

# *Nachiketanjali*

*an offering...*



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## कृष्ण पलना

कनक रतन मनि पालनो  
गढ्यो काम सुतहार ।  
बिबिध खिलौना भाँति के  
गज मुक्ता चहुँधार ॥ १  
जननी उबटि न्हाइ के  
रूम सौं लीन्हे गोद ।  
पौढाए पट पालनें  
निरखि जननि मन मोद ॥ २  
अति कोमल दिन सात के  
अधर चरन कर लाल ।  
सूर स्याम छवि अरुनता  
निरखि हरष ब्रज बाल ॥ ३



## Baby Swing of Krishna

The carpenter has made a baby-swing adorned with jewels, gems, and gold; there are many toys kept around it and strings of beautiful pearls are hanging at the four corners. | 1 |

Mother Yashoda, having done the Ubatana (application of pastes to cleanse the body) and bath of the baby, took Him in her lap. Then she kept Krishna in the baby-swing, kept a blanket over Him, and smiled with happiness. | 2 |

Krishna is seven days old at that moment and His lips, feet, and palms are red. O Soordas! Having seen the reddish appearance of Krishna, the children in Vraj felt joyful. | 3 |

Poet: Soordas

Bhakta Surdas is renowned for his realistic description of child Krishna, his divine pranks with Yashoda and cowherdresses. Surdas was born on Vaishakh Panchmi in Samvat 1535 to a poor family of Ballabhagarh. He was blind since his birth but had a strong inner vision. At 18 he went to Gaughat, near Mathura, where he used to sing bhajans. It is said that he composed of 1,10,000 songs of which only 10,000 are available. His verses show his profound knowledge of the spiritual world and his deep devotion to Lord Krishna.



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## **Cover Story**



Jainism is one of the oldest religions in India. Present historians say that it is at least 5000 years old but Jains believe it to be eternal. Jainism is thought to have begun in the Indus Valley Civilization around 3000 B.C.

Jainism comes from the Sanskrit word "ji" which means to conquer. This title of Jina is given to 24 teachers called Tirthankars. Rishabadev was the first Tirthankar and is considered founder of Jainism while Vardhaman Mahavir (599-527 B.C) was the 24th and last Tirthankar. Jains are followers of "Jinas" which means conqueror. They are conquerors of their inner enemies. The inner enemies are anger, ego, deceit, and greed.

The fundamental principle of Jainism is non-violence- refraining from doing hurt through physical actions and also through mind and speech. It prohibits injury to all living beings, not just human beings. Jains believe that all human beings, animals, insects, and plants, have living souls. Jains believe that acts of violence, greed, selfishness, dishonesty, just to name a few, obscure the soul while deeds of kindness and reparation liberate it.

Every soul in its purest form is God. Every life form is equal and is able to become God. We rid our karma through knowledge, service, self-control, meditation, penance, practicing tolerance and repentance. Achieving moksha is what we want to accomplish. Jainism strives for the realization of the highest perfection known to mankind, which is in its purest form, free from all pain, suffering, and Samsara.

**- Compiled by Annapurna R.**

# HAPPINESS *is a* STATE of MIND

When the sunrays fall on dew drops they gleam like pearls. The sky magnificently displays beautiful hues as the sun rises, making us feel that nature is more beautiful than the previous day. Every day starts afresh. We should feel the same way in our day to day lives. On the contrary, we ruminate on the past and miss the essence of the present and before we realize, the present turns out to be past. We do not know what is going to happen tomorrow, then why waste time worrying our heads about the future? Let us live the day and enjoy it to the fullest extent. Such an attitude brings in more peace.

Flowers bloom as soon as the sunrays fall on them. Similarly our mind should bloom with fresh thoughts; from the moment we wake up till we go to bed. This helps in bringing out the best of the day. Apart from taking care of the day's duties we should try to assess how we are repaying the society. Before going to bed if we contemplate on how much time we have

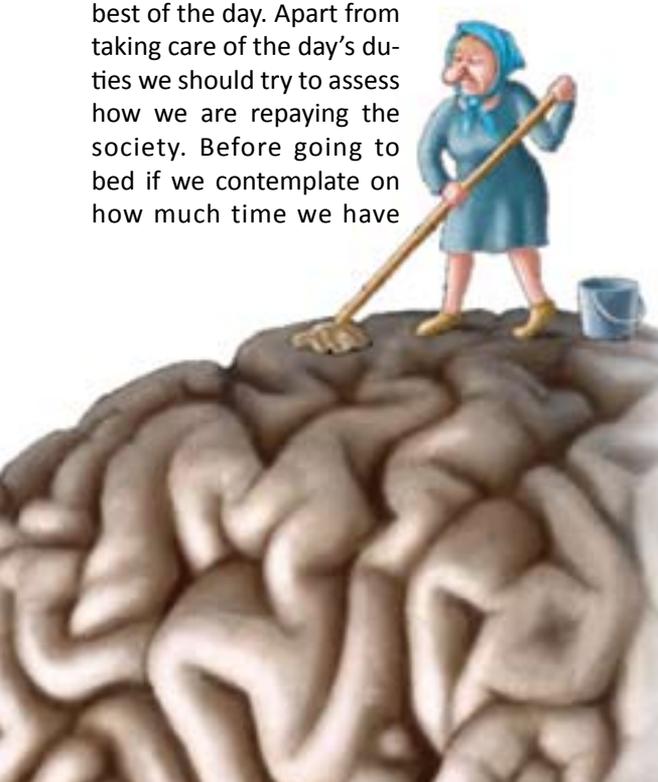
spent for ourselves and how much on others we get a better view of how we have lived the day and how much more we can improve ourselves. The more we mull over, the better we become. Continuous rubbing alone can make the diamond shine, so it is with our mind. When we are aware of the purpose of our life, all fears and doubts are brushed aside and our lives are renewed. We transform without our knowledge but the change is noticed by people around us.

We would have strived hard on some project which did not takeoff, but instead of feeling depressed and dejected, we should start thinking of other ways to achieve success. When a bee hive is disturbed the bees instantly go in search of other trees to make a new hive. They do not give up.

On waking up, most of us pray to God to make that day auspicious by bringing us happiness. But have we ever pondered if our mental attitude complies with the prayer? If we carry hatred for others then how can we be happy? As the saying goes, what we sow so shall we reap. We look for freshness in fruits and vegetables before we buy them. We do not compromise for lesser quality. We value our purchase, but have we ever valued our actions or our thoughts which influence our lives? Don't they deserve quality check or analysis? If our thoughts and actions are pure, every day turns out to be auspicious. Every day brings in freshness when our mind is free of pollution.

Happiness is a state of mind. So let us discard or reject anything that comes in its way.

- Subhadra K.



# Special

It was a special programme on a special occasion. Everything was charged in that wonderful atmosphere. Some people dressed in white; a few in orange robes and the major gathering in regular outfits, were witnessing the ongoing preparations. It was the special day of Maha Shivaratri and those who were in white robes were *brahmacharis* and in orange were *sannyasis*. A monk, whom all were addressing as Maharaj was sitting on the *peetham*. Few were stringing garlands and some were engaged in decorating the deity. Some were lighting the lamps and few were getting water for *abhishekam*. The entire atmosphere was charged with the continuous chanting of “*Aum Namah Shivaya*”. Everyone was reverberating with a kind of energy, and felt, as if they were getting transported into another world effortlessly. It was a special programme, meant to awaken the *Shiva Tattva* within. Maharaj was observing everything and at times was keeping eyes closed and withdrawing himself, from the external world. Everything was more powerful than the very presence of presence itself. No one was feeling hungry or overburdened. It was as if, nothing can damage the work and efforts that were going on. But as said by many, we human beings with unlimited potential within but limited understanding without may lose our patience any moment. Things might suddenly change, so the minds of people. Such is the power of situations, and the minds around.

