment of truth is the truth itself. It indicates that the Divine intelligence is present within us and has the power to return us to the Divine. Our inmost intelligence is that supreme intelligence through which we can merge into the Absolute.

"The Self is Brahman" (***Ayam Atma Brahma***). This states the identity of the soul with the Absolute but in an objective manner. Not only is our Self the Divine. It is the same Self in all beings that is the same Absolute truth.

"That thou art" (***Tat tvam asi***). Whatever we see or think about we are that. Not only is the I That, the You is also That. We are that ultimate I and Thou in all. The consciousness in the other is also the Divine.

"I am Brahman" (***Aham Brahmami***). This states the identity of the inmost consciousness of the individual with that of the supreme Divine. The Upanishads teach that our own Self is the true Divinity, that it is the presence of the absolute within our heart and the entire universe. These are statements of the identity of the individual consciousness with the Absolute or Divine reality. They all derive from and merge into Om (AUM), the Divine Word of "I am all".



The Ideal Message

Holy Scriptures state, the one who is moved by someone's suffering and tries to alleviate the suffering is the best example of good behavior. It is necessary for us to understand the hunger of the needy. He is the true devotee, who is aware that serving the poor, the weak, the old and the handicapped is the true service to God. If we are able to allow our minds to dwell always in Satwaguna, we can surely enjoy the bliss of human life.

Sages and saints have reiterated the true fact that God loves those who help others more than those who worship Him. We should always aspire to love our fellow-beings. Even a life spent in the right way goes waste if we are not able to help a needy person.

Once in a desert, on a dark night there was pin drop silence all around. Suddenly a storm hit the desert. An old person was caught in the storm. He looked around for help and was relieved to see a small house at some distance. With great difficulty he reached the place. The owner of the house was about to sit down for his dinner. When he saw the old man, he remembered that his religion states a guest should be fed and he invites the old man to share his meal. The old man was too happy and immediately sat down beside his host. His hands reached out instantly to the plate of food and when he was about to put a morsel in his mouth, the owner's voice thundered, "Stop!" The old man was taken aback. "Do you know how this food is available? It is due to God's grace. Don't you know that you have to thank God for giving you food before starting to eat?" The old man shrunk in fear at his anger. "Sir, I do not know about all this. My only thought is to fill my belly." "I can't feed a person who has no faith in God. You are not fit to eat this meal. Get out of this place immediately," the owner shouted.



The old man with tears in his eyes and great disappointment, looked at the food but followed his host's orders. He disappeared into the pitch darkness.

The host offered prayers to God, thanked Him for giving him food, ate well and slept. In the midnight, he felt someone was waking him up. He opened his eyes and saw a Divine Light. He could hear a voice from that direction. "You drove away an old person who approached you with hunger. You did not show any sympathy on him. You behaved in an atrocious manner which I don't appreciate. Dharma devata is weeping..."

"Oh God, how can I feed a person who has no faith in you?" asked the owner of the house. "Nothing is yours. Everything belongs to me. I have been feeding that old man since the last 75 years. You couldn't share a single meal with him. What is the use of practicing religious norms and prayers when your heart is polluted?" Saying this, the Divine Light disappeared. The owner realized his folly and wept in repentance.

Whether this story is true or fiction is not important. The one who realizes the sorrow behind the grief-stricken faces is the true bhakta. We have to comprehend the ideal message that God stays away from those who cannot help their fellow-beings.

- Subhadra K.



The Curtain rises and always falls...



One of the fears I always carried, especially since we were living in the US, so far away from our immediate family is the loss of a loved one. Given my mother's health issues, I was always nervous when I heard the phone ring or hear any other correspondence from back home. The one thing I dreaded most finally happened in 2008 when my mother passed away and seeing death from such close quarters has been life changing for me and added another perspective all together to life. Having witnessed how she started becoming distant and distant days before and having seen how her life slipped away in minutes seemingly so effortless and easy, made me start pondering on the true essence of life. After having gone through that experience, something in me has changed forever. I have never viewed life or death the same way and one thing that jumps at me is- how in birth and death, we are all exactly the same... it's just the time in between that is '*To each their own*'. If you compare this to a movie, imagine if every single movie started the same way and ended the same way, but with a different plot in between, how interesting or rather how boring would that be... and would we want to still keep going and watching those movies. But, here is where comes the genius of our Creator... it seems like He has an unlimited supply of screenplays up His sleeve and although He brings us all into this being the same way and takes us away in the same way, He makes the period in-between so interesting and totally action packed and a nail-biting suspense thriller right until the very end.

Something I read recently also stayed with me... it is about the purity in a child's smile. When we are born, we are so pure, devoid of any expectations from the world, from one another and can accept anything and everything just for what it is. This purity gives us the

ability to feel the pure love, sheer happiness without too much analysis and reasoning. As we grow older and older and our reasoning power develops, it also takes away our ability to accept things just as is. We start to analyze and over-analyze each interaction, situation, start to plan and over-plan our days and our life and slowly lose the ability to just live in the moment and experience the moment.

Just recollect the last time you saw a smile or joy on a child's face, it is so pure. Children just feel the love when you give them a little hug or a little smile or even a little lollipop and experience it whole heartedly... now let's say we did the same to another 'grown up' person, the first thing they start to think is, "why is this person being nice to me? Does he/she want something from me? How should I react? I don't want to look dumb or silly... let me just ignore for now"... so on and so forth and in the process completely miss enjoying and feeling that smile or love. Imagine, if only we could preserve the child like purity throughout our life and experience life for what it is, *Life will just seem so beautiful and momentous.*



So, as the curtain of our life is lifted, we all start off the same way...as a little baby with so much purity. Then, as the movie starts reeling, our lives transform from one to the other just as the caterpillar transforms into a butterfly and in the process there are also so many expectations built, impressions made, there are so many bonds made, so many bonds broken, there are so many emotions experienced, so many of so many things happen in between making us constantly think or plan for 'what next'... and then suddenly... Poof... He decides... 'Time is up'...and the curtain... comes down. The curtain's rising and the curtain's falling are the constants and

everything in between... is what we call Life... a Live Movie where characters are all real and not fictitious, but not representing any other person living or dead. Each character is absolutely unique and experiences life in their own way and *therein lies the beauty of the Creator and His creation.*

- Vasantha Gullapalli



*na tad bhasayate suryo
na sasanko na pavakah
yad gatva na nivartante
tad dhama paramam mama*
- Bhagavad Gita 18.62

"The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart, O Arjuna, and is directing the wanderings of all living entities, who are seated as on a machine, made of the material energy."

*ye tu sarvani karmani
mayi sannasya mat-parah
ananyenaiva yogena
mam dhyayanta upasate*

*tesam aham samuddharta
mrityu-samsara-sagarat
bhavami na cirat partha
mayy avesita-cetasam*
- Bhagavad Gita 12.6-7



*urdhva-mulam adhah-sakham
ashvattham prahur avyayam
chandamsi yasya parnani
yas tam veda sa veda-vit*
- Bhagavad Gita 15.1

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: It is said that there is an imperishable banyan tree that has its roots upward and its branches down and whose leaves are the Vedic hymns. One who knows this tree is the knower of the Vedas."



