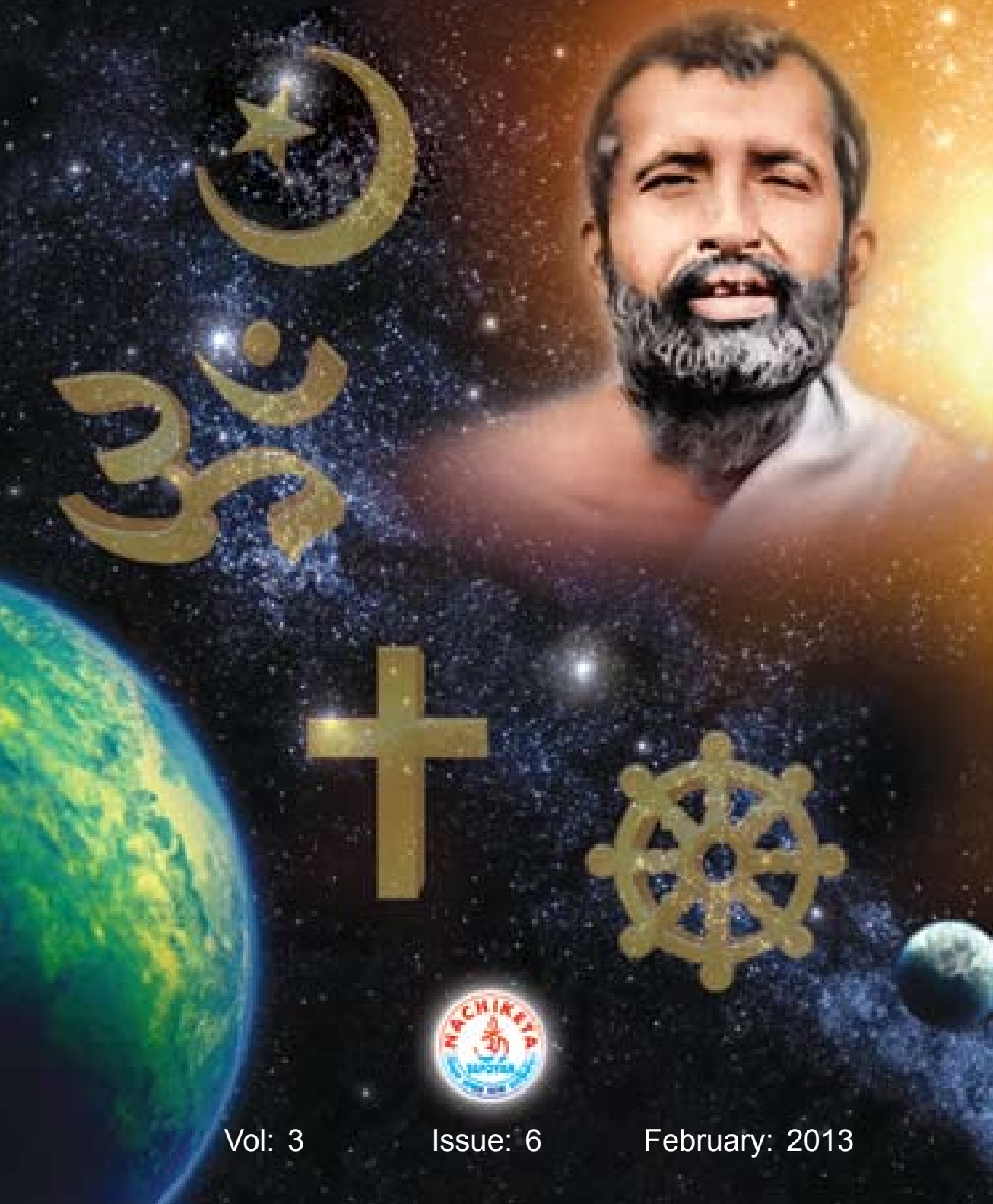


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Nachiketanjali

...an offering for Spiritual Evolution



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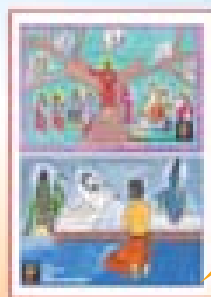
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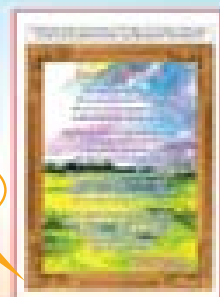
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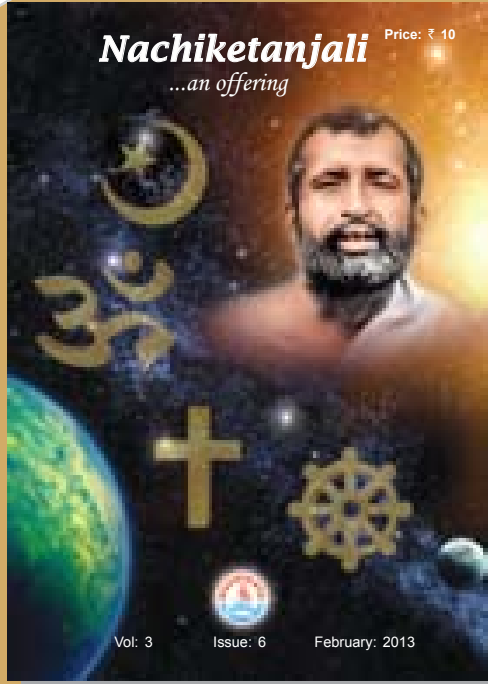
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Truth is one; only it is called by different names. All people are seeking the same Truth; the variance is due to climate, temperament, and name. A lake has many ghats. From one ghat the Hindus take water in jars and call it 'jal'. From another ghat the Mussalmāns take water in leather bags and call it 'pāni'. From a third the Christians take the same thing and call it 'water'. Suppose someone says that the thing is not 'jal' but 'pāni', or that it is not 'pāni' but 'water', or that it is not 'water' but 'jal', it would indeed be ridiculous... Everyone is going toward God. They will all realize Him if they have sincerity and longing of heart.

- Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

Editorial

IT IS OUR CHOICE!

Who is the magician who has created this beautiful world? Who is the musician who filled the air with blissful music? Our great saints had the fortune of visualizing the Divine hand at work, weaving magic into nature.

Nevertheless, it is incredible how this nature appears for a moment like a beautiful dancer, emitting grace in every step and the very next moment transforms into a ferocious lion, about to strike its target. Which is true? The Beauty or the Beast?

A true *Sadhaka* will realize that they are two sides of the same coin; just like happiness and sorrow. Like the maxim- 'if you want the rose you have to accept the thorns as well,' they come as a package. This is the reality and we need to acknowledge it.

All our lives we had lived in a particular way and have been accustomed to think in a certain way. It is really difficult to think anything away from our comfort zone. Much as a garland is threaded, the garland of life is threaded around one's own actions. But when intrigued by life we expect miracles to happen. Miracles always happen around us but it is a pity that they go unnoticed. In effect our very existence is a miracle.

Once a devotee cried out to God; "Oh God! Please show me some miracle of yours. Come and touch me if you are really there." Instantly a butterfly brushed across his cheek. He drove it away and walked ahead. His faith in God was still in the initial stage. The Divine touch went unnoticed. He was expecting great miracles to happen.

Miracles apart, the only relief from the torrid journey of life is to be as close to the Almighty as possible. We can either move towards Him or away from Him. It is our choice!

- Subhadra K.

Living in Grace

There is nothing more sublime and magical than being able to experience 'Grace' and to 'be aware' of it; being in constant communion with this aspect of 'existence' and this way of 'being' is perhaps referred to as 'being enlightened'.

I had a very humbling and overwhelming experience recently, on the day of Dussera, the day of celebrating victory over all that is limited, that which is holding us back...the day of celebrating the 'Devi' and Her presence in our lives.

After the most sublime chanting of '*Devi Stuti*', I was distributing the *Prasadam* to all those present for the Puja and had the most wonderful experience. My gaze was turned downwards as I chanted the 'Shiva' mantra in my mind and offered the *Prasadam* to everyone who was in front of me.

Every direction I turned, there were outstretched hands to receive the *Prasadam* and I kept placing it on their palms. Every direction I looked, the open palms of all present, in humble anticipation of receiving the Devi's blessing in the form of the *Prasadam*, was a humbling experience.

The fact that I was the giver and not the taker stayed in my mind for only a few moments and it was overwhelming. I felt very fortunate to be in this situation but what followed was so intense and so profound that it completely blew me away.

I realized that it was only an illusion that I was the giver. In truth, I was the receiver. The outstretched hands were not those of my co-workers, they were the hands of the Devi Herself and this fact humbled me so much that tears trickled from my eyes. I felt blessed and fortunate and extremely humbled that I had this realization, that I had this emotion within me, where I could picture myself offering something to the Devi Herself and that She was receiving it.

I became aware that I am nobody to give anything to anyone, let alone to the Devi Herself. For, everything that I have and everything that I am is because of Her grace and Her grace alone. I am a mere speck in this all-encompassing creation. All day, I remained in a state of bliss and every small thing made me feel grateful towards the Creator and His magnificent creation. I realized, this is the meaning of 'Living in grace'!

- Gautam Vir





Bhojeshwara

The king uncrowned...

Ceiling inside Bhojeshwara Temple

October 7th 2012, the day we visited Bhojeswar in Bhopal was a day of inspiration as well as a day for tears and silence. In fact, we were on our journey to Madhya Pradesh and the place was Bhojeshwar, 28 kms from Bhopal. In the back-drop were hundreds of acres of dry land and here was Bhojeshwara, the king uncrowned... standing tall, inviting everyone, invigorating, inspiring, awakening inner potentialities, mesmerizing and invoking spirit in all. If we were mesmerized and speechless seeing the magnificent majestic beauty, at the same time were we in a pool of tears, flooded by gratification for no reason!

It was fascinating to see the marvels of architecture and the great thought of a person who made everything possible in a short period of time. King Bhoj who lived only 44 years made a tremendous impact on Indian history and the history of mankind.

Dear one! Let us peep into the history of Bhojeshwara, the king uncrowned and our king Bhoj. Founded by the legendary Parmar King of Dhar, Raja Bhoj (1010 – 53) and named after him, Bhojpur is renowned for the remains of its magnificent Shiva Temple, and Cyclopean dam.

Bhojeshwar Temple at Bhojpur is known as the Somnath of the East. The height of the Lingam is 21 feet with a circumference of 17.8 feet. Gouripeetham is 21.5 feet square and is composed of three superimposed limestone blocks. The lake that was constructed was 250 square miles. This lake was destroyed by Hoshang Shah of Malwa (1405-34) for whom apparently it took three months to cut through the dam and three years to empty the lake, and its bed was not habitable for thirty years. The climate of Malwa is said to have been considerably altered afterwards.