There was another young disciple named Karma. He was also engaged in helping out in whatever way he could. But many direct disciples were more upset with his behavior. When the special *Prasad* was getting prepared, many disciples have seen this Karma eating *Prasad* before offering to Lord Shiva. In the afternoon also while everyone observed a fast, this boy was seen eating food and

drinking milk. This made *brahmacharis* and senior monks more furious. But the major problem started late in the night when they saw the flower that was supposed to be offered to Lord Shiva in his hand and the special garland around his neck. This is something terrible, they felt. No one was able to understand what to do with this boy or how to inform Maharaj. Some of the monks bashed him and took away the garland and flower from him.

At exactly the stroke of midnight, *Lingodbhavam* took place and once again everyone were engrossed in *Shiva nama* and rituals. Maharaj was personally offering everything and suddenly, they saw Karma who was trying to make way to the Shivalinga, losing balance and falling right on the *pooja* plate. Everyone present felt as if the cosmos turned into chaos. Everything got scattered... *pooja* material, flowers, garlands, *panchamrutam*, oil and also the minds of the people around. One senior monk couldn't control himself and just tried to push Karma away from the sanctum sanctorum. All were looking at Karma and the senior monk and sometimes at Maharaj. When many of the *sadhakas* were literally pushing and pulling this boy and trying to express their unpleasantness, Maharaj was quiet and silently engaged in reorganizing everything from cleaning the area to collecting the material. He seemed to be more calm and relaxed. One of the senior monks decided to bring to Maharaj's notice Karma's behavior from day one, when he landed in the Ashram.

After the *Lingodbhavam* and special rituals, everyone settled down to listen to the golden words from Maharaj. As Maharaj was about to speak, the senior-most monk, who was more upset asked Maharaj, “Why is this boy so special to you...? We have been seeing him making so many mistakes, yet why is he so special to you?” “I beg your pardon, but let us know Maharaj, why you never scold him or even try to correct him? Is it because, that he is young or because he is a close relative of yours? He ate *Prasad* this morning without offering, smelled the flower that was offered by you to Lord Shiva and the garland that you offered was around his neck, and what not is happening since day one when he came to the Ashram. We are unable to work in the Ashram with peace of mind be-



cause of this boy. He is always found everywhere, doing something wrong and making our lives more miserable.”

This was the first time when someone raised a question in that tone in front of Maharaj. A vacuum was felt by everyone around. No one knew that this senior monk would speak in that way. When the entire gathering turned towards Maharaj to hear what he has to say, they saw, Maharaj's face tilted down and two little drops of tears making their way, silently falling on the orange robe as if to merge with it. Though the atmosphere was charged with *Lingodbhavam* and chanting of the divine name, somewhere the senior monk's statement was enough to create the vacuum within. Perhaps this was the first time someone of that stature and also the successor has spoken openly and that too in front of a huge gathering.

That vacuum was more scorching and unpleasant... It was an unbelievable statement that pushed everyone into an uncomfortable but quite puzzled mode. The festive mood completely changed and no one was able to understand, what would happen next... Initially most of the *sadhakas* were getting pushed into a meditative state but now all eyes were glued to Maharaj...waiting anxiously... with total blankness...with broken hearts but with rapt attention...

And then was heard the heart breaking choked voice from Maharaj making way like a stream of river into the hearts of everyone... “My Dear, very special children of immortality...yes, he is very near and dear to me...he is very special to me... he is everything to me... but not because he is my relative or he is young... but he is so special to me because....because...because...he is a special child...!”

Now it was the turn of the audience to feel the vacuum within. For the first time, there were no thunderous claps except an internal thud...for the first time there was no chanting except an internal chaos...for the first time, all heads were hanging down...for the first time there was no flood of selfless tears but the gloomy faces smeared all over with broken tears...

And the heavy voice continued... “Dear One! If he is my kin then you all are my relatives too. For a monk, all are equal. A monk doesn't belong to any religion, sect and also get bounded by any dogmas. Monk is a monk, as long as the monk feels for everyone. Yes, you all are very special to me but in his case, if you feel that I have broken those limitations and given him a special status, then yes, I did, since he is a special child...!”

“Thank you for bringing up this issue at the right time. There cannot be a better occasion than this. Look at the work that he has done even though he doesn’t understand the consequences. I am happy for his selfless involvement and not the work. I felt, he is genuine, simple, straight forward and fearless... since he is a special child...!”

“Yes, when he felt hungry, he ate something... Yes, when he saw a beautiful flower, he smelled it... Yes, he made so many mistakes yet he tried his level best to be part of our Ashram. Remember, no one knows what damage your words have done to him. It is highly difficult to peep into his mind now. Your reaction of pushing and bashing him might have hurt him permanently... Yet he would not expect apologies from you, but would love to get involved...since he is a special child...!”

There was a pause...a vacuum, a deep cry within...and a pin drop silence...and everyone felt as if Maharaj’s voice is coming from a distant cave, asking them to contemplate not only on this issue but all other problems that people invite unnecessarily sometime or the other.

Maharaj continued, “Dear One! Not everyone is blessed with such relations...but let me tell you one truth. I picked him up from the street. I do not know, how to name it or what to name it, but when I have seen this boy, I felt, I had something to do for him and asked him to come to the Ashram. Sorry, for telling a lie, but that’s how I felt that he should be taken care of. I wanted him to learn from the normal life that we always follow in the Ashram. Remember, one cannot feel oneness unless one finds oneself within.”

Again there was a long pause...and then a more heavy voice was heard by everyone...“Most Dear One! Shiva *Tattva*, is everywhere in everyone...in you, in me, in trees, in rocks...in animals...in divine beings...and in people like Karma as well. If one is able to identify the *Tattva* within, then one shall never have any differences with others. It is not just the feeling of oneness with others but it is the feeling of oneness and nothing else.

“Remember! We all are in some way or the other, special children to Lord Shiva. In spite of knowing our repetitive mistakes, he gives us every moment

a complete new opportunity to rectify ourselves, to modify ourselves, to charge ourselves, to feel ourselves.... Isn’t it? Similarly, if we try to forgive others and allow others to play their role, then within no time, the world would be the best place to live in. Therefore, let us meditate on Shiva to experience the *Tattva* within”.

Once again, everything got charged with devotion the whole night. However in the morning when *Prasad* distribution was taking place...they noticed that Karma was missing. They searched for him everywhere but couldn’t find him. When this news was brought to Maharaj’s notice, once again they heard Maharaj’s choked voice...unable to express his anguish but with great difficulty he said, “We are all sensitive but he is more sensitive since he is a special child... Such special children are more special to Lord Shiva since they are the same inside out... It is not that I was not aware of the flower that he smelled and the garland that he put around his neck. When I was silently looking at him, I felt as if Lord Shiva himself smelled that flower... I felt as if Lord Shiva wore the garland around His neck. When he ate I felt as if Lord Shiva ate that *Prasad*...”