*mayy eva mana adhatsva
mayi buddhim nivesaya
nivasisyasi mayyeva
ata urdhvam na samsayah*
- Bhagavad Gita 12.8

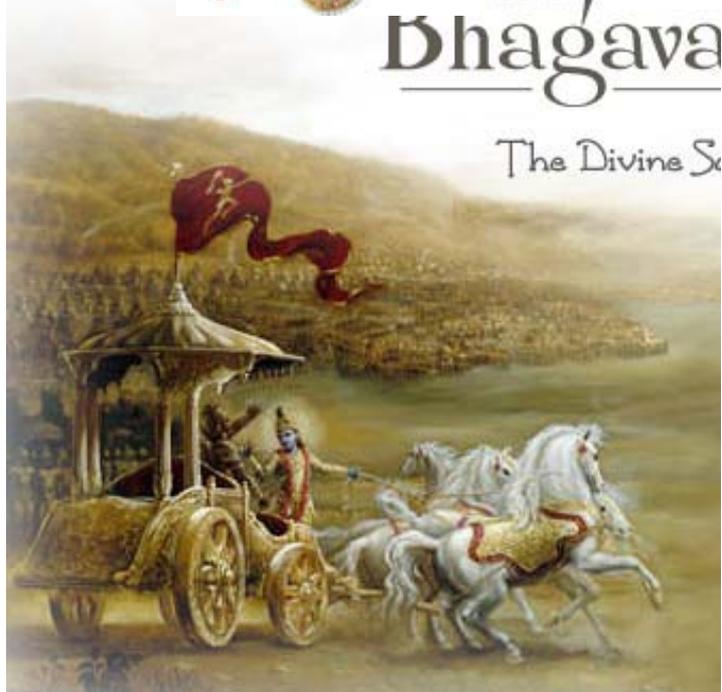


*man-mana bhava mad-bhakto
mad-yaji mam namaskuru
mam evaisyasi satyam te
pratijane priyosi me*
- Bhagavad Gita 18.66



Absorb your mind and heart in me, become my devotee, worship me, offer your obeisances to me and then certainly you will come to me. I promise you this because you are very dear to me.

THE
Bhagava
The Divine S





Lord Krishna says: "But those who worship Me, giving up all their activities unto Me and being devoted to Me without deviation, engaged in devotional service and always meditating upon Me, having fixed their minds upon Me, O son of Pritha (Arjuna) - for them I am the swift deliverer from the ocean of birth and death."

ma Veda



Just fix your mind exclusively on my Syamasundara form and engage your intelligence fully in me. Thus, upon leaving your body, you shall certainly come to reside with me. Of this there is no doubt.

**aham sarvasya prabhavo
mattah sarvam pravartate
iti matva bhajante mam
budha bhava-samanvitah**

- Bhagavad Gita 10.8



"I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds.

Everything emanates from Me. The wise who perfectly know this engage in My devotional service and worship Me with all their hearts."



**ishvarah sarva-bhutanam
hrd-dese 'rjuna tishthati
bhramayan sarva-bhutani
yantrarudhani mayaya**

-Bhagavad Gita 18.61

"The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart, O Arjuna, and is directing the wanderings of all living entities, who are seated as on a machine, made of the material energy."

ad Gita

ong of God

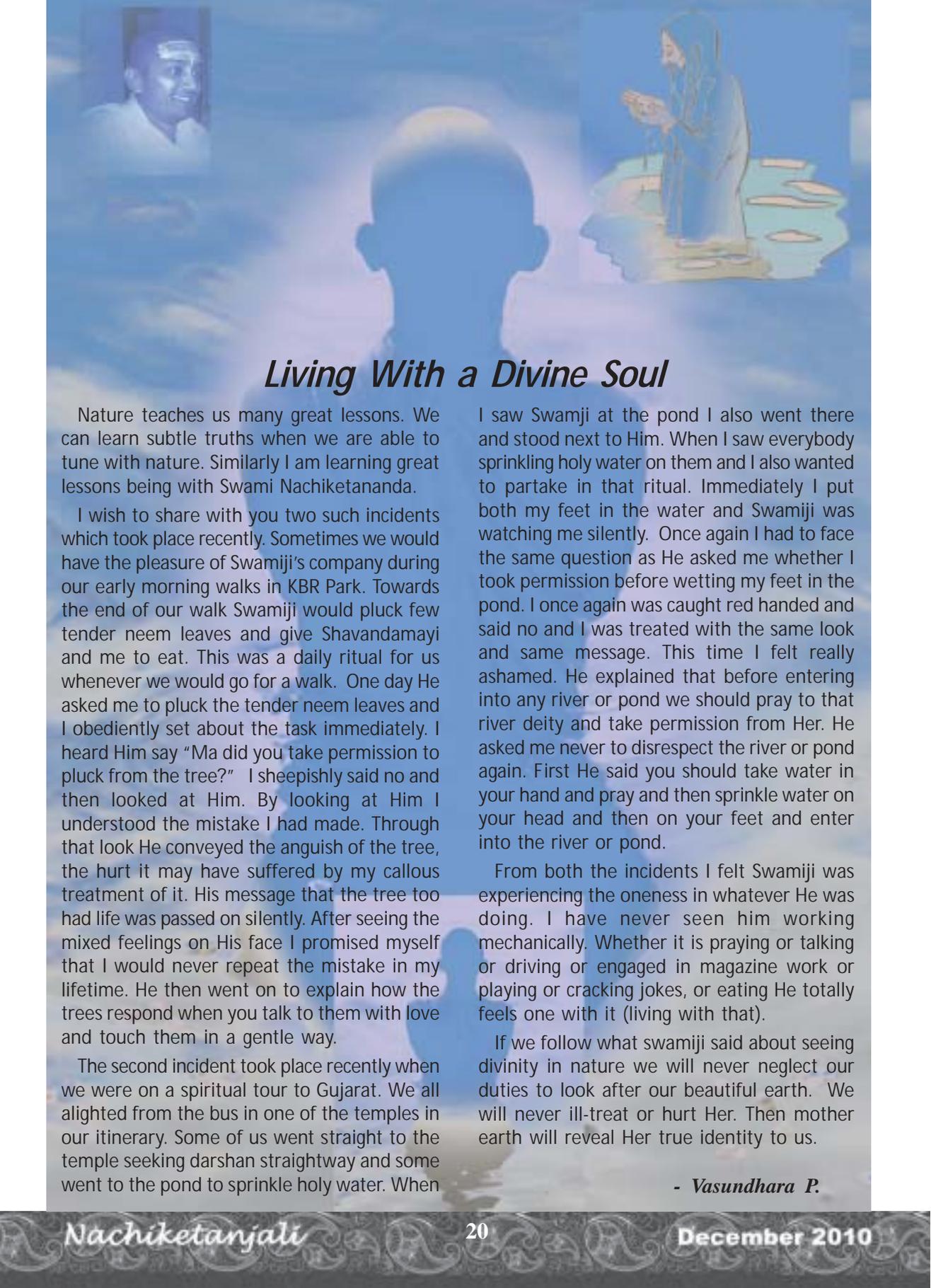


**vidya-vinaya-sampanne
brahmane gavi hastini
suni caiva sva-pake ca
panditah sama-darsinah**

- Bhagavad Gita 5.18



"The humble sages, by virtue of true knowledge, see with equal vision a learned and gentle brahmana, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater [outcaste]."



Living With a Divine Soul

Nature teaches us many great lessons. We can learn subtle truths when we are able to tune with nature. Similarly I am learning great lessons being with Swami Nachiketananda.