No doubt one should go into history to know the facts of this great saga. But one needs to go more into the depths of human psyche; for the grandeur of the Bhojeshwara can be understood only by those who really understand the science of consecration and the spiritual ambition of a human being.

On one side we were mesmerized seeing the massiveness of the structure and on the other, got more awakened as we entered into the sanctum sanctorum of the temple. The 'Pujari' made special arrangements for all of us



Damaged exterior of Bhojeshwara Temple



Bhojeshwara

to sit down for *Sadhana* and how the time flew nobody knew. It was an intoxicating experience and we felt that even though the invaders have destroyed the temple they could not destroy the aura and energy, the hard work and skill of the craftsmen and the science of consecration, of spiritual souls of our Motherland.

History might not give a clear picture but one thing is for sure; that one can instantly feel the essence of it and be drawn to it automatically. Very reluctantly we had to leave the place but only after carrying with us the rich aroma and great legacy. India is full of such fits but this is something different, something unique, something inspiring, and something beyond one's perception.

Dear One! For five things every Indian should visit this place. First, for its grandeur, second, even though there were floods of invaders yet it is standing tall even today. Third, perhaps this is the only massive Shivalinga with a huge *Gauripeetham*. Fourth, for the energy that exits even today and fifth, for its consecration!

As per the history and facts, the temple structure is incomplete but not the consecration. King Bhoja could not complete the temple because of reasons such as commitment towards Gujarat's Somnath Temple, loss of treasury and early death. But there is no doubt that consecration was done, otherwise 'Abhishekam and Poojas' would not have been performed.

In many places even today, due to *tithi* or money or availability of a consecrator, etc, people would undertake consecration and at a

later stage construct the remaining part of the temple. It is permissible and accepted. When we look at the structure of the Bhojeshwara Temple we will easily come to know that the sanctum sanctorum was completed and the doors were fixed. Unfortunately it was destroyed by invaders. So it shows that without consecration *Gauripeetham* and Lingam cannot be installed. There is a special ramp in the southern wall to reach the Linga without touching *Gauripeetham* for doing *Abhishekam*. Those many years nobody made any attempt to renovate it and now it is considered as a world heritage.

Just as a thread is necessary to bind flowers into a garland, so also we need a Divine thread to bind people together to see the society as a whole... as a single unit like a garland. We should never forget that it is spirituality that binds and it is spirituality that unites.

Right now what we need is a spiritual will blended well with social will and accepted by political will; then there is possibility to make this monument once again a place for *Sadhana*. It is charging, rejuvenating, awe-inspiring, awakening but without collective will it is going to be just a world heritage place for tourists and not a hermitage for *Sadhakas*.



- Swami Nachiketananda Puri



Lakshmi Devi



When God incarnates as a human being, other Gods and Goddesses, yogis and illumined souls, incarnate with Him. These *Nityasiddhas*, or free souls, are immediately able to recognize the Avatar, since they themselves are endowed with Divine qualities.

Lakshmimani Devi, a niece of Sri Ramakrishna, was an incarnation of the Goddess Shitala. She was born at Kamarpukur in February 1864. Her father, Rameshwar was Sri Ramakrishna's second elder brother. As a little five year old girl, Lakshmi would help with the worship of the family deities by making sandal paste and picking flowers. Her playtime was mainly spent in performing her own worship. Lakshmi was married at the age of eleven to Dhanakrishna Ghatak. A couple of months later he went in search of work and never returned leaving behind a very young widow as predicted by Sri Ramakrishna. On Sri Ramakrishna's advice she gave away her share of her husband's property, to other members of his family and went to live with Holy Mother in Dakshineshwar.

Lakshmi was among those fortunate few who were very close to the Master and free with Him. Sri Ramakrishna asked Lakshmi who her favourite deity was and with a seed, the Master wrote that *Mantram* on her tongue and uttered it to her audibly. On a certain occasion the Master, said that He would be born again after a hundred years. Holy Mother and Lakshmi vehemently opposed the idea. Master laughed and said "our roots are twined together like the *Kalmi* plant, pull one stem and the whole clump comes forward."

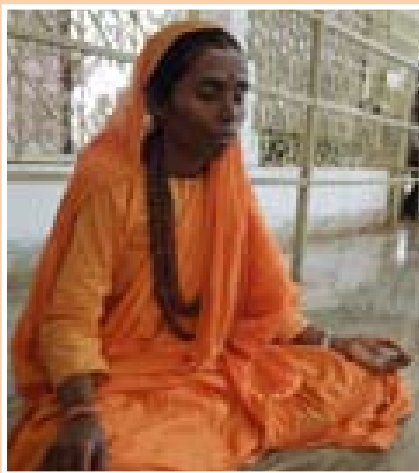
After Sri Ramakrishna's passing away Lakshmi travelled with Holy Mother to different holy places and then moved back

to Kamarpukur. Lakshmi was a very talented woman and had a captivating personality. She could sing, dance, act, mimic and inspire. She was a wonderful story teller and her child like simplicity deeply impressed people. Sometimes in a gathering she would dress as a *gopi* and with her melodious voice sing *Kirtans* and some devotional songs of Ramprasad. Lakshmi's favourite holy place was Puri, knowing this some devotees built a house for her near the sea shore. She moved to Puri in February 1924.

Lakshmi's daily routine was very simple. She got up at 3'o clock in the morning and after washing sat for meditation and *Japam*. Afterwards she ate little *Prasad* and at 10'o clock went for her bath. Then she again repeated her *Mantram* until noon, when she took her lunch. After 3'o clock after resting she either talked to the devotees about the Master or practice *Japam*. From 6 to 8 in the evening she repeated her *Mantram*, and then the devotees sang *Kirtans* and read a chapter from the Srimad Bhagavatam. After taking some *Prasad* and milk for supper she went to bed at 10'o clock. Frequently Lakshmi experienced *Bhava Samadhi* and had visions of different Gods and Goddesses. Even though Lakshmi's health started failing day by day, she continued to go into ecstasy.

Despite the excellent care given by the disciples she passed away on 24th February 1926 at the age of 62. Once, before she passed away, she described to Swami Saradananda a vision she had had "I saw a mountain of dazzling mica. On one side of that mountain were Lakshmi and Narayana, and on the other side was Sri Ramakrishna. I saw that the Master was surrounded by the Holy Mother, Swamiji, Rakhal Maharaj and others. Then I saw Yogin Didi and Golap Didi and they told me, "O' Lakshmi here there is no problem of food and sleep or disease and grief. Living with the Master gives us uninterrupted bliss."

**Source: 'They lived with God'
by Swami Chetanananda**



*We all are directed
by Shadaripus,
whereas the realized
Master directs all
the Shadaripus.
Difference between
realized Master and
ordinary soul is that
both have ego but one
has purified ego and
ordinary person has
impure ego.*

**Paramahansa
Swami Shivananda Puri**

Venting Anger

The other day, I was very upset with not being able to complete a task. My mother called me up and as usual like all moms, spoke in her affectionate manner. I vented my 'frustration' on her, though she did not know anything. Thank God! She did not say anything. I did not have to say sorry to her the next day. I finished my work and all was well again. The same happened another day, this time with my dearest friend. She was patient but then made me reconcile myself with the reality as she knew what the problem was.

Many of us face many issues everyday in our life and we all have different ways of bringing the anger out of us. Some of us break delicate objects, while a few others bang doors. It is really better to express our anger rather than keep it boiling within. In retrospect, when we sit down and think of our behaviour, we feel so amused and more often than not laugh at ourselves. In fact, when I read some of my previous diary entries, I keep laughing at the foolishness in my thought at the time of that entry.

Practically speaking, we are not in the best of our spirits every time. We all face ups and downs and we all feel frustrated with our situation. But the way we bring out the same has the potential to make or break us. Tomorrow, when I start working and face a similar situation as that with my friend, no colleague would put up with my obnoxious behaviour. So, the need arises that I ponder and develop a different method altogether to get rid of my mood swings. After all, my mother or my friend is not the reason for the state of affairs I am in. In fact, I should be thankful to them for being there to lend a patient ear and suggest solution, if only I am ready to listen and follow up.

There are many solutions which we can think of and which are freely available on the internet. But, each one of us has a different way of reacting to the situation. We should first look around and share our problem with our dear ones who are generally ready to listen. We may take advice and choose to act or not on it. But then sharing makes a difference. Also, we should not see ourselves alone as the ones who are in trouble. We are all part of a larger matrix and there are many walking with us. And in the words of Mangte Chungneijang Mary Kom, the five-time World Boxing Champion and winner of a bronze medal in the 2012 Summer Olympics, "Success lies not only in talent, but in each individual's ability to hone that talent as best as s/he can, even, or perhaps more accurately, especially, in the face of poor odds and immense pressure... Push yourself to achieve your dreams, have faith in your abilities, act honestly and with integrity and the world will eventually give you everything you deserve."



Neetika Gogula, Final year
B.A. L.L.B. (Hons) has passion for
writing articles on social issues.

Tatahkim...Tatahkim...Tatahkim



When we speak of a *Vanaprastha* life in India, what does that mean? It means 'March on! March on!' We have been busy with earning money, enjoying life, getting name and fame, leading family life, etc. It was all beautiful. But we should not continue it too long. There is a time when we should say 'stop!' There is something better, something still higher. This is very much accepted by men like Carl Jung, that Swiss psychologist, in his book *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. Should we continue indefinitely this life of earning money and enjoyment at the sensory level? Sometime we must be able to stop it, so that inner development can take place. We have neglected it in the course of this struggle. Now we have to do that!

Jung calls these worldly acquisitions, achievement. He calls inner development by the name culture. True culture is something internal; how many degrees one has got is 'achievement'. How much money one has donated, how many awards one has received-these are all achievements. Good! But do not continue this too long. Then he gives a beautiful idea. Achievement is meant for the forenoon of human life. He divides life into two: forenoon and after-noon. Up to noon you can have achievement: education, job, money-making, family rearing, acquiring name & fame in society, etc. All these are achievements. Then comes the afternoon of life. Do not carry on this to the afternoon. Then he warns people: Those who carry on to the afternoon the philosophy of

the forenoon, are bound to pay a heavy price for that mistake, namely, diminution of personality. Personality becomes smaller and still smaller. 'Arrested human development' will take place. Much greater development could have taken place. This is the language the Indian philosophers have used.

There is nothing to be looked down upon. We should finish it and march on without stagnating. One does not look down upon any stage of life. When we become older, we do not look down upon our life as a child. That was also beautiful. But now it is not beautiful. If one remains a child even after he or she has grown up, that is not correct. I must go to the next development, to the next stage of life. That is what is meant by this summons: 'march on'. Suppose we don't listen to this call to march on, we will be thrown aside on the sand; the current of life will go on without us. We then become frustrated.