“Dear One! I saw *Karma* moving away from all of us when he heard you complain...slowly but firmly bidding an adieu to all of us...and taking a firm decision to never to step into this Ashram again...” Maharaj stopped speaking...and probably for the first time the *sadhakas* have seen him so exhausted. He asked everyone to leave the room and closed his eyes perhaps for a prayer...and there were two more tiny tears making their way out slowly, kissing his cheeks but this time making sure not to fall on the lap and become part of the orange robe but just disappear from there itself... as if bidding an adieu, once again not to be seen anymore by anybody...



- Swami Nachiketanda Puri



## The Master With The Brahmo Devotees

Sri Ramakrishna was in his room at Dakshineswar, conversing with devotees. It was about nine o'clock in the morning.

Master: (to M. and the other devotees): "It is not good to harbour malice. The Saktas, the Vaishnavas, and the Vedantists quarrel among themselves. That is not wise. Padmalochan was the court pundit of the Maharaja of Burdwan. Once at a meeting the pundits were discussing whether Siva was superior to Brahma, or Brahma to Siva. Padmalochan gave an appropriate reply. 'I don't know anything about it', said he. 'I haven't talked either to Siva or to Brahma.'

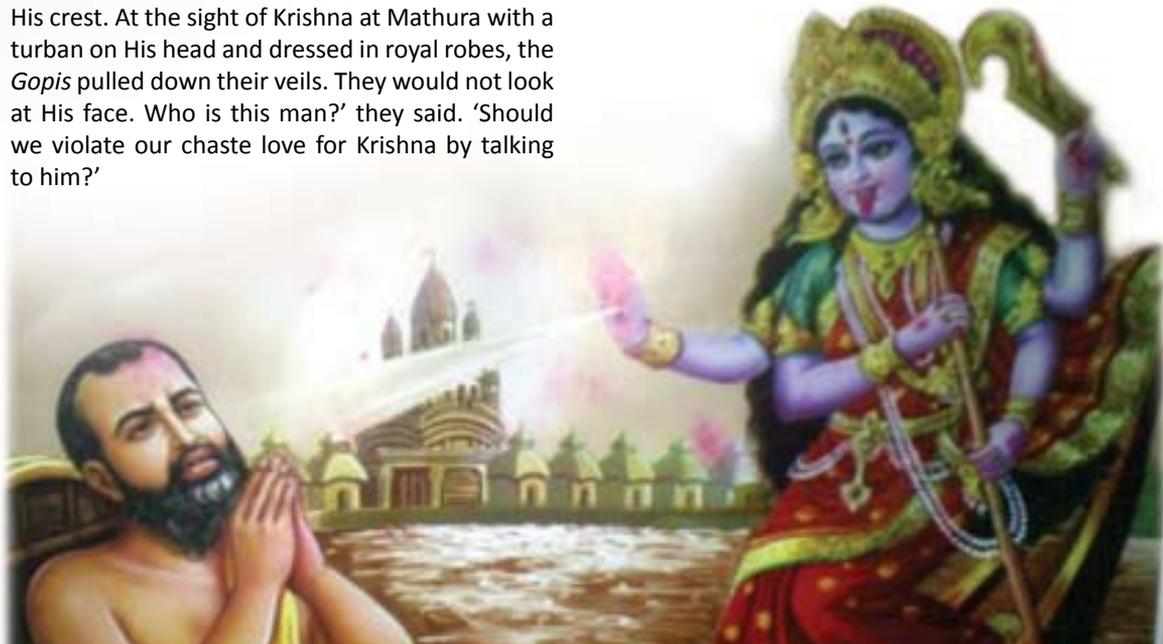
"If people feel sincere longing, they will find that all paths lead to God. But one should have *Nishtha*, single-minded devotion. It is also described as chaste and unswerving devotion to God. It is like a tree with only one trunk shooting straight up. Promiscuous devotion is like a tree with five branches. Such was the single-minded devotion of the *Gopis* to Krishna that they didn't care to look at anyone but the Krishna they had seen at Vrindavan—the Shepherd Krishna, bedecked with a garland of yellow wild-flowers and wearing a peacock feather on His crest. At the sight of Krishna at Mathura with a turban on His head and dressed in royal robes, the *Gopis* pulled down their veils. They would not look at His face. Who is this man?' they said. 'Should we violate our chaste love for Krishna by talking to him?'

"The devotion of the wife to her husband is also an instance of unswerving love. She feeds her brothers-in-law as well, and looks after their comforts, but she has a special relationship with her husband. Likewise, one may have that single-minded devotion to one's own religion; but one should not on that account hate other faiths. On the contrary, one should have a friendly attitude toward them."

The Master bathed in the Ganges and then went to the Kali temple with M. He sat before the image and offered flowers at the feet of the Divine Mother. Now and then he put flowers on his own head and meditated.

After a long time he stood up. He was in a spiritual mood and danced before the image, chanting the name of Kali. Now and again he said: "O mother! O Destroyer of suffering! O Remover of grief and agony!" Was he teaching people thus to pray to the Mother of the Universe with a yearning heart, in order to get rid of the suffering inevitable in physical life?

**Source: The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna**





I \*ahem\* regularly attend tennis classes. I am not very good at the sport if that's what you are thinking. Getting back to the point; One day, a kid in my batch asked me why I bring a whole kit (i.e. Bag full of stuff and a racket), and I replied that it had an extra t-shirt for me to change into and a towel to wipe myself. What he said next hit me like a ton of bricks. He said, "If you are going to change your clothes in your car and use only your racket and water bottle in class, why don't you leave that extra bag in the car itself?"

This really made me think of the excess emotional baggage that we carry in our minds and like my bag, which gives me a wrist ache, this baggage will also take a toll on our physical and mental well being.

Imagine your mind as a backpack and let me tell you what you do with it. First, you fill it with all the major stuff, like your future plans, studies, job, etc. This already makes your bag quite heavy. Then you add in minor things like short term goals, friends, family, etc. Then come all the other anxieties and worries of life, which, though you know will set themselves right, you still waste your time worrying about them. Now, your bag is extremely heavy. You can feel its straps dig into your shoulders. You are NOT able to carry it. Why? Because you chose to stuff too much unnecessary junk into it.

Everything does have a limit. Even your mind, however powerful it may be, it cannot take the load that you put on it. The problem is that the majority of the load is from the 'emotional baggage' part.

When someone scolds you or hurts you, you tend to keep it inside you, think about it and let it ruin your day. That is your excess emotional baggage. Imagine your day to be an airplane journey. You are not allowed any excess baggage. So now, put the bag on the floor and leave it there. No regrets, no feelings. How do you feel now? Relieved of that burden, right? That is what you must do, every morning after you wake up. Sit up straight and think of all your worries and regrets, and then together throw them in your mind's dustbin or just burn them. This will help you kick start your day with good, positive feelings.

Have you ever seen a hot cup of tea? It looks very calm from outside, but when touched, it can burn you. This cup of tea, just like you with emotional baggage, is calm only externally, but inside it is boiling, like you holding in your emotions of regret, misery, distrust, guilt and what not. These withheld emotions make you a very unsocial person and leaves you fighting within your mind.

People go into depression just because of holding in their emotions. The major reason for this depression and also the source of this emotional baggage is regrets from the past and worries of the future. We don't know how to live in the moment and enjoy it. They say that yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery but today is a gift. That is why it is called the present.