I wish to share with you two such incidents which took place recently. Sometimes we would have the pleasure of Swamiji's company during our early morning walks in KBR Park. Towards the end of our walk Swamiji would pluck few tender neem leaves and give Shavandamayi and me to eat. This was a daily ritual for us whenever we would go for a walk. One day He asked me to pluck the tender neem leaves and I obediently set about the task immediately. I heard Him say "Ma did you take permission to pluck from the tree?" I sheepishly said no and then looked at Him. By looking at Him I understood the mistake I had made. Through that look He conveyed the anguish of the tree, the hurt it may have suffered by my callous treatment of it. His message that the tree too had life was passed on silently. After seeing the mixed feelings on His face I promised myself that I would never repeat the mistake in my lifetime. He then went on to explain how the trees respond when you talk to them with love and touch them in a gentle way.

The second incident took place recently when we were on a spiritual tour to Gujarat. We all alighted from the bus in one of the temples in our itinerary. Some of us went straight to the temple seeking darshan straightway and some went to the pond to sprinkle holy water. When

I saw Swamiji at the pond I also went there and stood next to Him. When I saw everybody sprinkling holy water on them and I also wanted to partake in that ritual. Immediately I put both my feet in the water and Swamiji was watching me silently. Once again I had to face the same question as He asked me whether I took permission before wetting my feet in the pond. I once again was caught red handed and said no and I was treated with the same look and same message. This time I felt really ashamed. He explained that before entering into any river or pond we should pray to that river deity and take permission from Her. He asked me never to disrespect the river or pond again. First He said you should take water in your hand and pray and then sprinkle water on your head and then on your feet and enter into the river or pond.

From both the incidents I felt Swamiji was experiencing the oneness in whatever He was doing. I have never seen him working mechanically. Whether it is praying or talking or driving or engaged in magazine work or playing or cracking jokes, or eating He totally feels one with it (living with that).

If we follow what swamiji said about seeing divinity in nature we will never neglect our duties to look after our beautiful earth. We will never ill-treat or hurt Her. Then mother earth will reveal Her true identity to us.

- *Vasundhara P.*



Law and Justice-

Have they been sold out?

A few days ago, I was having a conversation with one of my friends. He was ruing about misuse of funds in the holy precincts of the University in which he was studying and how the students there could not do anything. I assured him that the law would not leave them helpless. He then very sadly remarked that the law has been sold out and so was the media which has to bring to the fore issues of public importance. It hurt me a lot, myself being a student of law.

The outgoing Chief Vigilance Commissioner, Mr. Pratyush Sinha, in an interview to a newspaper said that one out of every three Indians is 'utterly' corrupt. He was distressed that corruption has gained a sort of social acceptance. Transparency International, the global anti-graft body, puts India 84th on its corruption perception. This is deeply saddening to know.

One day, I was discussing with my mother that we apply for a contest that promised lots of money as award. Her reply touched me. She said, "Child! Always trust yourself and earn money with hard work. Easily earned money is not going to stay with you for long."

We are a culture that is deeply entrenched with values. Our values and ethos teach us never to hurt others, never to make profit at other's cost and distress. Importance of *Karma* or doing ones duty in a steadfast manner has always been a part of our scriptures. Lord Krishna said in the Bhagavad Gita,

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।
पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥ ४१ ॥

which when translated means, "Controlling your indriyas, O best of the Bharatas, restrain this source of sin, which is lust — the foe of knowledge and the destroyer of wisdom."

Thus, we are warned by none other than God against the domination that can be possibly done on our thoughts by our senses and the lust that engulfs them.

In the context of the present world, where competition forces people to do anything, do these values have any significance? Definitely, they do. Values are something which have perpetual relevance and which are a part and parcel and the essence of our heart and soul and very existence.

More often than not, it does happen that we get frustrated with all that is going on around us. But, Swami Vivekananda said, "Nothing can happen to us unless we allow it to happen." Therefore, it requires great self-control and restraint on our part to face the injustice and dishonesty that is perpetrated in society. Nevertheless, it is a sin to bear injustice also. But doing the right thing at the right time is what matters the most. A student has to study, envision a great future for himself and his nation, see how that future can be achieved, inculcate in himself integrity and courage and then move ahead.

What is necessary in the present day is concerted effort. One person on his own can do very little, which will most probably go unnoticed. When a group of people, however small, does something, then it carries more value. The like minded people who are ready to place the cause of the nation before their own cause need to come together and act. We need to be totally intolerant to acts of corruption. For that, we need to be aware of our rights. Ultimately, it rests on us as to what extent we are aware and to what extent we possess the patience and courage to fight.

When I remember the following shloka of Jayadeva's *Gita Govinda* on *Dashavatar* of the Lord, I feel the time has come for God to take an incarnation on this earth and cleanse it, thereby protecting His innocent and righteous children:

*"mleccha nivaha nidhane kalayasi karavaalam
dhuuma ketum iva*

*kim api karaalam kesava dhrita kalki sariira jaya
jagadiisa hare"*



Nitika Gogula, 3rd year B.A. L.L.B. student, has passion for writing articles on social issues.



SRI ANDAL

Alvars are Dravidian saints. They are the bhaktas of Sri Maha Vishnu. Alvars, the '*God-steeped mystics*' are the ones who give up all material wealth and comforts seeking His Lotus Feet. Unlike other saints, the only purpose of Alvars is to get reunited with the Lord and none else - not knowledge, not wisdom, not riches, not mukthi, not salvation, not any boons. They composed and sang beautiful poetry called Paasurams on the Divine Beloved Vishnu in Tamil. Between the sixth and ninth century, in the Tamil-speaking region of South India, these saints revitalized the Indian religious milieu, sparking a renewal of bhakti throughout the subcontinent. Tradition reckons 12 Alvars who come from all walks of life and all strata of society and includes only one woman - Sri Andal whose life and poetry are celebrated every December-January (month of Margaseersha or Marghazi or Dhanurmasam) by singing Thiruppavai, one of her two compositions.

A devout brahmin named Vishnuchitta (also known as Periyalwar, an Alvar himself) lived in Villiputtur, a town near Madurai. One morning, as he was picking flowers in his garden for worship, he discovered a baby girl lying under a tulasi plant. Vishnuchitta having no family of his own took her home, gave her the name Godai and



raised her as his own in an atmosphere of love and devotion. He imparted Godai his philosophy and knowledge of music and poetry. His love for the Beloved Lord intensified further in his daughter, and before long she was passionately in love with Lord Krishna. Even as a child, Godai made up her mind to marry none but the Lord of Brindavana, and refused to think of any human being as her husband. She would adorn herself with the garland prepared for the Lord admire her reflection thinking of herself as His bride and put it back for the worship. One day when Vishnuchitta noticed this, he scolded Godai for the desecration and offered Lord a freshly prepared garland asking for forgiveness. That night Lord appeared to Vishnuchitta and told him that He preferred to wear the garlands worn by Godai (soodi koduththa nachchiyar). Vishnuchitta then realized the spiritual greatness, purity and intensity of Godai's love for the Lord and henceforth she came to be

known as "Andal", the girl who "ruled" over the Lord.



As Andal grew to be a young girl her love for the Lord also grew so intense and to Vishnuchitta's despair she refused to marry anyone except Lord Sri Rangantha of Sri Rangam. Then Lord appeared before

Vishnuchitta in his dream and asked that Andal be sent to Him in all her wedding finery. He made all the wedding preparations and arranged for Andal's journey in a palanquin to Srirangam. Andal waited with excited anticipation as the wedding party approached Lord Ranganatha's shrine. As they entered the temple, she jumped out of the palanquin, unable to restrain herself any longer. Running into the temple sanctum, she embraced Lord Ranganatha and disappeared in a blaze of glory, having joined her Lord. She was only fifteen at the time. Tradition reckons her in fact to be the descent of Bhumi Devi (Mother Earth) in human form to show humanity

the way to His lotus feet. She is present in all Sri Vaishnava temples, in India and elsewhere, next to her Lord, as she always desired.