The word 'frustration' comes again and again in modern life and literature. Why is there frustration? Because we continued in a particular line which we should have left behind. There are other things to do than what we did earlier. Because we continued in it, we became unfit for higher things. And therefore, life continued to flow on leaving us on the sand, like waves throwing objects on the sand and itself going on into the sea. That is what happens to such people. Frustration comes when we do not continue our progress in life and get stagnant at a particular level. Life should not stay stagnant; it must march on. So we remain in an absolutely stagnant pool by the side of the river that is flowing towards the sea. The word *Samsara* indicates 'stagnation' at the sensory level. Do not be a *Samsari*, means, we should not get stagnant. It does not mean that we should not have a house, a husband or a wife, or children etc. No! We can have all these, but we should not stagnate. We have to find the answer for ourself; 'What is next? What is next?' in Sankara's language: *Tatahkim, Tatahkim, Tatahkim*.

**Source: My life is my work
by Swami Ranganathananda**

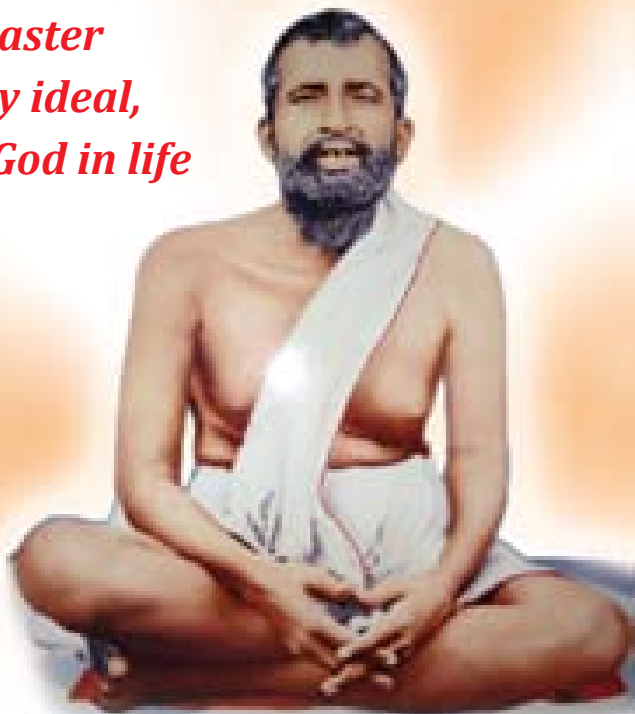


My teacher, My master My hero, My ideal, My God in life

Ramakrishna has no peer. Nowhere else in the world exists such unprecedented perfection, such wonderful kindness to all, such intense sympathy for men in bondage.

He had the same sympathy for all; He had found the secret of their harmony. A man ought to be intellectual, or devotional, or mystic, or active; each of the various religions represents one or the other of all these types. Yet it is possible to combine all the four in one man, and this is what humanity in the future is going to do. That was His idea. He condemned none but saw the good in all.

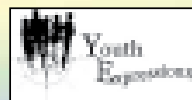
He was a triumphant example, a living realization of the complete renunciation of lust and money. He was far beyond any idea of either; and such a man was necessary for this present age. Such renunciation is necessary in these days when men have begun to think that they cannot live even a month without what they call their 'necessities,' while at the same time they are increasing in geometrical ratio. It was necessary in a time like this - one man should arise to demonstrate to the skeptics of the world that he cared not a straw for all the gold and all the wealth that was in the universe.



This is the message of Sri Ramakrishna to the modern world. Care not for doctrines or for dogmas, for sects or for churches. All these count for but little compared with that essence of existence which is in each one, and called 'spirituality'. The more this develops in a man, the more powerful is he for good. He who has most of it can do good to his fellow man. First, then, acquire that. Only those who have seen it will understand this; but such spirituality can be given to others, even though they be unconscious of the gift. Only those who have attained to this power are amongst the great teachers of mankind. They are the powers of light. Then be you this! The more of such men any country produces, the higher that country is raised. That land where no such men exist is doomed. Nothing can save it. Therefore, my Master's message to the world is, 'Be ye all spiritual! Get ye first realization!' And to the young and strong of every country He would cry that the time has come for renunciation. 'Renounce for the sake of humanity!' You have talked of the love of man till the thing is in danger of becoming words alone. The time has come to act. The call is now. Do! Leap into the breach and save the world!

(From Swami Vivekananda's letter to
Ramakrishnananda, 1895)

Get Set for a New Beginning!



Dear You – who reads this,

Today, I wish to take you there, where you always wanted to be. You saw many dreams, you forgot some, you achieved some...you relieved some trying to relieve yourself...of misery, of pain, of failure...of fear. Today, open the Pandora's Box...I dare you! Relive what you relieved yourself of. Does it still hurt as much as it did then? The scar on the skin faded, why have you kept the wound still alive? Toys broke, you cried, your heart broke, you cried...someone wiped your tears then, someone would wipe your tears now...that didn't last forever, this won't too.

Today, when you are wiping your Pandora's Box and making a way out, relive those memories that pull you up. Your school house badge was a matter of pride, even your company ID card is! Why have you changed your perspective? Did you get tired, so soon? Your bruised knees did not restrain you from sneaking out for a game of football...what is stopping you now? You won accolades, you celebrated, you failed a test, you cried...but the next day was as lively and fresh as ever. Why do you keep hanging on to things now? There were surprise tests then, there are surprise tests now. A remark in your school diary, a red mark on your report card...weren't the end of the world...neither will a rejection of your job application and a failure of your business plan end your life...then why do you sit and cry?

When you appeared in exams during school, no one but you knew your level of preparation. Today, when you are chalking down your future, again no one but you knows how well or ill prepared you are. You wished to secure the first rank in class, you studied all night...you wish to succeed in life. You will have to slog for nights together. You have been a warrior, you know that. Do not succumb to minor wounds and injuries. Fight with all your might. There is always a solution. Face it – from the front. Down memory lane when you go, you will see you

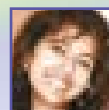
never hid behind your mom for long...you ran, jumped, hurt yourself but got up again and did it yourself. Why have you lost that courage and conviction now? It was you yesterday, it is you today...a few rounds of the clock and you forgot who you are!

Open your Pandora's Box...let your inhibitions loose...clear the clutter; make space – for your dreams, desires, aspirations...for yourself. Make your own story...a story full of love and light. Relive what you wanted to and how you wanted to...on your own terms.

Do not melt your chocolate in a cup of sour milk!

- Yashasvi Singh

Email: yashasvi.nliu@gmail.com





Sun Temple

MODHERA

The Sun Temple of Gujarat

As one traverses the length and breadth of Gujarat, one constantly stumbles across architectural legacies of the 'Solanki' rule. You keep coming across living spaces and monuments of another time.

A soothing drive amidst green farmlands just 35km away from Mehsana on the way to the temples of Goddess Bahucharaji reposes the village of Modhera. Set along the backdrop of River Pushpavathi, surrounded by a terra-formed garden of flowering trees and songs of birds, rests the famed Sun temple of Modhera.

The remains of the Sun temple are relics of times gone by when reverence of the natural elements fire, air, water, earth and sky were at their peak sharing space with myriad manifestations of Vedic Gods. The ancient philosophy venerating natural elements and its association with humans was considered the prima force and energy of the life cycle. A walk around the serene temple campus makes you aware of the positively strong aura of energy which the place radiates.

The exclusively carved temple complex and the magnificently sculpted kund are jewels in the art of masonry of the Solanki period apparently which was also known as the Golden Age of Gujarat. The life like icons, narrate stories and legends of Modhera. Legend narrates that after vanquishing Ravana in battle, Lord Rama and Sita halted here on their way back. After due consultation with Sage Vashishtha, Lord Rama decided to conduct a *yagna* here to cleanse himself of the sin of killing a Brahmin, namely Ravana who was a Shaivite and one of Shiva's most glorious disciples. This *yagna* was performed by a local Brahmin belonging to the Modh community thus originated the name Modhera. There is even a temple of Modheshwari, a manifestation of the Mother Goddess nearby.

The temple complex was constructed as a magnificent offering in sculpture to the Lord of Life and Light, fiery Surya, the Sun God, under the patronage of Bhimdev-I in the year 1027 AD. Ensnconced in an undulating landscape of green foliage, the design of the temple follows the



Sun God sculpted on the exterior of the temple

tenets of Vastu-Shilpa. The kund and the entrance passageway face east in an aura of welcome to the tantalizing rays of the Sun and the entire structure floats on a plinth resembling a flowering lotus as an ablution to the Sun God. The design specs of the step are a stylized mirror image of the temple 'shikar', thus symbolically linking fire and water, dream and reality.

The main complex is divided into three parts, the entrance which is the '*Sabha Mantap*', '*Antaral*' the connecting passage and the '*Garbhagruha*', the sanctum sanctorum. The *Sabha Mantap* has a splendidly carved dome and two huge ornamental arches called Torans form a gateway. Inside the *Mantap* the inner half occupies the sanctum sanctorum and the front one the *mandap* or hall. Between the outer walls of the sanctum sanctorum and that of the temple is the *Antaral* or *Pradakshina Marg* (the circumambulatory passage). The exterior of the *Garbhagruha* has many carved images of the Sun-God, portrayed as wearing Irani style Tiara, Long shoes and Jeweled Belt. There are 12 different postures of Aditya, the Sun-God, along with eight *Dikpalas* who are the Guardians of Direction, guarding specific directions of space. The Surya Kund also known as Ramakund is a fine example of geometry and pattern art. It has 108 miniature shrines carved between the steps inside the tank. There are many terraces and steps leading to the water level.

The Sun Temple is a God given gift to our Motherland by God's own sculptors.

Ref: Gujarat Tourism

Divine will

Our lives are designed by decisions taken by us alone but on few occasions it may not be so. Most particularly if those decisions involve the intervention of the Divine; the lives appear more fruitful and purposeful. One such instance had happened with me and also with my friend. It sounds dramatic but it is a fact, let me elaborate.

Those were the days of struggle, the future still unclear, when I met this friend at a Spiritual Centre. Both of us had almost the same ideology and had the desire to succeed in our respective lives. Here the Divine play started unfolding. It is said 'Daivam maanusharupena' meaning the Almighty takes human form in order to help the people who realize their potential and discover themselves. His deeds are inexplicable. As I said, both of us would meet regularly, discuss, debate and we slowly developed a rapport among ourselves. We had a friend in common who would share his views as per our interests. See how the Divine act of the Lord enacted through this person who was our common friend.

Though he also would visit the centre, we hardly had any discussions. However, *Divine play* started unfolding through him. My friend and this person were also batch mates of a language course. My friend was an atheist then and would just attend the class and leave the premises. One day this gentleman asked my friend to accompany him to a nearby temple, which was opposite to this spiritual centre. My friend was reluctant to go but this man made my friend to visit the temple on the pretext of relishing sumptuous *Prasad* that was distributed there. My friend surrendered to the taste, of course *Divine Prasad* and was habituated to it in no time. This slowly brought a sea change in the attitude of my friend and he started visiting the temple situated at the Spiritual Centre and needless to say the precincts of that place unfolded the spiritual potential hidden in him. Eventually he was spiritually personified waiting to unleash his spiritual journey.