We should cherish every moment of it, because we don't know when it may be our last. Instead of succumbing to these unnecessary emotions, we should live life to its maximum by spreading positive thoughts and energy around us at that point in time, because you have no control of the things that the future has in store for you. You can only determine how to react to it, as for the past, that too you have no control over, as you can't reach back into time to set things right. One thing that you should know



is that, live life in such a way that, in the future, you would never want to say, "I wish I could turn back time."

Remember, these emotions will only weigh you down. They are among those things that can actually be categorized as useless in this world. Throw them away, burn them, or do something to get rid of them, because,

Less baggage, More comfort.

**N. Rohan C. Govind**

**Class 10,**

**GT Aloha Vidya Mandir, Chennai**



*S*ing the song of success,  
Let her alone be your princess

Help always comes from the above  
When in the heart happens true Love

Yet Love is partial till your  
Beloved loves you,  
Success is also incomplete till  
She adores you too,

Romeo couldn't live,  
Without Juliet,  
Alike, without Success  
My mind is so uneasy and disquiet

## SUCCESS

But singing the glory of success,  
Can help you merely a little,  
But to cuddle her unremittingly,  
You need to unravel life's riddle

As success does not depend upon  
Only one or two factors,  
But don't be too serious,  
Life is a play so play as an actor,

Sing the song of success,  
Let her alone be your princess

**- LOKENDRA SINGH RATHORE**

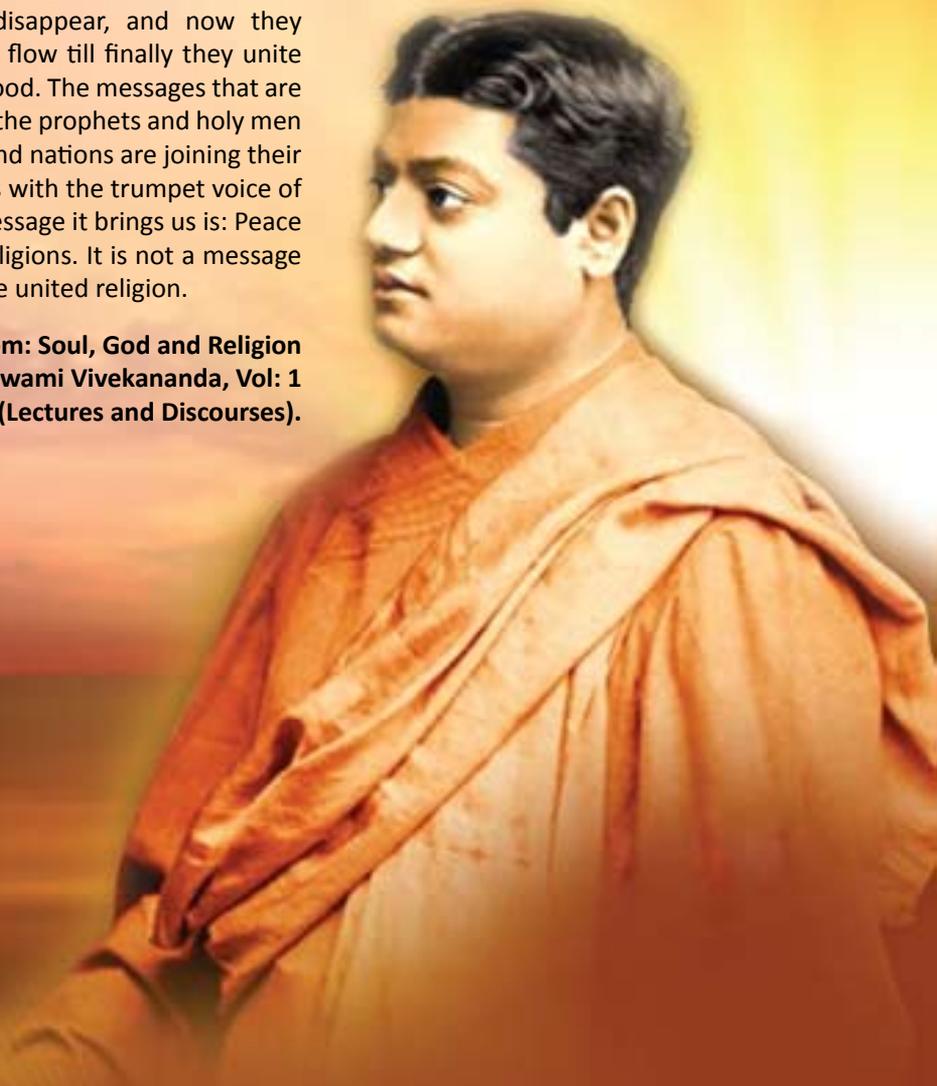




# The Voice...

*Through the vistas of the past the voice of the centuries is coming down to us; the voice of the sages of the Himalayas and the recluses of the forest; the voice that came to the Semitic races; the voice that spoke through Buddha and other spiritual giants; the voice that comes from those who live in the light that accompanied man in the beginning of the earth — the light that shines wherever man goes and lives with him forever — is coming to us even now. This voice is like the little rivulets; that come from the mountains. Now they disappear, and now they appear again in stronger flow till finally they unite in one mighty majestic flood. The messages that are coming down to us from the prophets and holy men and women of all sects and nations are joining their forces and speaking to us with the trumpet voice of the past. And the first message it brings us is: Peace be unto you and to all religions. It is not a message of antagonism, but of one united religion.*

**Extracted from: Soul, God and Religion  
Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol: 1  
(Lectures and Discourses).**



# DEATH

*I* woke up thinking about death. Feeling death. Not only of myself but other people's...

And as I lay in bed, I once again wondered about the futility of the circus we go through...

And in the above context to agree or disagree with people seems one and the same...to have a strong opinion about things, seems very stupid...

I was at some place, like a waterfall...lots of other people too, a touristy kind of place. And as my friend fell and I reached out to save her, I was falling too, I could see myself going...the breath fading...

When I saw myself dying...the only thought in my mind was 'how pointless to waste this life while I had it and now it's slipping away, just a few seconds left'...and since there was nothing to do, either struggle against it (which I chose not to consciously) or just accept it, I said focused on my breath and said 'Shambho' and accepted it.

It made me realize the futility of so many things we do...So many accessories we pile up in the form of people, thoughts, ideas, views, opinions, likes, dislikes, titles, material things...

Life can't stop...won't stop...shouldn't stop... so we need to do the dance on the outside...our work, the work in the society, travel, learning, art, etc. but the entire focus has to be on the 'how' of things...

To live in this awareness, that this breath could be our last, this handshake or embrace could be our last we give to a friend or a stranger, that this could be our last meal or the last cup of coffee...

And I want it to be drenched in love, in serenity, joy, calmness and divinity...it doesn't matter whether it's with my family or my best friend or a stranger or a tree or a dog or the children on the street or my people at work...

With these thoughts I woke up, lay in bed, focused on my breath...and grateful for everything I have, everything I am and above all for this time I have...now...