In her short life, Andal composed two works in Tamil unique in their literary, philosophical, religious, and artistic content. Thiruppavai – ‘thiru’- an honorific prefix like *Sri, pavai*- the religious vow; a poem of thirty verses in which Andal imagines being a cowherd girl during Krishna's incarnation yearning to serve Him and attain eternal happiness and describes the vow that she and her fellow cowgirls will take for this purpose. Just like the Ramayana, people are never tired of listening to the Tiruppavai which is known to contain the quintessence of Vedas and Upanishads in a succinct and simple form. The Poem of Surrender to Lord is recited with great religious fervor, particularly in Tamil Nadu and also other places of South India including Tirupathi especially during the month of Margali (December-January).

Nachchiyar Tirumozhi – “Nacchiyar” means goddess, so the title means “sacred sayings of our Goddess.” A poem of 143 verses, this fully reveals Andal's intense longing for Vishnu, the Divine Beloved, and is recited in Vaishnava weddings in Tamil Nadu. Her expression of intense love to Krishna, in varying moods of bridal love—tender hope, utter dejection, joyful triumph, woeful sorrow and total surrender—are depicted. Tamil brides are dressed as Andal for She is the symbol of feminine youth, grace, beauty, devotion, talent and purity.

Today, the tulasi garden in which Andal was found is preserved in Srivilliputtur. Vishnuchitta's house, adjacent to Lord Vishnu's temple, has been converted into a temple in honor of Andal and contains the well called Darpana theertham in which she admired her reflection while wearing the Lord's garlands. The water in this well is crystal clear and never dries up!



Compiled by Annapurna R.



Determination

“As for determination, one should follow the example of the sparrow who lost her eggs in the waves of the ocean. A sparrow laid her eggs on the shore of the ocean, but the big ocean carried away the eggs on its waves. The sparrow became very upset and asked the ocean to return her eggs. The ocean did not even consider her appeal. So the sparrow decided to dry up the ocean. She began to pick out the water in her small beak, and everyone laughed at her for her impossible determination. The news of her activity spread, and at last Garuda, the gigantic bird carrier of Lord Vishnu, heard it. He became compassionate toward his small sister bird, and so he came to see the sparrow. Garuda was very pleased by the determination of the small sparrow, and he promised to help. Thus Garuda at once asked the ocean to return her eggs lest he himself take up the work of the sparrow. The ocean was frightened at this, and returned the eggs. Thus the sparrow became happy by the grace of Garuda. Similarly,

*sa niscayena yuktavyoyogo 'nirvinna-cetasa
sankalpa-prabhavan kamams tyaktva sarvan
asesatah manasaivendriya-gramam viniyamy
samantatah*

The practice of yoga, may appear to be a very difficult job. But if anyone follows the principles with great determination, the Lord will surely help, for God helps those who help themselves.” - Bhagavad-gita 6.24





Swami Ranganathananda

Swami Ranganathanada, fondly called 'Shankaran' was born in a wealthy agricultural family of Sri Neelakantha Shastri, Lakshmi Kutty at Trikkur village in Kerala on **December 15th, 1908**.

Swamiji's childhood was full of different activities like games, gardening, and swimming with an interest in Swami Vivekananda's literature. As a young boy, He had a vivid dream that bright light came out of the Shiva Temple near his house and engulfed him. The 'Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna' enhanced his spiritual vision influencing him to join the Ramakrishna Mission at the age of seventeen. He had a very close intimacy with many direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. While walking in the foot steps of Swami Vivekananda, He gathered the nectar of love and wisdom from them and silently filled countless hearts with spiritual gifts. It is this 'Divine call' that transformed a village boy into a great saint and messenger of truth.

Swami Ranganathananda, being a great orator, through His teachings changed many lives. In one of His powerful talks He said "We give money to our children: we set up bank accounts for them; we often indulge in all sorts of malpractices so that we may leave something to our children; but by these measures we only ruin our children and sap the manhood and womanhood of our nation. Money is meant to be spent; it is good as a servant but bad as a master; let it circulate; let it bring happiness everywhere, of which only one part is our children but to the children we should say: ***"We will give you education; we will give you manliness; we will give you strength and courage; we will give you training in swimming, then we shall leave you on the sea of life, sink or swim, it depends on you."*** This fact said by Swamiji is apt for modern age, where selfishness reached its peak and people feel compelled to earn more and more money to have secured life for their family and children.

Swami Ranganathanada as a great vedantist with His simple and lucid language simplified Vedanta, so that even a layman also can understand and practice. Through His life He always exhibited Vedantic values. His every pore was filled with Vedantic aroma. Any one coming into contact with Him used to get engulfed by His Divine presence. Such was the presence and fragrance of Swamiji and why not? When somebody is so compassionate and kind to the entire man-kind...





The Holy Mother Sri Sarada Ma

According to the dictionary, a **mother** is a woman who has conceived, given birth to, or raised a child in the role of a parent. However many women have time and again disproved this by their spontaneous, unconditional and supreme love and Sri Ramakrishna's Divine Consort, Ma Sarada is foremost of them. From Sarada Ma's life it is evident that if Universal love is the nature of God then that trait is amply exhibited by the Holy Mother in her remarkable life on Earth.

An incident outlined here provides just a glimpse of the Holy Mother's abounding love towards her family and the strangers, the saints and the criminals, the rich and the poor, the sick and the suffering all alike. Once Sri Akshay Kumar Sen, a close disciple of the Great Master had sent some things to Sarada Ma through a woman known to be from a low caste. The lady along with her salutation handed over the articles sent through her and the Mother affectionately welcomed her and insisted that she has a bath, food and a night's rest before starting her journey back. Accordingly the woman had a refreshing bath and a hearty meal of Prasad and rested on the bed arranged for her on the portico by the Mother's door. The woman who was old, tired from the journey, also a patient of malaria, fell fast asleep during which she unconsciously dirtied her bed in sleep. The Mother who gets up very early in the morning realized this and decided to act upon quickly before others in the house came to know of it lest the poor woman would be harassed in many ways, the thought of which gave much pain to the Mother. Ma softly woke her up, placed a packet of Muri and Gur for her breakfast and in sweet words asked her to start her return journey at once to avoid hot Sun. And as soon as the woman left, the Mother with Her own hands, washed the mat, dried it, cleaned the portico and spread cow dung on it so that the inmates never knew what had happened.

“If we cannot see here the face of the all loving Universal Mother, of God the Redeemer where else can we? Only we should have the sensitiveness to recognize that the subtle potency of love transcends the obtrusive display of power.”- Tapasyananda

Adapted from *The Mother As I saw Her* by Swami Saradeshananda
Sri Sarada Ma's Birthday is celebrated on *December 22nd, 2010.*





...For I may never pass this way again

From time immemorial this holy land has been blessed by Divine souls. As they walk on this soil, it is sanctified. In tune with Divine Consciousness, they help the mankind to continually evolve. The great ones lift the mankind physically, mentally and spiritually. Devoid of any selfish motive, they help the men in many unknown ways. Being humble, they never boast of their existence. Whether they hide in a cave, or sit under a tree or dine with an ordinary person or among the crowds, the Divine One is constantly in communion with the Almighty. People mistake Him for an ordinary man, as the actions of the Divine One don't reflect the Divine light. Therefore it is very difficult to recognize Him. In fact their actions are in conformity with the Divine Wish; which most of the times is mysterious and beyond comprehension. Such a Divine Soul, when comes and plays a human drama, as was done by Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, Ramakrishna Pramahansa, Pramahansa Yogananda, Bhagavan Ramana, Shirdi Saibaba, it is a supernal blessing.