Coming to my experience with this person, like my friend's, my experience with this person was gradual but progressive. That life-changing day had dawned and he asked me "how is your practice



as a 'Lawyer'?" Till that day the professional ego that was driving me and made me shy to admit that I am not doing well on the expected lines in the profession vanished. I said candidly "I am professionally unemployed." He just smiled, did not utter a single word but asked me to come to his office. On the very next day I rushed to his office, only to surprise myself that I was offered a professional service. Though the remuneration was meager I grabbed the opportunity and started working tirelessly. His office recognized my services and entrusted more and more work. In a short period of time my work grew by leaps and bounds. I was flooded with offers from all other companies that were in the same business. Divine play did not stop there. His encouragement not only brought laurels and success in my career but an MNC has offered me a lucrative job that I accepted. It helped me realize my personal goals also.

My friend's spiritual quest made him renounce the worldly life and adopt monastic life, which he is content with. Me being worldly, I was not totally content, hoping the best is yet to happen. For both of us the turning point in our lives was through the same person. Our destinies may be different but we realized goals of our own interest. Is this not the Divine will that bloomed at the right time, changing our lives? I call it the "**Will of Divine**" because people noticed the change in us.

- **Koti Rajasekhar M.**

Coming Back Home



It was a warm November afternoon when we left the usual humdrum of Hyderabad and began our long 'road-trip' to the Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram. After about an hour of steady driving, the congested-coughing city roads soon gave way to deliciously empty highways, making the engine purr with pleasure. As the stereo batted out my favorite tracks, I hummed along merrily, without a care in the world. It was a day after Diwali, I was back in my hometown on vacation and there was nothing but a limitless horizon in front- an open invitation to some unknown paradise!

Soon, the steady line of trucks and carriers dwindled to a small tempo-rickshaw or two, overloaded with village-folk. A couple of sharp turns later, it was only bullock carts, cycles and old men marching with *lathis* in hand. I smiled to myself, reminded strongly of the Father of our Nation. There were vast expanses of square green fields, some lined with cotton flowerings dazzling brilliantly white in the afternoon light. Though the sun was blazing at its fiercest, the wind blew like a cool gulp of water from an earthen pot. I breathed in deep contentment. Time had begun to slow down, for some time.

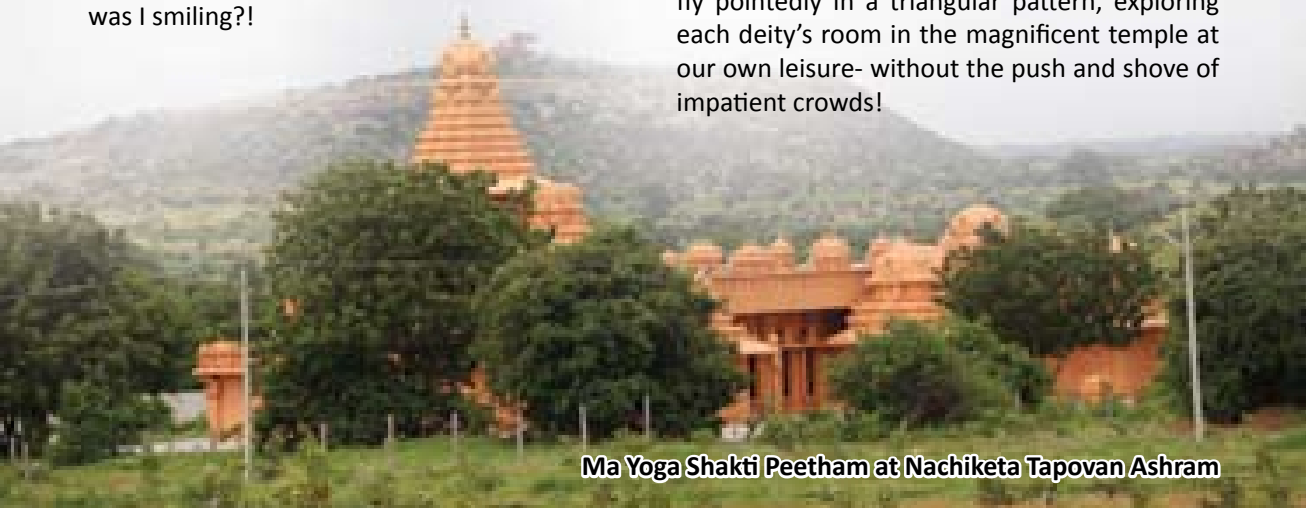
When we reached the gates of the Ashram, I had already left the outside world behind me and felt the strong vibes of 'happiness without reason' that those holy men talk about. Why was I smiling?!

I pushed the heavy iron-wrought gates with both hands and it creaked loudly as it swung open. It felt like an embrace with both arms open and I allowed myself another smile. We drove in past the saffron temple, the cozy, small grey-brick constructions here and there and took a turn again. There was an imposing 11-feet bronze statue of Swami Vivekananda, standing angularly with his arms crossed and head held high. Even in the distance, his gaze and awesome stature made me skip a heartbeat. This was the man who had taken the world by storm nearly a century ago with his bold message of truth and universal brotherhood. It was clear why. If a metal statue could evoke such awe, I wondered what the man in flesh and blood could inspire...

The car came to a gradual halt and we caught the figure of Swamiji sitting in the portico. His saffron robes fell gracefully about his shoulders as if an extension of his skin, his mischievous smile concealed deep in his black-grey beard. His eyes twinkled as he welcomed us with his characteristic boisterousness, "Come, come, come in!"

We were back home.

The rest of the day passed as if this was nothing out of the ordinary from our routine life- feeding the cow and her calf with roti-jaggery rolls, standing up on the terrace watching the birds fly pointedly in a triangular pattern, exploring each deity's room in the magnificent temple at our own leisure- without the push and shove of impatient crowds!



Ma Yoga Shakti Peetham at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram

Hunger eluded us and our appetite for ‘lunch’ didn’t return until it was time for sunset. We sat on the cold stone floor, broke chapattis and heard tales of how the desolate, snake-ridden piece of land had now transformed into this little slice of paradise- this Ashram so far away, nestled in its own corner of the world. To sweeten the tale, Mataji unlocked two boxes of her choicest sweets, then sat and watched with motherly affection as we gobbled them down with incomprehensible ‘Mmmms’ and ‘Aaahs’.

The sun had set and the glorious day was signaling an end. It was a long way back to the city and we piled up into the car quickly, wary of the wintry chill that the open expanse was swooping down on us with. As the iron gates shut with a metallic clang, we were outside again. This time there was nothing but pitch-black darkness for miles ahead. We sat in the car and drove out with a quiet sense of deep contentment.

We had spent many hours of this eventful day in conversation, arguments and debates with Swamiji and Mataji- on everything spiritual and materialistic, some religious, some practicalities and some pure mythologies! And it was coming back to me in a rush. I had the strange feeling of leaving one home behind, and journeying to another.

It was then that one of Swamiji’s remarks came back to me- “There are two worlds,” he had said, looking at me squarely in the eyes, with the backdrop of an orange-purple sunset behind him. “One the outside world and one the inside. But the beauty of it all is, you don’t have to go anywhere or chase anything or prove to anyone in the inside world. It’s all right here, the answers and the questions. Whenever you start feeling that the outside world is getting to you, all you have to do is close your eyes. And then you are there- exactly where you are meant to be. It’s all within you- the calm, the bliss, the silence.”

I let myself smile once again as I squinted at the headlights illuminating the black tar of the road ahead. It was a long drive back home. But



**Swami Vivekananda's Statue
at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram**

the paradox of ‘home’ dawned on me- I wasn’t going away from home or coming back home. Home was wherever I wanted it to be. Right here, right now.

-A devotee

(Inspired by my first ever visit to the Ashram.
You really must go there!

There’s a magical story waiting there for you to
experience too)

Experiencing Silence and Encountering Lord Krishna

Sri Aurobindo who always liked to work from behind the scene, had been pushed into the forefront of the Freedom Movement. People had awakened to the need of Swaraj- complete independence – and were willing to give their lives to attain it.

In the midst of this turmoil Sri Aurobindo met in Baroda a Maharashtrian Yogi called Vishnu Bhaskar Lele. Lele asked Sri Aurobindo to remain in seclusion for three days. He told him to sit in meditation and not to think. He would find that thoughts were not his own but came from outside and should be thrown away. Sri Aurobindo describes his experience:

“I did not think either of questioning the truth or the possibility, I simply sat down and did it. In a moment my mind became silent as a windless air on a high mountain summit and then I saw one thought and then another coming in a concrete way from outside; I flung them away before they could enter and take hold of the brain and in three days I was free.”

In three days Sri Aurobindo had achieved the silent mind which deepened into an experience of the Brahman Consciousness. He says: “When I was in Bombay, from the balcony of a friend’s house I saw the whole busy movement of Bombay as a picture in a cinema show, all unreal and shadowy.”

But there was a problem. Sri Aurobindo had to address a national meeting after three days. His mind had become calm and blank. How was he to give a speech? Lele told him that it did not matter. He had only to bow down to the audience as Narayana and everything would be all right. As usual Sri Aurobindo followed the directions without questioning and he found that something else spoke through him. And thus it was for the rest of his life. Everything was done from the silent Brahman Consciousness, writing, speaking or the most intense political activity.



This was another great turning point in Sri Aurobindo’s life. He began listening to a Voice within and Lele told him to follow it and that he now had no need for any further instructions or an external Guru.

But the Divine had a very different setting for the next major spiritual experience of Sri Aurobindo – the prison-cell of Alipore in Calcutta. Sri Aurobindo was found not guilty and acquitted. But this period of one year in jail was a very important period in Sri Aurobindo’s life. It was a period of intense sadhana when he had the experience of Krishna as the Immanent Divine. This is how he described the experience:

“I looked at the jail and it was no longer by its high walls that I was imprisoned; no, it was Vasudeva who surrounded me. I walked under the branches of the tree in front of my cell but it was not the tree, I knew it was Vasudeva, it was Sri Krishna whom I saw standing there and holding over me His shade. I looked at the bars of my cell, and again I saw Vasudeva. It was Narayana who was guarding and standing sentry over me. Or I lay on the coarse blankets that were given to me for a couch and felt the arms of Sri Krishna around me, the arms of my Friend and Lover.”

Sri Aurobindo saw the same smiling Krishna in the magistrate and even the prosecuting counsel. Where was there any place for fear? When Sri Aurobindo had entered the prison he had said that he was not sure that there was a God at all. But now all was changed. As he said afterwards:

“That one year in prison was like living in an ashram or hermitage. The only result of the wrath of the British Government was that I had found God.”