- *Gautam Vir*

# The Message of The Brhadaranyaka Upanisad

There is a saying in Bengali: *TetulpAtAinaojon*, 'If you have a unified heart, nine persons can sit on one tamarind leaf!' If our hearts are united, many people can stay on just one tamarind leaf. *Tetulis* tamarind, *pAtA* means leaf, and *naojon* means nine persons. Nine persons can sit together on one tamarind leaf, says the Bengali adage. Even twenty people can sit on it if their hearts are united. Now what is the meaning of that? Some great change has taken place within them. I am alone in a big house. A second man comes and I go on colliding with him like a billiard ball. Something is wrong with me. But in another house, many live together in a small place. How does that become possible? That is a wonderful thing! That is the meaning of spiritual growth. It has nothing to do with ringing bells in temples. A big growth, a tremendous human development, what we call today human resource development, has taken place there. That tremendous resource of love and compassion, the capacity to enter into each other, has come there.

In the *Vaisnava* tradition of South India, there is a fascinating story on this wonderful theme. One saint was going through a forest near Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu. Suddenly there was thunder and lightning, and heavy rain began to pour. He found a small, unoccupied room, entered it, saw that there was enough place to lie down, and he closed the door and just lay there thinking of the Lord. After sometime, another saint reached there in the midst of that rain and thunder. He too ap-



proached that room and knocked at the door. The door was opened, and he was welcomed. The first saint said: 'There is place for just one person to lie down, but enough for two persons to sit. So let us sit together.' They sat together. After sometime, another saint came and tapped at the door. He too was welcomed with the words: 'Please come in, there's place for just one person to lie down, for just two persons to sit, but enough for three persons to stand. We shall stand together and repeat the Lord's name.' Thus they stood repeating the Lord's name throughout the night. Now, here we can see the significance of this philosophy. We shut out our true nature by the tyranny of our organic system. We consider ourselves separate from others and think we have nothing to do with them, and if at all we do relate with others, it is mostly to exploit. That is called the tyranny of the sensate system, the tyranny of the ego that is within us. When that goes away, everything changes. We all can then live together in a beautiful atmosphere.

Today the world requires that. If the four billion people living on this tiny planet go on attacking and killing each other, the whole population will soon collapse. We have to live together in a friendly manner. How to do that? In today's technological age, space has vanished, and though spatial distance has lost its meaning, the distance between minds has increased. Unless this mental distance is removed, we remain far apart from each other though physically near. And without bridging the mental distance, this physical closeness can be dangerous. Therefore, this *AtmajNana* making for spiritual growth must be realized.

**The Message of the Brhadaranyaka Upanisad  
by Swami Ranganathananda**

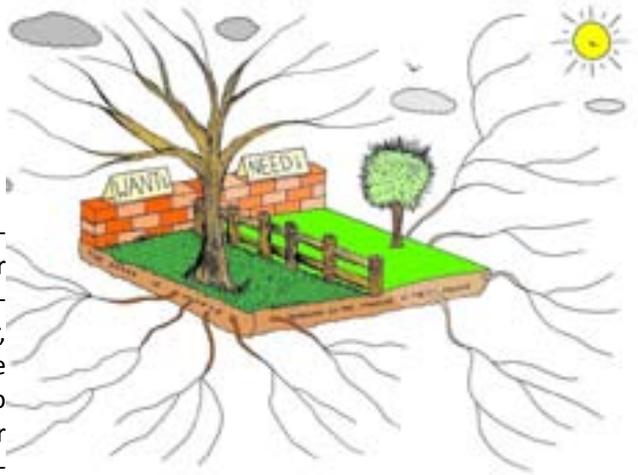


# In Search of GREENER PASTURES

“All we want is your success and happiness.” This is what most of the parents tell their children. Parents stand with their children at every step of life, well most of them do. However, there comes a point in everyone’s life where we are called upon to decide whether we want to stay with our parents, or move on to another place. In search of greener pastures, many people have moved to foreign lands. Many of these people and some of those living in the same land as their parents had no option but to keep their parents in an ‘old age home’, while some simply even got rid of their aged parents. Some are content by sending them money every month. The demands of time are such! In such a world, meeting someone who gives more importance to the comfort of his mother is really touching. So here is a real story-

Rajeev (name changed) had a good start to his career in Delhi. He is originally from Bhopal, the wonderful city of lakes. He was good at what he was doing and his employers were very happy with his work. He was doing his job so well only because he loved what he was doing. In fact, his love for the job took him away from his hometown. Then, when everything was going on smoothly, all hell broke loose. His father had taken ill and his younger brother was still in school. Financial situation had run amok. The only relief was that his mother was working. He had to make a choice – either to stay back in Delhi and enjoy the career growth, or go back to Bhopal where his ailing father needed him. Without second thoughts, he chose the latter. Things moved from bad to worse, but he stood firm with his family. After a few years, his mother retired from her job and father passed away.

While he was struggling to find a job in the small city of Bhopal, which offered minimal opportunities in his field, I wondered why he did



not consider moving back to Delhi. I asked him why he was ‘wasting’ the most productive years of his life. He said he did not want to leave his mother. His younger brother is a sportsman and keeps travelling, and without him, his mother would be alone. I reasoned why he could not take his mother too with him. He replied, “My mother’s happiness is here, for she is nearer to her brothers and sisters. I do not want her to sacrifice more for me.”

I was quiet. For quite some time, I had not met someone like him. I too had ‘forgotten to feel’ such feelings. My mind raced – between practicality and prudence on the one side and love and sacrifice on the other. Is money everything in life? Do we need enough to fulfil our needs or do we need more and more for our desires? While money is certainly important, should it be the only force driving our actions?

Rajeev is presently in a job which pays him just enough for his needs. But he has not stopped dreaming and working for his dreams. Many people have left him for he took a different decision, for he is not wealthy. But I pray, luck shines on him! God has sprinkled goodness from above. People like him are precious and priceless.

**- Neetika Gogula**

An advocate and has passion for writing on social issues.





# Supta Vajrasana

Swami Nachiketananda Puri



*Supta* means lying down, dormant and also subtle as well; *Vajra* means hard and *Asana* means posture. Thus this posture helps one to awaken inert energy. This *Asana* makes one hard like a *Vajra* and activates lower body to the maximum extent where one can not only get more activated but also feels more rejuvenated and relaxed. If one has to get ready for a long walk or heavy work where lower body needs more strength then *Supta Vajrasana* is one of the best postures. It corrects the spine, redefines the internal mechanism and brings flexibility and subtlety from gross network of nerves to subtle network of *Nadis*. Therefore, it is an important posture for every *Sadhak*. One should perform this posture every day, if possible.

## How to perform?

### Pose

1. Sit on the floor with legs stretched out, place hands sideways near the buttocks with palms down and fingers forward
2. Then fold left leg from the knee and place left heel below the left buttock
3. Then fold right leg from the knee and place right heel below the right buttock
4. Both the heels together and sit properly with toes pointing outwards

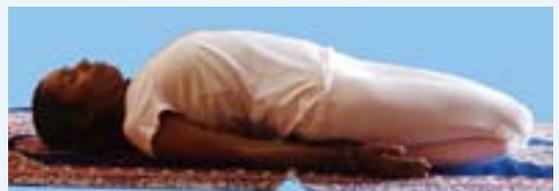
Mataji  
illustrates  
Supta Vajrasana  
pose



5. Keep spine erect and head straight in vajrasana
6. Then place both the palms near the toes and while bending backward place both the elbows on the ground and bend completely backward
7. Let the back touch the ground
8. In the initial stage, only shoulder blades and head would rest on the ground
9. Hand can be placed below the head region or side of the body
10. Normal breathing