When a Divine One, free from ego, comes into the midst of the humanity, we take Him for granted and usually do not accord reverence He deserves. Even Arjuna treated Krishna as a friend till he saw the Viswaroopa. He was not in his usual self till he could see the Lord in His human form and hear the reassuring words from the Lord... The Divine One doesn't care for what is said to Him or of Him; He plunges into the 'work' with total devotion and dedication, for He knows His mission ordained by God. He is aware of the people who help Him in His mission, the souls He has known and are yet to come. Fully conscious about the vision, which is already there; the Divine Soul, chosen by God will carry the movement ahead.

It was one evening, this writer happened to enter the portals of Tapovan to behold a serene young personality, radiating a Divine aura. Perennial, charismatic smile added to the beauty of the young hermit. Boisterous laughter from the monk can diffuse any tense situation, instantaneously. When He invited us, to the Tapovan grounds, we were immediately at ease with ourselves. He listened to us with rapt attention and spoke at length and showed different sections of Tapovan and explained the activities. People served us a simple yet sumptuous meal.

We came to know about the activities of Tapovan, slowly and began to understand the tidbits of the personality of Swamiji, who is the fulcrum of this mission. His love for humanity is unlimited. The kids, who gathered around Him bear a testimony to this. The tiny tots who were getting education, hail from the slums nearby. Swamiji is simple and a real monk at heart.

This writer digresses from the subject to bring to focus that the world is balanced because of people who have been relentlessly working in silence in different corners of the earth contributing their might for the

*Work silently,
For those who are
silent from ages
together...*

*Be simple and
humble,*

*While showing
them the
divine path...*

*Be sincere and
dedicated,
While making them
stand on their
own feet...*

*That is the way to
serve...*

*That is the way to
get blessed...*

*That is the way to
express divinity...*





improvement of the society. I am in this connection, reminded of our 'teacher' who believed in 'humanity', I narrate below.

The scene is a small village. There were no metal roads. They are kutchra. Even if it rains for a while the roads become marshy. To catch a bus, one has to walk about 5-6 miles in any direction. There is an elementary school and a high school. This is the centre of learning for many boys and girls in the radius of 5-6 miles. The village is inhabited by about 6-7 thousand people. It is divided into a few streets, each street usually dominated by a caste. The village has two hamlets separated by a kilometer. There is a veterinary doctor and a government ayurvedic doctor to take care of villagers health needs.

There is a banyan tree, a village idol, an elementary school on the banks of one of the tanks. A rice mill is seen farther in the fields. In midst of agricultural fields, by the banks of a canal, is a high school building. The person is a teacher by profession, a doctor by practice, a humanist by nature. Mornings and evenings, witness a hub of activity in his small house, patients on one hand and poor students on the other. His treatment for the rich and poor is alike and so there is no dearth of people. He was giving free treatment for poor, paying tuition fee for the students and some students used to stay permanently in his house.

Belonging to an orthodox family, the teacher used to



follow his daily rites and rituals, but he never gave precedence to them. If a patient comes for treatment, he would give up everything, including the worship of God in the

middle to attend to them. Once, a couple from Harijanwada was coming along with a one year old child. The child is taut. All the muscles must have become rigid. He is motionless. The teacher who was

about to move to school was in his daily worship. Somebody informs him of the arrival of the couple. He is yet to offer the food to God before partaking it. He stops the puja (worship), takes an injection from the ampoule and administers to the child. Lo, the child weeps and both mother and father are on their knees filled with tears. The teacher used to keep nearly 20 ampoules for the child to meet the contingency, out of his meager salary.

The teacher believed in humanity. He is not well versed in scriptures nor did he quote any verse any time. He led a simple, yet fruitful life.

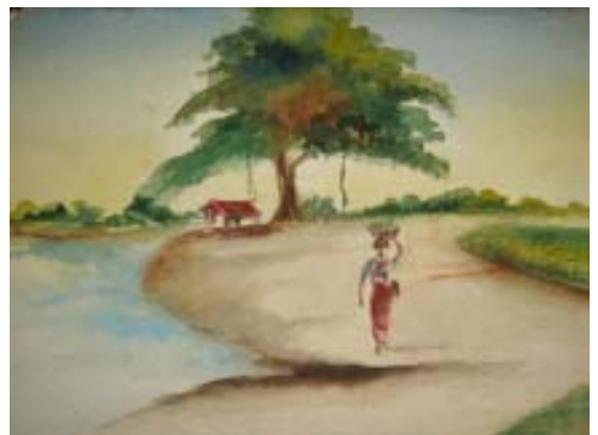
All popular philanthropists, nay good human beings are inspired probably by

*I shall pass this way but once
And any good therefore I can do
Or any kindness that I can show to anyone
Let me do it now
For, I may never pass this way again.*

Though he is no more on this earth, even after four decades the people fondly remember him. He has left his foot prints on this soil. The contribution of the teacher may be small but he is an institution.

From time to time, out of great love for humanity, God sends these great souls to earth to redeem our suffering in one way or the other. Always remembering that this life is ephemeral; the man should march on, helping in every way, the souls that he comes across and try to be a partner in the great mission of the Divine souls to become receptacles of Divine mercy. Let us join together to drink the nectar of love and grace that flows from the great soul Shri Nachiketanandaji Maharaj!

- R. Sridhar





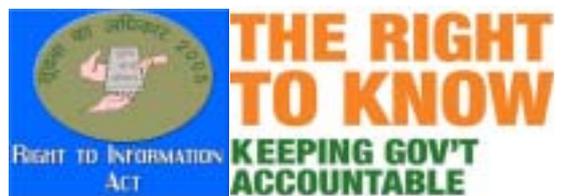
Chandra Prakash is a fresh post graduate in Business Management. He is a bright student with social consciousness. He is very rational. One day an employee working in his father's company asked his father as to why he was removed from the employment? His father told that he need not give any reply and it is his prerogative. Chandra Prakash was in sixth standard then. He was not happy with the answer given by his father. When he was studying ninth class, he got less marks in the mathematics examination, than he expected. He asked his teacher to show his answer sheet. She denied. When his friend was denied the opportunity to represent the college, in the Cricket tournament, he asked the college principal. He denied giving reason. Students are not given minimum required facilities in welfare hostels. Poor patients are denied medicines in the government hospitals. No one knows as to how much budget was allotted and how much was spent? Chandra Prakash was always thinking as to how this type of menace is to be encountered.

He read in the newspaper that The Right to Information Act was enacted by the Parliament to be effective from 13-10-2005. From that day, every citizen has a right to ask any public authority for any information including records, documents, memos, e-mails, opinions, circulars, orders, logbooks etc. Not only that, every citizen has the Right to inspection of work, documents, records; taking of notes or certified copies. The right to freedom of information is a statutory right and the public authorities are under a compelling obligation to supply the information,

unless such disclosure would prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India or is forbidden to be published by any court or is a breach of privilege of Parliament or Legislature etc. The important feature of this Act is that the information which cannot be denied to the Parliament or a State Assembly shall not be denied to the citizen. Public authorities of the Central and State Governments are under the obligation to publish the particulars of their organization, functions and duties; the powers and duties of their officers and employees, a directory of their officers and employees, the monthly remuneration received by each of them etc.