An extract from: ‘Sri Aurobindo and the Mother’ a brief introduction by Vijay.



MAUNI AMAVAS

(A day allotted for Silence)

Mauni Amavas or Mauni Amavasya is the 'No Moon Day' in the month of Magh (January-February) as per the traditional Hindu calendar. In 2013, the date of Mauni Amavas is on February 10. The word 'mauna' or 'mauni' means silence and several Hindus observe complete silence on that day. It is also an important bathing date during the Magh Snan Kumbh Mela.

According to Hinduism, 'Mauna' (silence) is an essential part of spiritual discipline. Derived from the word Muni, a Sanyasi or Saint who practices silence, mauna ideally symbolizes a state of oneness with the Self. Mauna has also been described by Adi Shankaracharya as one of the three essential attributes of a Sanyasi.

In modern day, it was Ramana Maharshi who popularized silence as a medium of spiritual instruction. For Him, silence was a state beyond speech and thought – it is living without the ego sense.

Mauni Amavas is a day of spiritual sadhana – a day to make an attempt to getting into the habit of calming the restless mind. On this day, a large number of Hindu devotees assemble at Sangam (confluence of Rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswathi) in Prayag (Allahabad) and meditate

the whole day after taking a holy dip in the sacred river. Magh Snan is considered to be a purifying act. Some camp near the River Ganges and bathe daily in the sacred river throughout the month of Magh and end it on the day of Mauni Amavasya after worshipping Lord Vishnu and circumambulating the peepal tree which is mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita as holy.

In his book 'Seven Spiritual Laws of Success' Deepak Chopra writes... "practicing silence means making a commitment to take a certain amount of time to simply 'Be' and periodically withdrawing from the activity of speech... When you go into the experience of silence, initially your internal dialogue may become even more turbulent, but as you stay with the experience, the internal dialogue begins to quieten. And soon the silence becomes profound... In this silence, even the faintest intention will ripple across the underlying ground of universal consciousness, which connects everything with everything else. But, if you do not experience stillness in consciousness, if your mind is like a turbulent ocean, you could throw the empire state Building into it and you wouldn't notice a thing."

This signifies the essence of silence!

Ref: Hindu Blog





A couple offering prayers during the Mela



A Sadhu after the holy dip



Ladies offering Arghya

Maghamela

The *Maghamela* is primarily a ritual bathing festival observed every year from the month of *Magh* to *Phalgun* for 45 days. The annual *Maghamela* converts itself into the *Ardh Kumbh* every six years and *Poorna Kumbh* every 12th year. Incidentally the year 2013 hosts the famous *Poorna Kumbh Mela*. *Magh Snan* at Prayag Sangam in Allahabad has a great significance which attracts millions of devotees to have a holy dip at Triveni Sangamam -the confluence of holy rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswathi. The pilgrims take dips hoping to wash away sins or to fulfill their worldly or spiritual desires. Triveni Sangamam is considered to be the holiest place in the three worlds – heaven, earth and nether world.

It is a *Tirth* par excellence, a centre of faith and devotion and provides a traditional focus for a variety of sects and mendicant orders. Thousands of pilgrims, belonging to all strata of society and speaking different languages and ascetics of various religions of the country flock to Prayag and dwell in tents within the sacred precincts. People perform purificatory rites by taking a dip in the *Sangamam* and famous pundits of the land address huge gatherings and share their spiritual knowledge not only with ascetics and mendicants but also laymen.

Source: Kalpavasi



An offering filled with devotion



Devotees through the Triveni Sangamam at Prayag during the Maghamela



Sadhus lineup for prasad



Devotees enjoying the sunset

The safest place for investment



We all would like to keep our money safe and secure and invest it very wisely. After all money is part of today's livelihood. But what is the safest place to invest our money?

Many of us would think of options like Banks, Mutual Funds, Real Estate, Stock Market, Gold, etc. If you have invested your money in any of these options and feel that your money is safe, then you should think once again!

What if your bank becomes bankrupt, when recession hits the market proceedings? All our investments would see a downfall. Then how to make the best use of our money?

It is my strong belief that there is always a better and safer place for investment and that is CHARITY. It is unbelievable, but yes, this is the Universal truth! We usually forget the fact that apart from Banks, Mutual Funds and Stocks, charity is also one such place where we can invest our money.

Yes, this is true! When you lend a helping hand to those who are in need, then your money will gain its real value and your investments would start from that very moment. Your help need not be in the form of money. Anything that is in excess for us can be given out for a good cause. It can be food, clothes, education, serving the elders, etc. When you invest your help for others then your investments get doubled and tripled, depending on how whole heartedly and selflessly you render your service.

There are various benefits that you gain when you invest in noble deeds like charity. Banks might just give you interest for your money till you die. But when you invest in charity, your wealth not only increases at enormous rates during your life span but its value is also counted after your death. You will earn a great status and respect in the society and will be remembered even after your death. Doing charity or volunteering could lead to working for a new organisation, a new career - suddenly the career you have enjoyed in the private sector up

to now seems less meaningful than the worthy aspiration of helping others. You could find a new group of friends who care about the same things as you do. The benefits obtained by doing charity cannot be equated to any kind of social service or by performing any of the greatest rituals on earth. This is because service to nature or human being is service to God Himself.

Parents teach their kids to invest their money very wisely. However they ignore to teach them how to donate and do charitable deeds. By teaching to do noble deeds, children automatically understand the importance of rich morals, humanity and good relationships that build a strong nation. Bill Gates and Warren Buffet are among the world's millionaires. They donate most of their wealth to charities because they know its importance. Their pockets never emptied by donating, rather they continue to be the richest men even today. They became role models for many millionaires across the world. You need not be rich to perform charitable deeds.



All that you need is a will and a kind heart that is sensitive to others' problems. A person who has good character and thoughts is the richest person on the earth. People irrespective of their age, gender, class and creed, who work for a noble cause, are the real heroes and heroines gifted to mankind.



Shanthi Deepti

Senior Software Engineer in NTT DATA



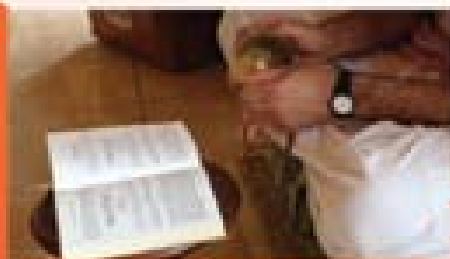
WORLDLY DUTIES AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

We all busy ourselves with various kinds of activities we usually call duty and very often we find that these activities bring only restlessness and misery. If this is true, there must be something wrong with our ordinary conception of duty. We do karma, work, but ordinarily we do not know how to turn it into Yoga, a spiritual technique, a means for Divine realization.

According to the Hindu scriptures the householder has five kinds of duties to discharge.

These are:

1. Worship of Gods
2. Study of the scriptures
3. Helping fellow beings
4. Offering oblation to ancestors
5. Protecting animals



These duties are called *pancamaha-yajna* (the great five-fold sacrifice). And all these duties are to be performed not as drudgery but in a spirit of service, in a spirit of worship. When one discharges one's duties in this spirit they do not lead to bondage. On the contrary, they help one in spiritual life. Vedanta aims at integrating duty, service and worship. If an activity cannot be linked with our spiritual life it is not to be called duty.

We may do our work out of attachment to people and objects, out of a sense of duty or out of devotion to the supreme Spirit dwelling in all beings. Very often the first two get mixed up. Most people are unable to separate the true sense of duty from attachment. Duty then becomes a justification for our attachments. The Buddhas, Christs, Ramakrishnas, etc. have no duty at all. In their case there is only loving service and no duty. There is no constraint in their activities. Neither is there any wish for gain, nor any for the fruits of their work.

True duty consists in the control of the senses, in selflessness, in loving service, in the purification and the right concentration of the mind and in giving all our faculties a higher turn making them fit instruments for the Divine. The purer we become, the better can we do our work as a form of loving service to the Divine in all, but we should see that there is no attachment in it.

Source: Meditation and Spiritual Life

By Swami Yatiswarananda

Plastic Surgery in India 2,600 years ago

Shushruta, known as the Father of surgery, practiced his skill as early as 600 BCE. He used cheek skin to perform plastic surgery to restore or reshape the nose, ears and lips with incredible results. Modern plastic surgery acknowledges his contributions by calling this method of Rhinoplasty as the Indian method.

125 Types of Surgical Instruments

"The Hindus (Indians) were so advanced in surgery that their instruments could cut a hair longitudinally."

- Mrs. Plunket

Shushruta worked with 125 kinds of surgical instruments, which include staples, lancets, needles, catheters, rectal speculums, mostly conceived from jaws of animals and birds to obtain the necessary grips. He also defined various methods of stitching: the use of horses' hair, fine threads, fibre of bark, goats' guts and ants' heads.

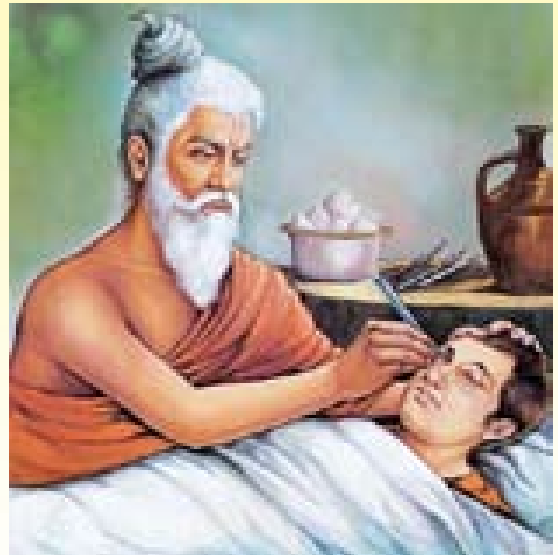
300 Different Operations

Shushruta describes the details of more than 300 operations and 42 surgical processes. In his compendium 'Shushruta Samhita' he minutely classifies surgery into 8 types:

Aharyam - extracting solid bodies

Bhedyam - excision

Chhedyam - incision



Aeshyam - probing

Lekhyam - scarification

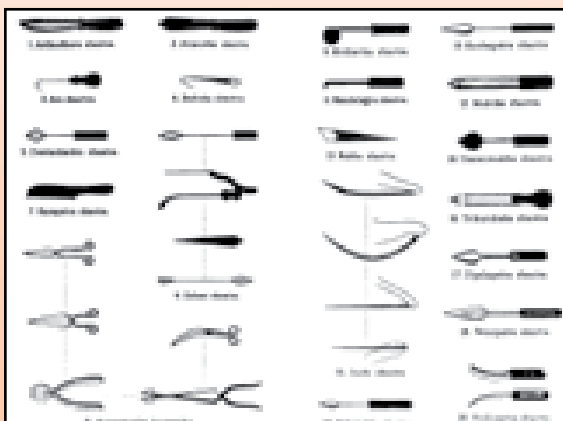
Vedhyam - puncturing

Visravayam - evacuating fluids

Sivyam - suturing

The ancient Indians were also the first to perform amputation, caesarean surgery and cranial surgery. For Rhinoplasty, Shushruta first measured the damaged nose, skillfully sliced off skin from the cheek and sutured the nose. He then put medicated cotton pads to heal the wounds.