11. If you find difficulty in keeping heels together then one can even spread the heels slightly or can place heels at the side of the buttocks
12. Close eyes and concentrate on the lower body or head region to derive maximum benefits, especially lower back bone area would be the right place to concentrate
13. Maintain this posture from 3 minutes to 45 minutes
14. One can even sleep in this posture as well but nothing can beat if one can keep awake oneself completely
15. Then take the support of both the hands and come back to sitting position by bringing up upper body vertically while breathing in





16. Relax in the Vajrasana posture for couple of minutes
17. Then inhale and raise both the hands above the head region or take both the hands behind the body and hold right wrist with left palm
18. And while exhaling slowly bend forward and relax in Shashankasan for at least 1/3 time of the Supta Vajrasana posture
19. Then come back while inhaling and sit erect
20. Release left leg first, then right leg
21. Then stretch both the legs
22. Relax in sitting posture for a while and then slowly lie down

**Awareness points:**

1. Physical: Tailbone and spine
2. Subtle: Energy flow in lower region, breathing and also experience throbbing sensation in lower region

**Benefits:** Improves blood circulation to all internal organs especially belly region. Lower body parts become more supple. Urinary disorders would be taken care of. It is good for sciatic pain and prevents hernia. Energizes pelvis and nerves of the lower back. Helps in seminal weaknesses. Internal organs get massaged and it corrects the spine. People who are more introvert and lost faith in themselves also would get benefited. Whole body gets relaxed and one can feel lighter and energetic. Mind gets the taste of higher energies. Immediate activation of energy in lower body.

**Counter pose:** Shashankasan and Shavasan

**Be careful:** Those who have knee, shoulder, and arm problem should be more careful. Please take advice from an *Asana* expert.

**Sadhak, kind attention:** Please perform every day and make sure that your eyes are closed throughout the *Sadhana*.

## Atmaparikshan

*A Sadhaka should analyze each and every thought and action of his. He needs to be watchful about the intention behind every thought and action. Whenever he gets evil thoughts or selfish motives or finds himself expecting a return, then he should take a pause and do Atmaparikshan. Self analysis gives insights that reveal the state of your mind, so that you can start working on yourself.*



**- Paramahansa  
Swami Shivananda Puri**

# MY INDISPENSABLE HELPER

*A* helper who made me a believer, in humanity, in goodness and in an unlimited supply of selfless love.

As I sit to write this, I place very gently and comfortably, on a chair next to me, my ego, my arrogance, my superiority, my self-consciousness, and my shame. I put on display here, my humility, my gratitude and my honesty as I sit to write this story that has been incubating in my heart and head for well over a few months now.

There is a beginning to this story...but frankly speaking there is no end to it...the kind of person whom I write about has no end to her abilities to give and to serve and to love.

Her name is Savita Haldar. She's been working in my house for the past 16 years. She first came to my small apartment in Lake Gardens, Kolkata as a cook. I was a new bride then. She had just become a widow. Add to her woes of recently losing her husband who actually beat her up for the 16 years they were married, she was now left alone to fend and look after her 3 small daughters.

I never knew her loss and her pain then. She'd never let anyone see her pain. She'd come every morning with a chirpy smile and lovingly cook the food and leave. Those days she'd work in 9 houses altogether to augment her meagre income. Even after cooking a whole meal, cleaning up, and doing miscellaneous work in the kitchen she'd get only Rs. 300 from me!!!

Now how much she gets is another story altogether!!!

She managed to enter our lives so seamlessly and lovingly, that by the time I realized it, she had become an indispensable part of our house and our family. It's not just her cooking (which is fabulous especially her *aloo dum*), or her housekeeping skills or her ability to always give more than she takes, it's her ability to do so lovingly, as if it's her happiness and her pleasure to make our lives comfortable and easy. And her work ethics is something that management text books should really write about!!!



She has literally brought up both my kids, with a kind of love and selflessness that even I, as a mother lack. She has been more than a helper for me. Sometimes she's been my life saver... especially in times that I get distressed or overwhelmed (which has been many times over the years!!). She's been my moral support and a calm presence during all my hospitalizations and operations and was responsible for the best post-operative care any one could ask for.

She is the pillar of my strength, she is the epitome of goodness and generosity, not only of her hands, but of her heart as well. She makes me feel humbled by the way she shows her love to each of us, to all of us at home. Her sweet gentle understanding in all kinds of situations and in all circumstances and her loyalty is unconditional and unquestionable. Perhaps I can tell myself that she is the best gift life gave me in place of an absent mother-in-law and a mother who is no more.

Perhaps she is the person who is sent by providence to fill in the aching void in my life for a lot of absentees and a lot of lacks. But in truth, she has been more than all that for me. She is by far, the best part of my own story of life.

Oh, did I forget to mention, that in all these years she's worked for me, she has never ever asked for a raise? Or taken undue liberties, or asked for special privileges (old timers usually take certain things for granted)? The only mandatory leave she takes is the four days for Christmas and that too she uses for cooking for about 100-150 people and distributes it. Her goodness has no boundaries and no limitation. What a blessing to witness such a life and what a bigger boon to be a part of it!!!!

*- Mallika Sastry Chandrasekhar*



## *An inspiring story*

I recently read a very inspiring story that I wanted to share. This is the story of a bright young girl called Srivalli who hailed from a poor family. At the age of eleven, Srivalli unfortunately met with an accident and both her legs were amputated.

After she met with the accident, her heart sank in sorrow. Many a time, she just wanted to die. She hated God for doing this to her. She was terrified of losing both her limbs. Her surgeon, Dr.Rao, kept encouraging her by telling her that she would eventually be able to walk and run normally. She kept trying and trying without giving up at any stage. After two years of relentless struggle, Srivalli could go back to her school. Initially, she could walk with the help of artificial limbs and run slowly. However, her situation today is very different. With the help and encouragement of family and friends, she learnt music from her Guru Rama Sastry and now she is both a good singer and composer of songs. Despite her disability, she worked hard with great determination, discipline and dedication.

Says Srivalli, "The challenges in our lives are there to strengthen our convictions. They are not there to run us over." I would like to walk in the footsteps of this exceptional woman and overcome obstacles with similar self-belief and courage. I would also like to wish her all the best for her future endeavors.

Compiled by M. MAHESH  
Class 10

Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir



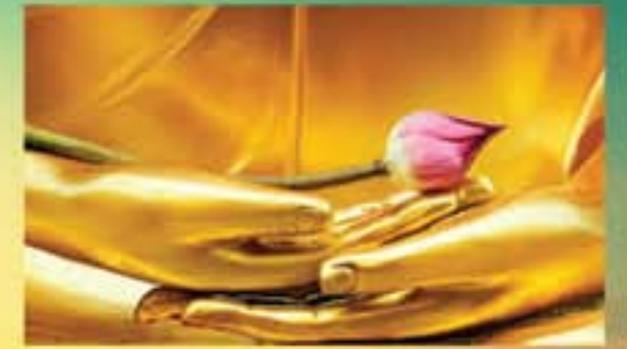


# ADI SHANKARA'S UPADESA PANCHAKAM

*(Pentet about religious practice)*

By Adi Shankara Bhagwat Pada, Translated by P.R.Ramachander

It is said that, when Sri Sankara was about to disappear in the Himalayas at the close of his advent on earth, he was requested by the disciples to favour them with a final message which they themselves could treasure and broadcast to all earnest aspirants in the march towards the final goal of life and that it was in gracious response to this request that this set of five stanzas was given. But every stanza contains within itself eight injunctions arranged in a logical and ascending scale and so this small work really contains forty injunctions.