Every public authority, under the control of the Central Government, shall designate 'Central Public Information Officer' in all administrative units or offices and 'Central Assistant Public Information officer' at each Sub-Divisional level. Similarly, every public authority under the control of the State Government shall designate 'State Public Information Officer' in all administrative units or offices and 'State Assistant Public Information officer' at each Sub-Divisional level, to receive the applications for information.

Any person who desires to obtain the information under this Act, shall make a request in writing or through electronic means in English, Hindi or in the official language of the area, addressing to the Central Public Information Officer if the public authority is under the control of the Central Government or to the State Public Information Officer if the authority is under the control of the State Government. The letter shall be accompanied by Demand Draft or IPO for Rs. 10/- towards fee drawn in favour of the addressee. If the amount sent is insufficient the Information Officer shall ask for the payment of the balance fee amount. The



letter seeking the information shall clearly specify the particulars of the information sought by him. The subject of information sought, must relate to the administration only, either relating to present or past.

On receipt of the letter the Public Information Officer shall either provide the information or reject the request on the ground that the information sought is covered under the exceptions given by the Act; within 30 days from the date of receipt of the letter. If the information is not provided within 30 days it shall be deemed that the request for the information is refused. If the information is refused or the information is not properly given, the applicant may prefer an appeal to an officer holding superior rank. If the order made by the appellate officer is also adverse to the applicant, he may prefer a second appeal to the 'Central / State Information Commission' within 90 days, who shall dispose off the appeal within 30 days; which shall be binding.

Chandra Prakash is very happy about the Act. He started asking different authorities for information under the Act. Based on the information, he started giving representations to different authorities as to the irregularities committed by the officials and requested to rectify the same to serve the needy in a better way. He could gather the information on many welfare measures of both the Central and State Governments, the budget allotted to it, the criteria for the beneficiary under the given scheme and as to whether the allotments are reaching the actual persons. When he could see the positive outcome in the process, he contacted his friends and convinced them to serve the poor for one year. Accordingly, a group of ten persons adopted a Mandal each. They moved from one village to another and observed the conditions in which the villagers were living. In the process they met the educated youth in the Village. They were educated about the funds the Central and the State Governments were allotting towards medicines and nutritious food, to the pregnant women, eradication of malaria and other viral fevers, for the literacy and for the upliftment of weaker sections of the society and explained to them about the Act. The youth were motivated to send letters to the concerned departments, for information on different issues. Based on the information, the entire village people were educated on different developmental and welfare activities, and funds allotted for their implementation. The villagers could become active participants as responsible citizens, in the positive development of the village.

Act by itself cannot give the result. Its implementation makes all the difference. The country needs more and more persons like Chandra Prakash to take the fruits of the Act to every nook and corner.

- R. Muralidhar



*Know
yourself
and
you
will
know
that
which
is
beyond
all!*

Sanskrit lesson - Ten

- Krupalu Ogeti, Secretary, Sanskrit Bharati, Hyderabad.
email:okrupalu@sanskritam.net

Let us look at slightly longer sentences now. However, concentrate on the verb forms and their meanings only.

oḥṣṭē Śāḍhēḥ irṣēḥī, AWQ Śāḍhēḥ irṣēḥīḥ – *balaH durguNaM tyajati, ahaM durguNaM tyajAmi*

Boy leaves bad habit.

xē qēkēṇḥ Zēṣī, AWQ qēkēṇḥ Zēṣīḥ – *saH madhuraM khAdati, ahaM madhuraM khAdAmi*

He eats sweet.

nēḥQuē Uēqērṣēḥ eḥīḥī, AWQ Uēqērṣēḥ eḥīḥīḥ – *paNDitaH rAmAyaNaM jAnAti, ahaM rAmAyaNaM jAnAmi*

Pandit knows Ramayanam.

nēḥī pēḥēḥ Mūḥī, AWQ pēḥēḥ Mūḥīḥ – *putrI bhojanaM karoti, ahaM bhojanaM karomi*

Daughter does (takes) meals.

zēṇēḥ xē...ḥīḥ Zēḥēḥī, AWQ xē...ḥīḥ Zēḥēḥīḥ – *SunakaH sa~ggItaM SRuNoti, ahaM sa~ggItaM SRuNomi* (~g' stands for the 5th letter in *kavarga*. ~j' stands for 5th letter of *cavarga*.)

Dog listens (to) music.

uḥṣṭIrē uḥxṣṣḥ Sṣḥī, AWQ uḥxṣṣḥ Sṣḥīḥ – *vaDAnyah vastraM dadAti, ahaM vastraM dadAmi*

Donor gives cloth.

ḥīḥē kēḥḥ nēḥrḥī, AWQ kēḥḥ nēḥrḥīḥ – *pitA dhanaM preShayati, ahaM dhanaM preShayAmi*

Father sends money.

aē...ḥī nēḥḥ nēḥrḥī, AWQ nēḥḥ nēḥrḥīḥ – *ga~ggA pApaM prakShAlayati, ahaM pApaM prakShAlayAmi*

Ganga washes sins.

oḥṣṭē zēḥḥḥ Eḥīḥī, AWQ zēḥḥḥ Eḥīḥīḥ – *bAlaH SlghraM uttiShThati, ahaM SlghraM uttiShThAmi.*

Boy gets up fast.

qēḥḥḥ Eḥḥḥzēḥī, AWQ Eḥḥḥzēḥīḥ – *mahilA upaviSati, aham upaviSAmi*

Lady sits (down).

qēḥīḥ Aḥḥ xjēḥrḥī, AWQ Aḥḥ xjēḥrḥīḥ – *mAtA annaM sthApayati, ahaM annaM sthApayAmi*

Mother puts (serves) food.

Nūḥḥ xēqrḥḥ xqēḥī, AWQ xēqrḥḥ xqēḥīḥ – *CAtRaH samyak smarati, ahaM samyak smarAmi*

Student remembers well.

While we Indians know quite a lot of Sanskrit words, we may lack the sentence framing skill. Therefore, it would be a good idea to read the above Sanskrit sentences aloud and try to internalize *nēḥ Eḥḥḥ* and *Eḥḥḥ* forms of these popular verbs, which are very useful in our day-to-day life.

Celebrations:

Diwali and Children's Day at Tapovan

Diwali celebrations began in Nachiketa Tapovan with a traditional Lakshmi puja and lighting of the lamp on the morning of November 4th. Our chief guest to inaugurate the celebration was Smt. Sushma who lit the lamp. Although today much of Diwali is about fire crackers, we reminded ourselves that Diwali to us, meant illumining our souls with the "inner light". Sixth grader Chi. Nagamani eloquently gave details of the significance of the festival based on various stories from our mythology.

This was followed by a lively drama presented by the fourth and fifth graders on Narakasura vadha. The teachers and students utterly enjoyed the show that was presented with great enthusiasm by the little artists. They had eagerly spent time in the library and with teachers to help them prepare the necessary information for the play.

The highlight of the event was a fantastic show put up by first graders on fire safety during Diwali celebrations. This very pertinent and timely presentation conveyed emphatically on how crackers should be handled and the care we need to take, to avoid accidents and fire.

The celebration joyfully concluded with offering of Naivedyam (Offering to the divine) followed by distribution of prasadam (blessings from the Divine).