*Ref: Understanding Hinduism from BAPS
Shri Swami Narayan Mandir.*



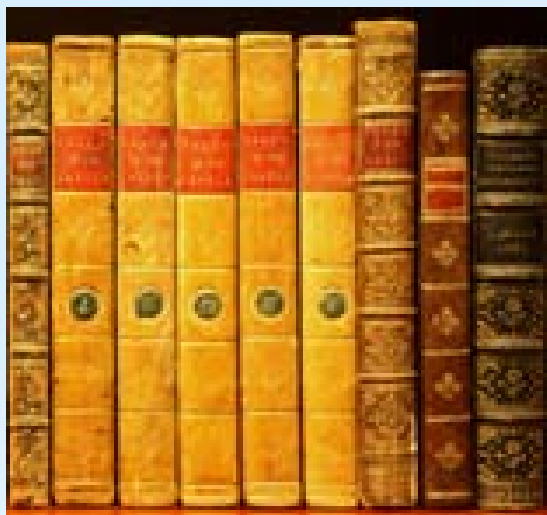


Importance of BOOKS IN ONE'S LIFE



A friend of mine asked me how my vocabulary was (and is) so good. I simply answered that I read books. And it is true because, by reading books, I knew so many more complex words than my friends while I was still young. Books play a major role in our life. Be it fictional, non-fictional, science fiction, biographies and autobiographies or anything, books teach something or the other. In today's time there is such a variety of books that give you something that you hate, in a way that you will love. For example, there might be some of you, who hate history or despise history, of any kind. But now, there are books which give you history in such an amazing way that you feel like reading the same thing again and again.

In my case, I always felt that the history that they taught at school was boring. They used to teach us about the ancient civilizations of India in a very boring way. But recently I read a book about how Shiva became a God (don't even ask) and it was written so beautifully (about the Indus Valley civilization etc.) that everything that the author put in words, I could easily imagine, and the imagination was so beautiful that I was awestruck.



What I am saying is that, what school books couldn't put forward efficiently, was done so well by some random person who put his passion on paper. This was in my case, but everybody is different. Someone might be interested in something else, while another person might not like the same. Another example could be as follows. We don't get that much spiritual guidance at our regular schools, so some people, even some of you, must have made it a point to read some books on spirituality. I don't know much about spirituality, though I am very close to our Swamiji. But I can tell you this much; small stories from the lives of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna are very inspiring. They are not only spiritual, but they also teach us essential values and lessons for our life. So books are nothing but our best friends (If you don't count in God, music, *sadhana* etc.) So those of you who are sitting at home watching TV, playing video games or rutting your exam portions, stop, and first get out there, find a book store, buy a good book and I guarantee you that you will not be sorry you read my article.

And by the way, that friend whom I mentioned in the beginning was my School Librarian's son.

- Rohan N.

8th Class,

GT Aloha Vidya Mandir, Chennai

Come to think of it...

**jADyaM dhiyo harati sinjcati vAci satyaM
mAnnonatiM dishati pApamapakaroti I
chethaH prasAdayati dikShu tanoti klrtiM
satsaNgatiH kathaya kiM na karoti puMsAm II**

- from Neeti Shatakam by Bharthruhari

The friendship of the learned and noble men will help you in the following ways: It will kill the sluggishness of the mind. It will make you honest. It will lead you on a path that will enhance your honour. It will reduce your sins. It will awaken your conscience. It will make your fame spread in all directions. Tell me who shall not be benefitted by the friendship of noble men.

Effect of environment has long been established as a factor affecting the growth, behavior and efficiency of a human being. When non-human conditions like good light, fresh air and greenery are known to contribute positively to our wellbeing, can we question the role of the company of wise? Every faith and every teacher has emphasized the importance of Satsang (association with wise). Although the role played by Satsang is crucial in developmental years of human being, it continues to be influential throughout one's life. *¹Throughout life human mind remains a highly malleable entity continually remolding itself in response to its social interactions and therefore the people we look upon as teachers, advisors and friends can be the most powerful influences. Such people silently speak to the hidden potentials of our own being, potentials that will either unfold or wither under their influence.*

Though the term Satsang is largely applied to the religious and spiritual associations, it extends to other mundane components and events of daily life. *²Our regular and repeated social contacts implicate us in a constant process of psychological osmosis that offers precious opportunities for growth and transformation. Like living cells engaged in a chemical dialogue with their colleagues, our minds transmit and receive a steady barrage of messages and suggestions that may work profound changes even at levels below the threshold of awareness.*

Sri Sathya Sai Baba says, "As is your company, so shall you become." "Make friends with those who are good and true, not with those who are bad and false", says the Buddha. A good friend is not merely one who shares interests with you but is one in whom you can seek companionship, guidance and instruction. A true friend is one who not only empathizes and exhorts but if necessary, criticizes and admonishes too, to help you grow.

At every step and turn of our existence, we make choices. Our present is the fruit of choices we made in past and so will our future be the effect of options we exercise in the present. The Universe offers us all the freedom and it is up to us to make the right choice.

1&2 Association with the Wise by Bhikkhu Bodhi

- Annapurna R.



I sometimes think, “Why all these volunteers, Swamiji, Mataji, Vasuma, Jyothi Akkha and all other people who work for us spend their valuable time for us and help us not only in our studies but also in various other ways? What is the benefit to them in doing all these things for us?” Since their hearts are full of kindness, they are all thinking about the society and the poor people who are illiterate. In this way, they get some happiness in doing this work. So, I was inspired by all these people and am determined that I should also help others and get the same happiness that they work for.

So, I started thinking how I could help others. Just then I got the chance to help in the Nachiketa Tapovan’s weekly Sunday Dispensary, through handing medicines to the people. Now, I am also thinking that I should start a Balavahini in the streets for the children who are not able to study. This idea was given by Mataji to us, one day. From that day onwards I’ve been thinking about how to start but I don’t have that much courage as our Swamiji. So, if some other members help me to start this work, I will be very happy than anyone else. I am eagerly waiting to start this work. I really thank all our institute members for their kindness and generosity towards us and I hope that we all also would think about the society and show kindness to others instead of always thinking only about our family members and our relatives.

- Nagamani

Class IX,

Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir



Happiness!!!

I am the creator of my own “happiness”

Anyone else in the world can neither create nor destroy my happiness...

MY HAPPINESS IS ALL MINE!

I can rather share it, as I am not selfish

But my happiness is independent

NOTHING can destroy my happiness

NO PERSON can steal my happiness

NO SUBJECT can kill my happiness

NO FAILURE can collapse my happiness

NO WORDS can conquer my happiness

MY HAPPINESS IS ALWAYS MINE!

NO INSULT can overtake my happiness

NO TEAR can wipe my happiness

My happiness is for myself!

“I am the happiest person on the earth”!

No one can change it, no one can ever dare to change it because my

Happiness never depends on anyone but “MYSELF”

- SAI HARATHI

Inter 1st year



इकलइकगो टिड्ढठ = थोरुपु ठिपर

Krupalu Ogeti, Samskrita Bharati, Hyderabad
email:okrupalu@samskritam.net

Past Tense

Answers to last month's 'Questions galore'

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| १. सः जलं पीतवान्। | ८. भवती शाटिकां न इष्टवती? |
| २. अहं लेखनीं विस्मृतवान्। | ९. अहं रामायणं ज्ञातवान्। |
| ३. भवान् उत्थितवान्। | १०. मम पिता धनं दत्तवान्। |
| ४. सा गृहं गतवती। | ११. अहं पञ्चवादाने उत्थितवती। |
| ५. अध्यापकः उक्तवान्। | १२. भवान् कदा उत्थितवान्? |
| ६. अद्य सा न आगतवती। | १३. कर्मकरः चोरं दृष्टवान्। |
| ७. भवती किमर्थं गृहकार्यं विस्मृतवती? | १४. मम पुत्री क्षीरं न पीतवती। |

Convert the following from present tense to past tense:

१. सः गृहं गच्छति।
२. अहं (पुरुषः) कादम्बरीं जानामि।
३. बालकः क्रीडाङ्गणे क्रीडति।
४. बालिका अधः पतति।
५. कालिदासः अभिज्ञानशाकुन्तलं लिखति।
६. स्वामी कर्मकरं प्रेषयति।
७. अध्यापकः श्लोकं वदति।
८. भवती किमर्थम् एवं करोति?
९. एकादश्यां सा किमपि न खादति।
१०. अहं (पुरुषः) प्रातः पञ्चवादाने उत्तिष्ठामि।
११. सः मम वचनं न शृणोति।
१२. भगिनी पुस्तकं ददाति।
१३. अहं (महिला) चलनचित्रं पश्यामि।
१४. भवान् किं पिबति?

Answers for the above:

१. सः गृहं गतवान्।
२. अहं कादम्बरीं ज्ञातवान्।
३. बालकः क्रीडाङ्गणे क्रीडितवान्।
४. बालिका अधः पतितवती।
५. कालिदासः अभिज्ञानशाकुन्तलं लिखितवान्।
६. स्वामी कर्मकरं प्रेषितवान्।

७. अध्यापकः श्लोकम् उक्तवान्।
८. भवती किमर्थम् एवं कृतवती।
९. एकादश्यां सा किमपि न खादितवती।
१०. अहं प्रातः पञ्चवादाने उत्थितवान्।
११. सः मम वचनं न श्रुतवान्।
१२. भगिनी पुस्तकं दत्तवती।
१३. अहं चलनचित्रं दृष्टवती।
१४. भवान् किं पीतवान्?

Let us turn our attention to plural.