Vedo nithya madheeyatham, thadhuditham karma swanushtiyatham,  
Thenesaya vidheeyatham apachithi kamy mathisthyajyatham,  
Papougha paridhooyatham bhava sukhe doshonusandheeyatham,  
Athmecha vyavaseeyatham nijagruhathoomam vinirgamyatham. 1

Let us read Vedas daily,  
Let us do rituals based on them,  
Let the Gods be worshipped based on them,  
Let us do work without attachment,  
Let us drive away the crowd of sins,  
Let us find the mistakes that we do in our life.



Ekanthe sukhamaasyatham, parathare chetha samadheeyatham,  
Poornathma susameekshyatham,  
jagadhidham thadbhadhidham drusyatham,  
Prak karma pravilopyatham, cithi balanna apyutharai slishyatham,  
Prabhadhandhiwa bhujyadham adha  
para brabrahmathmana stheeyatham. 5

Let us sit in a place of solitude,  
Let us fix our mind in the ultimate truth of the soul,  
Let us try to see the ultimate truth of the soul,  
Let us try to see the world fully filled with that truth,  
Let us destroy the effects of all karma done earlier,  
Let us not get tied up with new Karmas,  
Let us leave at this point all that is fated,  
Let us all stay with the ultimate truth.

Sanga sathsu vidheeyatham, bhagawatho bhakthir druda a dheeyatham,  
Santhyabhi paricheeyatham, drudatharam karmasu santhyajyatham,  
Sadvidhwaupasarpayatham prathi dhinam thath padukha sevyatham,  
Brahmaikaksharamarthyatham sruthi siro vakhyam samakamyatham. 2

Let us seek the company of good people,  
Let us build up stable sense of devotion to God,  
Let us know about states of mind like peace,  
Let us forsake hard to do karmas,  
Let us go near a wise teacher and give ourselves up,  
Let us daily worship his slippers,  
Let us meditate on the one lettered Brahnam,  
Let us hear the sentences from Vedas.

Vakhyarthascha vicharyatham, sruthi sira paksha samasreeyatham,  
Dustharkkal suviramyatham, sruthi matha stharko anusandheeyatham,  
Brahmaivamsi vibhavyatham ahara harghava parithyajyatham,  
Deheham athirujadyatham budha janair vadha parithyajyatham. 3

Let us try to understand great sentences,  
Let us try to understand the import of Vedas,  
Let us not involve into bad arguments,  
Let us try to listen to the arguments of Vedas,  
Let us try to think "I am Brahnam",  
Let us daily forsake being proud,  
Let us forsake the belief that "I am the body",  
Let us not do arguments with learned people.

Kshuvyadhisha chikithsyatham prathidhinam bhikshoushadham bhujyatham,  
Swadhannam na thu yachyatham, vdhi vassal prapthena sandhushyatham  
Seethoshnathi vishahyatham nathu vrudhaa vakhyam samucharyatham,  
Oudaseenya mabheepsytam jana krupa naishturyath srujyatham. 4

Let us treat the sickness of hunger,  
Let us daily eat the medicine of food got as Bhiksha,  
Let us not start pining for tasty food,  
Let us become happy with what fate gives us,  
Let us learn to tolerate heat and cold climate,  
Let us not talk unnecessary words,  
Let us start liking tolerance,  
Let us leave out not being merciful.

Ya sloka panchakamidham padathe manushya,  
Sanchithyanudhinam sthithamupethya,  
Thasyasu samsruthi dhavanala theevra ghora,  
Thapa prasanthi muyathi chithi prasadhah. 6

He who reads these pentet of verses daily,  
Daily earns and saves stability in life,  
He does not get affected by the intense,  
Heat of the sorrow of life,  
Because this thapas makes him wise.



*Designed by Annapurna R.*



## THE QUIZZICAL BROW

### *Point of Contention:*

## CODES OF MORALITY

*Reading* the editorial in 'THE HINDU' was a daily ritual at school. It was one among many efforts that my teacher steadfastly observed to improve our vocabulary. Whenever a new word was identified, its meaning was immediately looked upon in the dictionary. Surprisingly the term 'moral police' could not be located in the dictionary. Curiously we looked at our teacher for the answer.

It was explained to us that "Moral Police" is a blanket term used to describe vigilante groups which act to enforce a code of morality in India. The targets of moral policing are any activity that the vigilante groups, the government or police deemed to be 'immoral' or against 'the Indian culture'. One hand shot up in the air. My class fellow enquired 'Teacher! Is this practice good or bad?'

As children, what mattered to us was the meaning of certain social norms and practices. But as we hear or come across such incidents on a regular basis, one question always springs up in my mind 'How valid is the act of moral policing in India? What makes a select few suppose

that they are the torchbearers to safe guard a culture, religion or the society at large? Is this not an antithesis to the original purpose of religion itself? Diligent practice of certain social norms does not give us an access to dictate others' beliefs and practices.

Autonomy and Beneficence form core ethical principles in medicine. Autonomy is the obligation to respect patients as individuals and honor their preference in medical care. Physicians have a special ethical duty to act in the patient's best interest. It may conflict with the autonomy. If the patient can make an informed decision, ultimately the patient has the right to decide. Can we apply the same principles in this situation? Knowledge cannot be thrust on an individual. It is his/her individual choices that would chart the way to their future. Religion or culture is always by choice and not by force.

Dear citizen,

I refrain from citing further examples as I am only an observer like any one of you. I can only quote my teacher's reasoning, "A norm gives a person a rule of thumb for how they should behave. A rational person only acts according to the rule if it is optimal for them. Albert Einstein often said Force always attracts men of low morality."

Yours sincerely,

**An Observer**

# JADABHARATHA

The story of Jadabharatha appears in the 5th *skandha* of Bhagavatha. In his previous birth he was King Bharatha and our Bharat has derived her name after him. He ruled his kingdom righteously and when he grew old he handed over the kingdom to his sons and retired to the forest. He practiced several austerities and spent time on contemplating on his beloved God Narayana.

One day he was meditating by the riverside when he was disturbed by a lion's roar. He opened his eyes and saw a pregnant deer giving birth to a fawn. The deer delivered in fear of the lion and soon after, the deer died. The fawn fell in the river. Bharatha rescued the fawn and took it to his hermitage. He tended to the motherless fawn with utmost care but in the process neglected his spiritual practices. He became so attached to the deer and when he died his last thought was of the deer that he had held so close to his heart. It is said that one takes a rebirth according to his last thought and so Bharatha was reborn as a deer. He was born again and again until he reached salvation.

In his final birth he was called Jadabharatha because his behavior made people think he was stupid and ignorant. However he was far from any of these. After all these births, he turned out to be a great *jnani* but never exhibited his wisdom outwardly. One day he was guarding the crops in a field. Though his body was physically engaged, his mind was merged in the self. Some people came by looking for a healthy man to sacrifice to Goddess Bhadrakali and when they saw Jadabharatha they were pleased and took him along with them. Jadabharatha did not object. But while the priest was about to lacerate his head, Goddess Bhadrakali became furious as Jadbharatha was a saintly man. She came out of the idol and pulling the sword from the priest severed the head of the priest with one blow.