The following evening in Tapovan was filled with the powerful yet serene vibrations of the mantra chanting during Lakshmi Puja. The puja was beautifully performed under the holy guidance of Swami Shivanandamayi Ma in the Dhyana Mandir. The peaceful and joyful satsang experienced by all who attended, is a grace in itself, of the Divine mother.

The little ones at Tapovan also had a nice treat on **Children's day** on November 14th. The tribute to Chacha Nehru started off with Vidya mandir teachers Ms T Jyothi and Ms Parlimala rendering a speech and a song respectively. Games and activities were conducted for the teachers and the children entertained themselves watching their teachers in a playful atmosphere. The little hearts were amused to see their teachers scampering for a seat in Musical Chairs and were thrilled to see them engage in a Baseball game. The fun-n-games which the teachers enthusiastically participated in, was a feast to their eyes. Thanks to Ms. Bindu and all the others who helped organize the event.

The children were glad to receive new school bags lovingly distributed. And...the fun didn't end there for the 6th and 7th graders! They got to watch the movie 'Alice in Wonderland' in Prasad Imax and experience great thrill and suspense, making the day even more memorable. Nevertheless, they took back much more, the special memories of togetherness and being children on a super fun day.

May the Lord grant us at Tapovan, many more occasions to enrich and light up their spirits in a positive and spiritual atmosphere, so they too can grow up to radiate and share that light with others!



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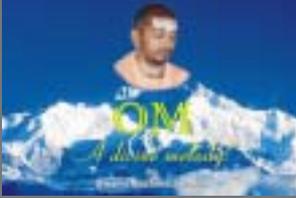
*Anna daanam maha daanam; vidya daanam mahattaram.
Annena kshanika trupthihi yaavajjeevanthu vidyaya.*

Vidya Mandir at Nachiketa Tapovan is currently able to accommodate a family of about 170 children who receive all-round nourishment from man-making education to milk-n-meals and basic health-aid in an atmosphere of genuine love. Kind-hearted Well wishers have been the unseen force behind this offering to God. We thank you for your continued support.

Vidya Daanam (Education)	ˆ 4500/year/child
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	ˆ 3500/day
Ksheera Daanam (Morning Milk)	ˆ 700/day
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	ˆ 500/day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	ˆ 600/2 pairs
Dinnerware (Steel Plates & Glasses)	ˆ 5000/ 50 sets
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Celebrate your Special Days with the Children at Nachiketa Tapovan!

A set of 8 'Yogic CDs'



Cost of each CD is ˆ 20

PUBLICATION

The CDs comprise instructions given on different yogic techniques based on an extensive research done by Swami Nachiketananda and assisted by other Swamis and volunteers. 'Om' - A divine melody is first of the series. All the CDs are available at the Nachiketa Tapovan premises at Kavuri Hills, and also in leading bookstores.

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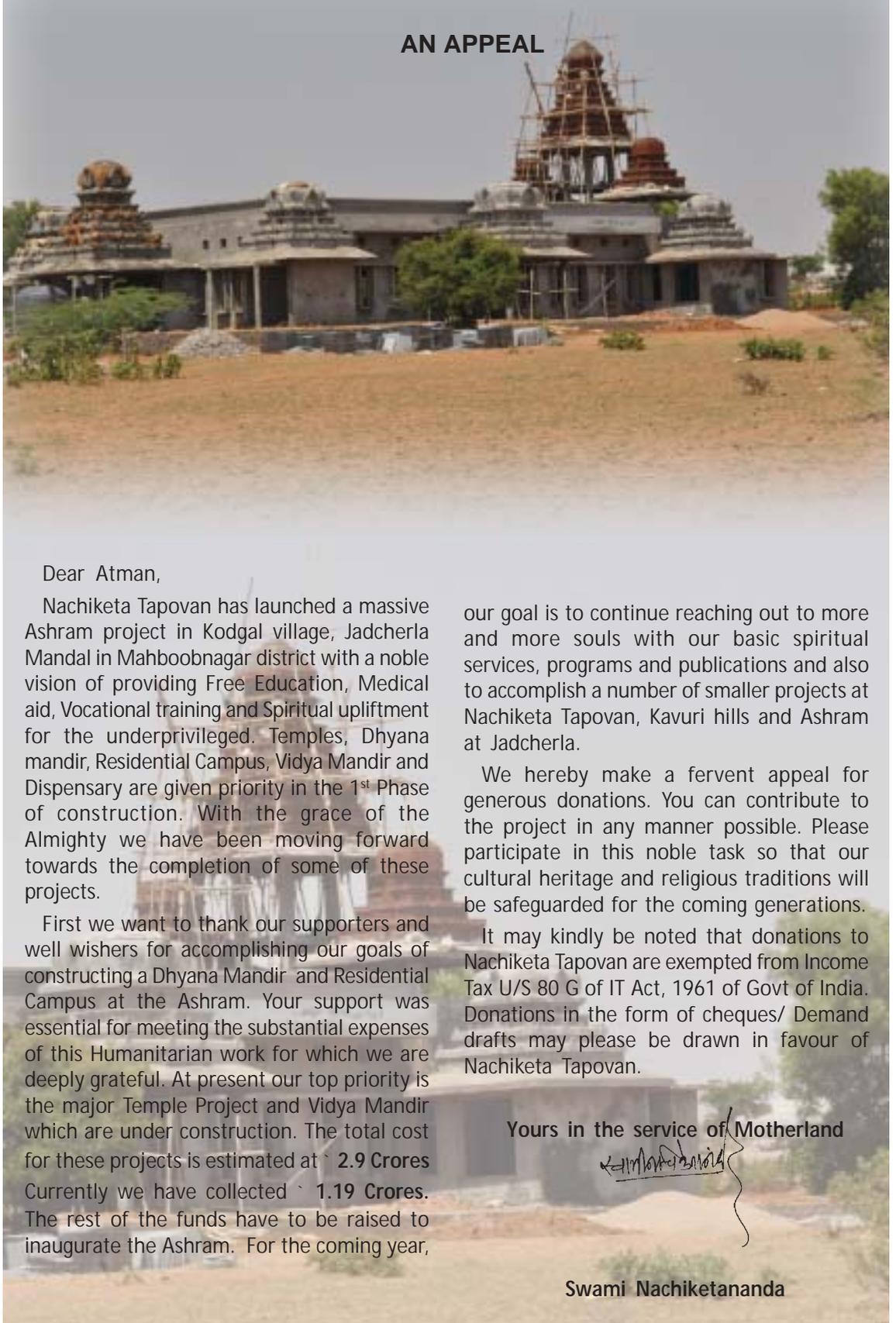
Phones: 040-2475 0111, 2475 0333, samskritabharatihyd@gmail.com

At this time, we have the following Samskrit learning centres in the Twin Cities (Hyderabad / Secunderabad), which are planned to be run on a steady basis for the coming one year.

- 1. Padmaraonagar** – Kowtha Swarajya Vihar, Near Park/Gharoanda Super Bazar
Gita Sikshana Kendram – Tue, Wed and Thu – 6:30pm to 8:30pm
- 2. Madhapur** – Nachiketa Tapovan, # 70, Phase I, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur, Hyderabad
Balakendram – Thu only – 2.00pm to 3.00pm
Saptahikam – Thu only – 3.00pm to 4:30pm
Saptahikam – Sat & Sun – 10am to 12noon & 1.00pm to 3.00pm (Gita Sikshana)
- 3. Yousufguda** – Vivekananda Kendra, Near Sarathi Studios
Saptahikam – Thu only – 11.00am to 1.00pm
- 4. AS Rao Nagar** – Tentatively at Sri VS Raju's House, Near Poulomi Hospital
Saptahikam – Thu only – 6:30am to 8:30am

Learn Samskrit

AN APPEAL



Dear Atman,

Nachiketa Tapovan has launched a massive Ashram project in Kodgal village, Jadcherla Mandal in Mahboobnagar district with a noble vision of providing Free Education, Medical aid, Vocational training and Spiritual upliftment for the underprivileged. Temples, Dhyana mandir, Residential Campus, Vidya Mandir and Dispensary are given priority in the 1st Phase of construction. With the grace of the Almighty we have been moving forward towards the completion of some of these projects.