बालः पाठशालां गतवान्गतवान्। – बालाः पाठशालां गतवन्तः।

भवान् अत्र आगतवान्। – भवन्तः अत्र आगतवन्तः।

अहं विषयं विस्मृतवान्। – वयं विषयं विस्मृतवन्तः।

शिक्षिका बालकं दृष्टवती। – शिक्षिकाः बालकं दृष्टवत्यः।

भवती शाटिकां धृतवती। – भवत्यः शाटिकां धृतवत्यः।

अहं महाभारतं श्रुतवती। – वयं महाभारतं श्रुतवत्यः।

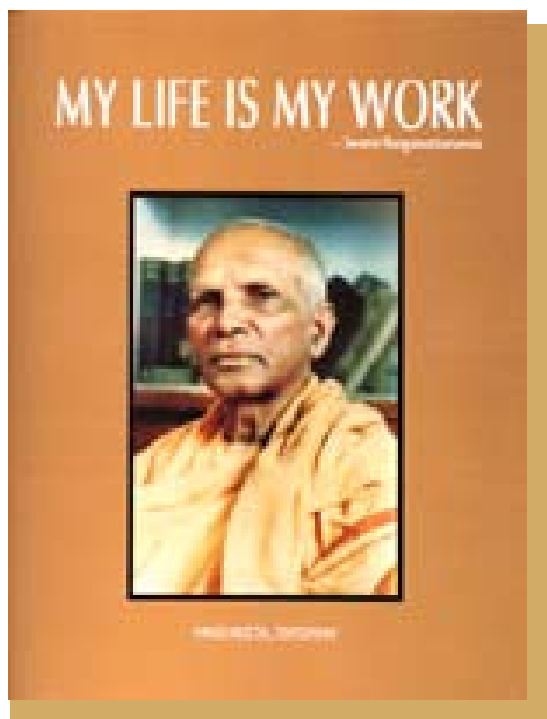
Recollect that plural of भवान् is भवन्तः, and so is भवती and भवत्यः. The past tense forms follow similar pattern. As an exercise, convert the above sentences in past tense in singular number into plural forms.

DOES GOD TEST OUR FAITH?

A devoted soul asked the Lord in his prayer, “Dearest God, why is it that you test my faith until the very last moment...” The Lord replied, “Sweet child... it is I alone who gives you faith... so I know it is true... It is not that I test... I only see how much of that faith are you able to use without interrupting and asking for a gift in return. And when I see that you are about to ask of me something of value for your effort I immediately come and give it to you before you can ask... so your faith can win and that victory of your waiting, not asking and not giving will give you the strength of a million elephants. That is why... do not say I test your faith... I only give you the strength to utilize it each time ...a little more!

Source: Sai Darshan by Seema M. Dewan

Our Publications



“My life is my work” is a pictorial biography that leads the reader through different dimensions of Srimat Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj’s life providing a glimpse of his oneness with the nature through his teachings. First edition of this book was released on 1st March 2006 followed by the second edition on 11th July 2006 and 3rd edition on 22nd November 2007. The books are available at Nachiketa Tapovan at Kavuri Hills and Ramakrishna Math, Hyderabad for a subsidized price of Rs. 250/-.

SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Self-improvement comes mainly from trying to help others. – Sir John Templeton

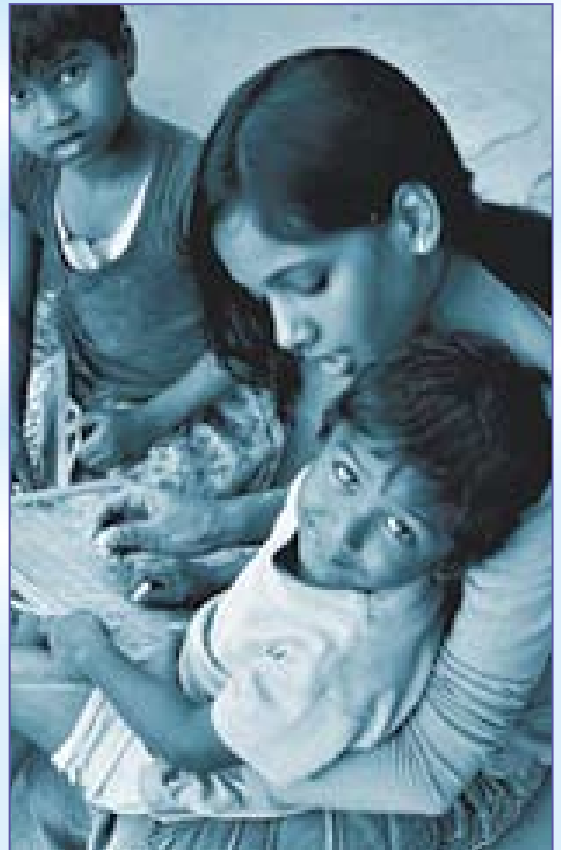
Social psychologists have learned a great deal about happiness in recent years, and one of the surprises is that the things we believe will make us happy really don't.

People who win the lottery, for example, enjoy an initial spike of happiness but then adjust and a year later are not significantly happier than those we who haven't won. Our happiness levels seem to be mostly innate and not markedly affected by what happens to us, good or bad. People in end-stage dialysis, for example, turn out to be no different in their moods through the day than a comparison group of healthy people. And while those suffer a crippling disability are initially deeply unhappy, they adjust quickly. One study found that just a month after becoming paraplegics, accident victims were in fairly good moods a majority of the time. Other research suggests that within two years of suffering a moderate disability, life satisfaction fully recovers to the pre disability level. So Jonathan Haidt a psychologist at the University of Virginia who has studied happiness advises that if you are hit by a truck and end up a paraplegic, or if you win a lottery, remember that a year from now, it won't make much difference to your happiness level.

Yet Professor Haidt and others advise that there are a few factors that can affect our happiness levels in a sustained way. One is "a connection to something larger" — a greater cause or a humanitarian purpose. Traditionally,

this was what brought people to churches or other religious institutions, but any movement or humanitarian initiative can provide a sense of purpose that boosts one's happiness quotient. We are neurologically constructed so that we gain huge personal dividends from altruism.

An excerpt from ***Half the Sky:***
Turning Oppression into Opportunity for
Women Worldwide



Investment in girls' education may well be the highest-return investment available in the developing world. The question is not whether countries can afford this investment, but whether countries can afford not to educate more girls.

– Lawrence Summers

Nachiketanjali's **LIBRARY SCHEME**

***Nachiketanjali** is a monthly magazine, published by Nachiketa Tapovan, a non-profit organization. The content of the magazine is a good balance of various aspects that could contribute to well-rounded development of individuals including youth and children. The pages come alive with articles on yoga, Indian culture, inspiration, youth expressions and insights on practical spirituality.*

Nachiketanjali's Library Scheme aims to reach youth especially in schools, colleges, universities and other centers of learning.

Sponsoring one library costs only Rs 450 which will enable subscription for 5 years! Sponsors can choose the libraries or Nachiketanjali can select the libraries on the sponsor's behalf. The names of the Sponsors and the libraries sponsored by them would be published in Nachiketanjali magazine.

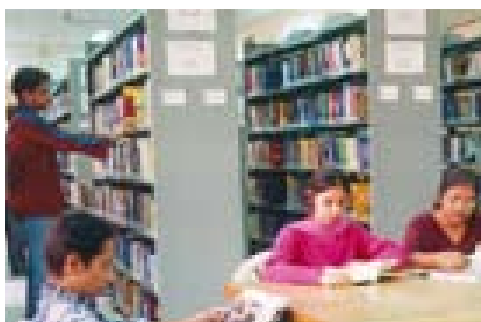
We await your positive response which will significantly contribute to this noble cause and will also help 230 needy and underprivileged children who are obtaining character-building education, totally free of cost at Nachiketa Tapovan!

Please send your sponsorship through cash, check or DD (in favor of 'Nachiketa Tapovan') to:

Nachiketa Tapovan
Plot No. 70, Phase I,
Kavuri Hills, Madhapur,
Guttalabegumpet, Serilingampally,
R.R.District. A.P. 500 081

Bank details for NEFT:

State Bank of India,
Jubilee Hills Branch, Hyderabad.
IFS Code - SBI N0011745,
Acct No. 30985314026. Please confirm
wire transfer through email to
nachiketanjali1@gmail.com



"The gift of spirituality and spiritual knowledge is the highest. The truths of the Upanishads are before you. Take them up, live up to them, and the salvation of India will be at hand."

– Swami Vivekananda



Cancer Awareness Camp

A Cancer Awareness Camp was held by Dr. Shivananda and Dr. Rohini at Uday Memorial School, Jadcherla on 1st December 2012 from 10.30 am. Mataji enlightened the gathering with a spiritual talk.



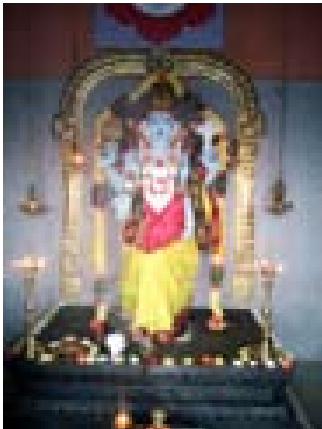
Swamiji introducing Dr. Rohini and Dr. Shiva Reddy to the students



Swamiji talking to the students

Vaikunta Ekadasi

Vaikunta Ekadasi was celebrated at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram on 23rd December 2012. Abhishekam, Puja and Homam were performed to Lord Kaivalya Venkateshwara in Ma Yoga Shakti Peetham.



Kaivalya Venkateshwara at Ma Yoga Shakti Peetham



Mataji performing *Homam* while devotees offer *Samidhas*

Sarada Ma Birthday Celebrations



Sarada Ma's birthday was celebrated according to *Thithi* at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram on 4th January, 2013. Tiny tots from LKG & UKG of Veda Vyasa Vidya Mandir sang bhajans at the Ashram and also in the neighbouring Gourigadda Tanda, where a Health Camp was organized. Dr. Rohini, Dr. Shiva Reddy, Dr. Ramesh and Dr. Chandrayudu examined 125 patients for General Checkup, Skin and ENT problems. Free medicines were distributed to the patients. Mataji advised the patients on having proper nutrition and maintaining personal hygiene.



Swamiji, Mataji and children offer prayers to Sarada Ma before the Health Camp



Patients from Gourigadda Tanda get their names registered

Sanjeevani (Free dispensary)

Around 180 patients were given free treatment and medicines at Nachiketa Tapovan's free dispensary, SANJEEVANI. We thank Dr Amulya, Dr Surekha, Dr Sudhakar Reddy and Dr Ranga Rao for rendering their valuable services in treating these patients. We also thank our volunteers who have helped with their voluntary services in serving the patients.



Young volunteers of Tapovan giving medicines

Eye Camp

An Eye Camp was held on 6th January 2013 at Nachiketa Tapovan. Dr. Atul Gupta, Dr. Gangadhar, Dr. M. Sagar, Dr. Ajay Kumar, and Dr. Thirupathi from Sarojini Devi Eye Hospital examined about 90 patients for eye problems and prescribed the required treatment. We thank the doctors and our young volunteers for making the camp successful.



Dr. Ajay Kumar and Dr. Sagar examining the patients



Volunteers of Tapovan enrolling the patients

Events & Celebrations

On

2nd December an Exhibition cum Sale was organized at Sloka School, Jubilee Hills. Arts and Crafts made by Nachiketa Tapovan's Vidya Mandir children were put on display and there was a good response.



Smt. B. Naganath talking to the students

On 11th December a workshop was conducted by Asa Banu Japan Centre at Nachiketa Tapovan. There was a show on Martial Arts performed by Dr S M Siddiq Mahmoodi and his team. Origamist Sri Govind Gopal Kulkarni explained to the Vidya Mandir students the paper art Origami. We are extremely thankful to Mrs. B. Naganath, Director of Asa Bhanu Japan Centre for organizing the event.



Paper Art by Vidya Mandir Students

A workshop was held by SOS Children's village at AP Forest Department, Kompally on 4th December 2012. Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri addressed the gathering and gave a talk on "Emotional well-being of Mothers."

On 12th December 2012, a Satsang and Sneha Milan was organized at Vinaya, residence of Sri P Suryanarayana Reddy and Smt P Vasundhara. Swami Nachiketananda Puri and Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri enlightened the gathering with their spiritual talk. We thank the Volunteers, friends and well wishers for gracing the occasion.



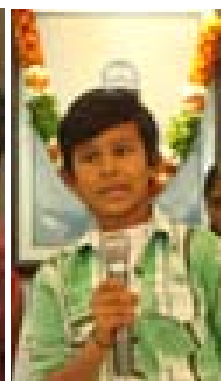
Mataji addressing the gathering as Swamiji looks on

We thank our volunteer Mrs. Radhika Bansal for sponsoring a trip to Biscuit Factory at Kothur for 3rd and 4th grade students on 15th December 2012.

Swami

Ranganathananda's Birthday was celebrated at Tapovan on 15th December. Smt. P. Vasundhara gave a talk on Simple living & High thinking which were the ideals of Swami Ranganathananda. Prasad was served.

On 22nd December Sharada Ma's birthday was celebrated at Tapovan. Vidya Mandir students presented skits, dances and read out teachings of the Holy Mother.



Performances of Vidya Mandir Students



Smt. Vasundhara enlightening the students on Sharada Ma

Paramahansa

Swami Shivananda Puri held a Meditation session for spiritual aspirants at Mrs Yash Sultania's residence on 26th December 2012.



Swamiji and Mataji engrossed in listening to blissful music

Swami Nachiketananda Puri and Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri attended a satsang at Sri Ashok Vir's Residence on 27th December 2012. Rama-nama sankirtan was beautifully sung by Smt. Sudha Ma and other devotees followed by spiritual talks by Swamiji and Mataji.



A Crafts sale was held at TCS, Wave Rock building at Gacchibowli on 27th December. Crafts made by Vidya Mandir children were put on display and we appreciate the good response.

On

29th December there was another crafts sale at Orchid International School at Kavuri Hills. We thank the School management for providing us a free stall during their Kids Carnival and encouraging our sales.



Turn around their future!

For ₹ 1 Lakh

Your donation will last a lifetime

Appeal for Sponsor-a-Child Corpus Fund

Nachiketa Tapovan runs a free Vidya Mandir for 230 children from poor families. They receive all-round, holistic academic education in English medium (LKG to 10th std.), including **arts, crafts, spiritual and culture lessons.**

Sponsoring a child is a great opportunity to help protect a child in need whilst seeing in return the real effect that your support has. Make a difference in a child's life- the chance to form a lasting, meaningful relationship with a child. All your kindness will add up to a bright future.

- ✓ *Nachiketa Tapovan is working hard to build a CORPUS fund to meet the ongoing expenses and expansion needs at a consistent pace. Donating to a Corpus Fund is a great way to sustain our efforts.*
- ✓ *Interest accruing from the investment made out of the Corpus donations, is only used without touching the principal itself. This way your DONATION remains forever, strengthening the cause and the organization.*
- ✓ *Being a charitable institution, we earn an interest of 9.25% annually from a Govt Bank. The annual interest on 1 Lakh will fully support one child's education for one year.*
- ✓ *Your donation will come a long way by meeting our expenses that include Teacher's Salaries, Uniforms, Educational material, Building Maintenance and Housekeeping, Salaries for support and administration staff, Field trips and Excursions, Celebrations and Extra Curricular activities.*
- ✓ *At present, we only have 25 corpus sponsorships, help us reach all of our 230 children!*
- ✓ *Bring hope and light into their lives – as a group or individual or in the name of a loved one.*
- ✓ *Donors receive annual report card and are welcome to interact with our children.*
- ✓ **We express our thanks to Corpus Donors by permanently inscribing their names on our recognition board in the school.**



Students of Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir

HOW YOU CAN HELP

*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 230 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.

Donations towards operation costs

Sponsor a Teacher (Dance & Music)	₹ 5000/Month
Vidya Daanam (Education)	₹ 5700/year/child
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 4700/day
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 700/day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	₹ 800/2 pairs
Stationery Supplies (Copier Paper)	₹ 5000/term
Medicines (For needy people)	₹ 5000/month
Sponsor a Festival in temple	₹ 3000

*Corpus Fund Options

Sponsor a child	₹ 1 Lakh
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 50,000/-
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 10,000/-

* With the accrued annual interest the following will be achieved every year, respectively.

- One child's education annually.
- Mid-day Meals for the whole school for one day annually.
- Snacks for the whole school for one day annually.

Donations within India- Details

Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of "Nachiketa Tapovan". The donations in India are exempt under the U/s 80G of IT Act, 1961. PAN No. AAATN2406K

Donations can be also directed through bank account as below

Bank Name	: Bank of Baroda
Branch Name	: Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad
A/c Name	: Nachiketa Tapovan
A/c No	: 18090100004093
IFSC Code	: BARBOJUBILE

(Note: IFSC code contains the number "zero" not letter "O")

Overseas Donations- Details

Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of "Nachiketa Tapovan". Nachiketa Tapovan has permission to receive donations from abroad under FCRA act

Bank Information

Bank Name	: State Bank of India
Branch Name & Code	: Kavuri Hills-12655
A/c Name	: Nachiketa Tapovan
A/c No	: 30953215793
IFS Code	: SBIN0012655
SWIFT Code	: SBININBB214

(Note: IFS code contains the number "zeros" not letters "O")

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

WITHIN INDIA

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

OVERSEAS

1 year	₹ 1500 (only in INR)
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We thank our volunteer Mrs. Nirupa for entertaining Vidya mandir students of classes 7, 8 & 9 by sponsoring for the movie 'Life of Pi' on 4th January 2013 at IMAX. Teachers and students had great entertainment.





Invitation



We cordially invite you to attend our celebrations



Sri Ramakrishna Birthday

18th February 2013

from 10:00 am onwards

At Nachiketa Tapovan

70, Phase I, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur, Hyderabad.



Vivekananda Birthday

3rd February 2013 (as per *Thithi*)

At Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram

Kodgal Village, Jadcherla,

Mahaboobnagar Dist.

17



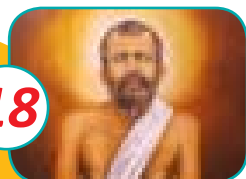
Rathasaptami

15



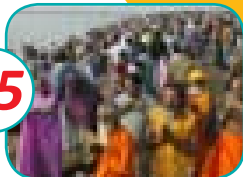
Sripanchami

18



Sri Ramakrishna Jayanthi

25



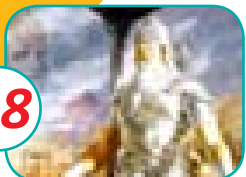
Mahamaagi

23



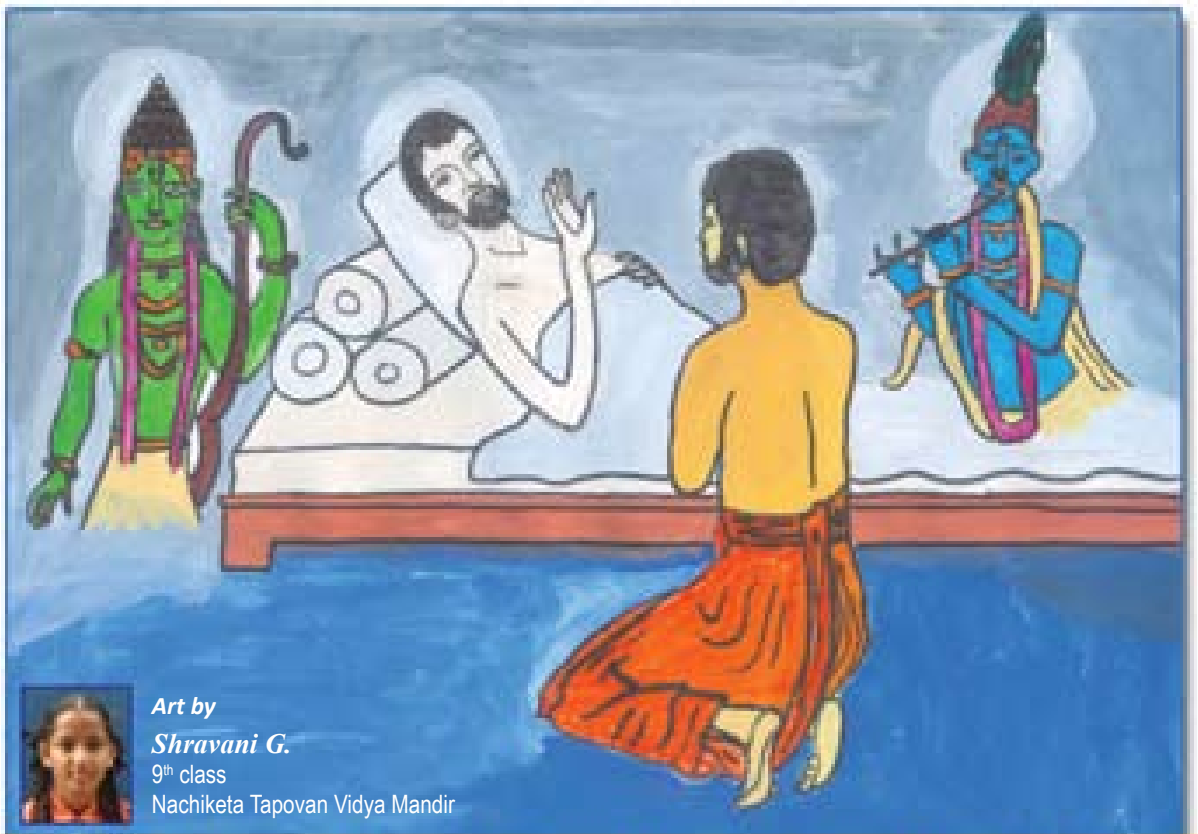
Shanitrayodhasi

18



Bheeshmashtami

Festivals & Events of February 2013



For Our Shy God

Our only Love, our shy God
You are beautiful even if You hide
We see Your secret messages of Love
In the clouds above; no one can see!

We know why we cry at the wild blue yonder
In a mackerel sky, we sense You
Is that why You paint thro' us?
We feel possessed at the first dab!

We sent You a letter yesterday, didn't we?
Looked heavenward and even cried
You won't remain quiet too long, will you?
Don't be shy, Lord, we love you, too!

Your signature beams across the ether
Colours splashed with maddening brilliance
In trembling joy, clouds race to form
A silvery white secret code -
'Look up, you are mine'

*Painting and poem by
Abir & Anisha Bordoloi*