First we want to thank our supporters and well wishers for accomplishing our goals of constructing a Dhyana Mandir and Residential Campus at the Ashram. Your support was essential for meeting the substantial expenses of this Humanitarian work for which we are deeply grateful. At present our top priority is the major Temple Project and Vidya Mandir which are under construction. The total cost for these projects is estimated at ` 2.9 Crores. Currently we have collected ` 1.19 Crores. The rest of the funds have to be raised to inaugurate the Ashram. For the coming year,

our goal is to continue reaching out to more and more souls with our basic spiritual services, programs and publications and also to accomplish a number of smaller projects at Nachiketa Tapovan, Kavuri hills and Ashram at Jadcherla.

We hereby make a fervent appeal for generous donations. You can contribute to the project in any manner possible. Please participate in this noble task so that our cultural heritage and religious traditions will be safeguarded for the coming generations.

It may kindly be noted that donations to Nachiketa Tapovan are exempted from Income Tax U/S 80 G of IT Act, 1961 of Govt of India. Donations in the form of cheques/ Demand drafts may please be drawn in favour of Nachiketa Tapovan.

Yours in the service of Motherland

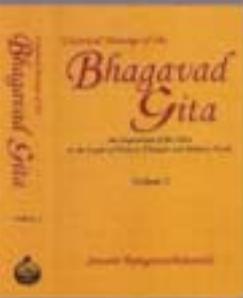
Swami Nachiketanananda

Invitation



Nachiketa Tapovan is celebrating
Swami Ranganathananda Jayanti
15th Dec 2010
Time: 1.00 pm
Lunch follows

Venue:
Nachiketa Tapovan



Gita Jayanti
17th Dec 2010
Time: 2.00 pm

Ma Sarada Jayanti

22nd Dec 2010

Time: 11.00 am

Please partake in Prasadam



Venue:
Nachiketa Tapovan

Christmas

24th Dec 2010

Time: 1.00 pm



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A NOTE TO WRITERS:

- You can send articles by email to nachiketanjali1@gmail.com or by post to Nachiketanjali, Nachiketa Tapovan, Plot No.70, Phase I, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur, Guttalabegumpet, Serilingampally, Ranga Reddy District. A.P., with your full name, address and contact details.
- No article is returned.
- Your article should be reader friendly with a positive view point.
- No controversial or political issues are published.
- Word limit for an article varies from 300 (one column) to 600 words (two columns). Writers can contact the editorial team for further details.
- The styles of references should be as per the 'Documentation of Sources' given at the end of the *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*.
- Editor reserves the right to accept/ reject articles and edit the selected articles.
- Unsolicited articles are not acknowledged.
- The Editor does not accept responsibility for the author's views.
- Articles received will be published in one of the forthcoming issues.

BOOK REVIEW

We request Publishers to send two copies of their Spiritual, Philosophical and Religious books for publishing a Book Review in our "Nachiketanjali" - monthly Magazine.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Nachiketa Tapovan is indebted to all the well-wishers, donors, patrons and advisors whose immense help and cooperation in multiple ways has helped us accomplish our goals.

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Single copy	₹ 10	₹ 10
1 year	₹ 100	₹ 100
3 years	₹ 280	₹ 280
5 years	₹ 450	₹ 450

Subscriptions can be sent by MO/DD/ Cheque/Cash in favor of 'Nachiketa Tapovan'. (Plus ₹ 30 for outstation cheques)

AN APPEAL TO PATRONS & SPONSORS

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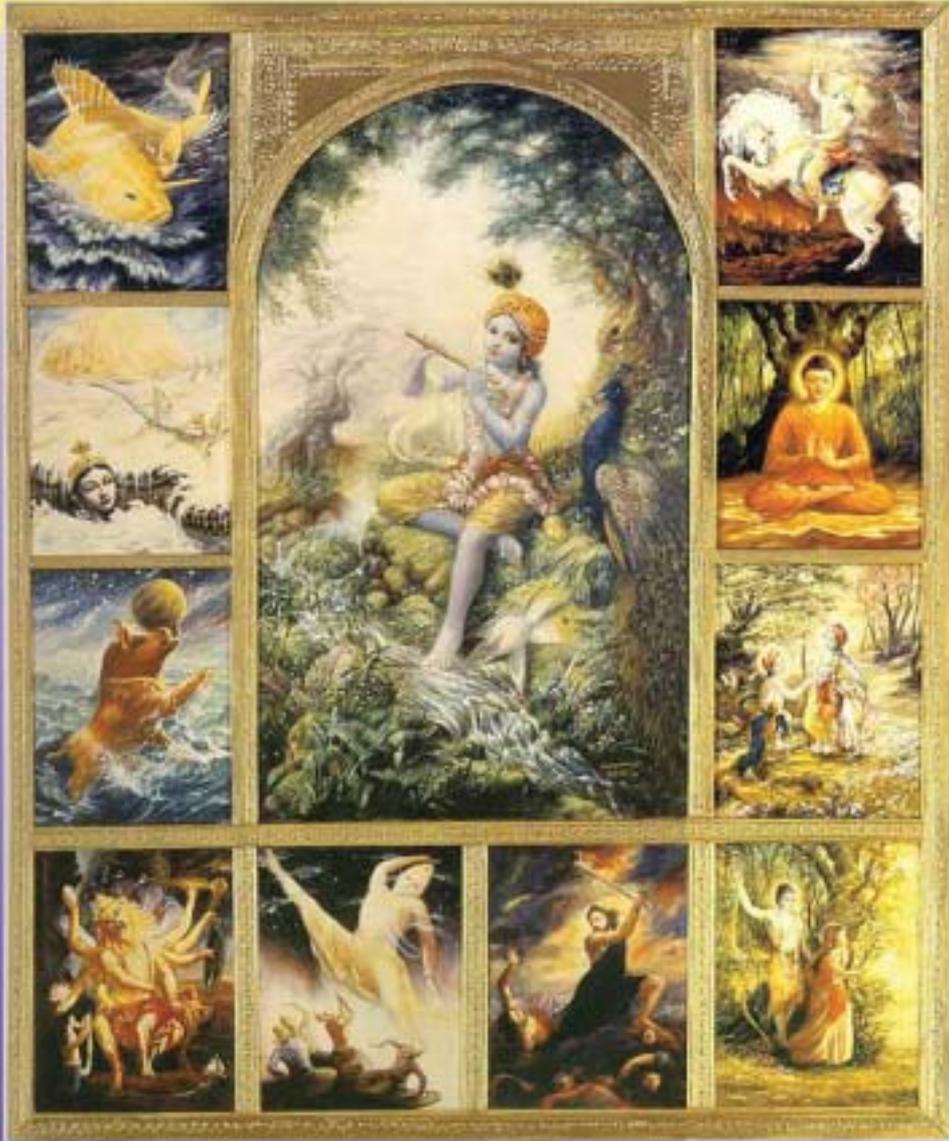
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