Time passed. One day King Rahoogana was passing by in a palanquin. The bearers of the palanquin required one more person to hold the palanquin and on seeing Jadabharatha invited him to help



them. Jadabharatha did so, but he was lost to the world and the rhythm of carrying the palanquin was getting disturbed. The king felt uncomfortable and asked the bearers to watch their rhythm. The other three carriers complained that it was Jadabharatha who was not keeping rhythm.

The king rebuked Jadabharatha and threatened to take him to task for his impassiveness. Jadabharatha was unperturbed and told the king that it was not him but his body that was carrying the palanquin and how logical was it to punish his soul for what his body does. Astonished by the answer the king realized Jadabharatha was no ordinary soul.

He prostrated before Jadabharatha and asked him "O sage, who are you? Your words are full of wisdom. I am not able to recognize you. Please enlighten me and remove my ignorance."

Jadabharata said "You appear to be a knowledgeable person. This world is full of maya. Only you have to realise yourself. This whole universe is Brahman the absolute consciousness and we are one with that. Meditate regularly on Brahman and attain self-realization." He further enlightened the king with spiritual wisdom. In his last birth Jadabharatha attained moksha.

**- A STORY RETOLD**



## IN THE WOMB

The dark night comes to a standstill and in a fraction of a second, something happens. The long-drawn darkness comes to a sudden halt, as does the cool night breeze. After many hours of stillness, the night gives birth to a new baby opening its eyes to the first twinkle of light. Good morning!

During a *Pranayam* or Yoga exercise, when we pause between an inhalation and exhalation, it is exactly this moment that we relive. It's a vacuum, a fresh new dawn for our Being.

After a night-long pregnancy, when twilight gives birth to sun, the energy in the air is palpable. We feel the life in the air, the waking up of the birds, the rustling of the leaves and this side of the earth stretching out as if in a giant yawn. It's indeed a gigantic cosmic responsibility someone has taken to see that Mother Earth turns so smoothly, softly, lovingly on her axis so as not to disturb the sleep of us, her children.

An equally glorious moment is the setting of the sun in the evening, the golden-purple dusk marking the end of a long day of work for the Sun God. But he doesn't go away without giving a warm welcome to his sister the Moon Goddess, who will watch over this half of the earth while he's off illuminating the other half. It's yet another moment of birth, the cry of a new night, a new day and so on.

The rise of the moon is beautiful in its own way-carrying with it the pain of separation mixed with the ecstasy of birth like a mother giving birth to a son and daughter. It's a work of divine poetry, when the Sun peeps out with the first rays of light and Mother Earth catches the baby in her arms and yet again when she passes it on to the Moon and its crown-like silver lining.

What a moment! And what a lesson it has for us.

Be it a seed blooming into a plant, a baby blossoming into a youth or an egg cracking open into a bird- it's a hard, tough process. There's no pot without the churning and heating of the mud on the potter's wheel. There's no sturdy table without the pieces of raw wood facing the edges of the saw and a grinding polish. The fields are ploughed through and face the heat of many afternoon suns before the harvest can be celebrated.

We must give every 'thing' or 'Being' its due time and respect- to grow, nurture and bloom. We must understand and appreciate the process.

This is what I've learned from Swamiji and Mataji, when they asked the *Sadhakas* to do weeks of strong, focused meditation. Only then were they ready for the *Pran Pratishtha* of the idols- a divine act of sharing your living spirit and breathing the power of the one living God into a figure of stone. If this is not a miracle, I don't know what is.

Let's not forget these beautiful lessons that our Gurus have been teaching us over the ages, in so many different forms. And let's walk the path of our practices and penances with this innocent spirit of total surrender to the divine, knowing that every step of this journey adds up- slow and steady as it may be- to bridge the gap between where we are, and where we are meant to be. You might laugh in the end to realize, that they were both the very same place- the journey itself was the destination.

- *Mamta Agarwal*



# इवलइकरोट्टिइठठ = इओरुपु

## tvAtumun

### Range (from ... to...)

We know the use of 'तः' for the meaning of 'from'. If you have a range to specify with an upper limit, you use 'पर्यन्तम्' (to). If you want to say that you would be at office from 9am to 5pm, you can do that by:

अहं प्रातः नववादनतः सायं पञ्चवादनपर्यन्तं कार्यालये भवामि।

Similarly,

अहं प्रतिदिनं प्रातः पञ्चवादनतः षड्वादनपर्यन्तं योगाभ्यासं करोमि।

Notice that both 'तः' and 'पर्यन्तम्' are ending parts of words. To mean continuously for one hour, you might also say:

अहं प्रतिदिनम् एकघण्टां (यावत्) योगाभ्यासं करोमि।

This means: I do yoga for an hour (hour long). I have included 'यावत्' in brackets. The meaning of the sentence with or without it would be same. However, adding it would make it clearer.

If you want to say I stayed there from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>. अहं तृतीयदिनाङ्कतः पञ्चमदिनाङ्कपर्यन्तम् तत्र उषितवान्। We have added 'दिनाङ्कः' here to mean 'date'. Some people use 'तारिका' also for the same. With the same meaning, you may also say I stayed there for 3 days from 3<sup>rd</sup>. अहं तृतीयदिनाङ्कतः दिनत्रयं तत्र उषितवान्।

Notice that we have used पूरणसङ्ख्याः here for dates. Accordingly, it would be better to say 'मम पुत्रः एकविंशतितम-दिनाङ्कतः त्रयोविंशतितम-दिनाङ्कपर्यन्तं मुम्बय्यां स्थास्यति।' (hyphens for comfort in reading only) as compared to 'मम पुत्रः एकविंशति-तः त्रयोविंशति-पर्यन्तं मुम्बय्यां स्थास्यति.'. We hardly ever say in English - 'My son will stay at Mumbai from 20 to 23'. Won't we prefer the usage: 'My son will stay at Mumbai from 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>'. In local languages though, we sometimes tend to use '20 to 23'.

- Krupalu Ogeti

Sanskrit Bharati, Hyderabad, okrupalu@sanskritam.net,  
Ph : 73962 49650

### Paired Terms (continued)

Earlier we saw the usage of यदि..तर्हि or चेत् (and नोचेत्). There is a similar sounding pair यद्यपि... तथापि..., which stands for the usage like 'even though'. For example, look at this sentence: Even though it is raining, he still went to college. Samskrit for this could be यद्यपि बहु वर्षति तथापि सः कलाशालां गतवान्।

Similar examples:

- 1) यद्यपि 'आप'-पक्षः प्रथमवारं निर्वाचनस्पर्धायां भागं स्वीकृतवान्, तथापि बहु सङ्ख्यां प्राप्तवान्।
- 2) अहं यद्यपि तत्र न आसम्, तथापि तत्र किं किं जातम् इति सर्वं जानामि।
- 3) यद्यपि पाण्डवानां सेना अल्पा आसीत् तथापि ते एव जितवन्तः।
- 4) यद्यपि तत्क्षणे भवतः कष्टं भवति, तथापि भवान् सत्यम् एव वदतु।
- 5) यद्यपि सर्वकारः बहु प्रयत्नं कृतवान्, तथापि कालधनं न प्राप्तम् एव।

See if your understanding of the above matches with the following:

- 1) Even though AAP party took part in the elections for the first time, still it got large numbers.
- 2) Even though I was not there, I still know what all happened there.
- 3) Even though Pandava's army was small, they only won.
- 4) Even though you would be insulted at that time, still speak only the truth.
- 5) Though government tried hard, still black money was not obtained.

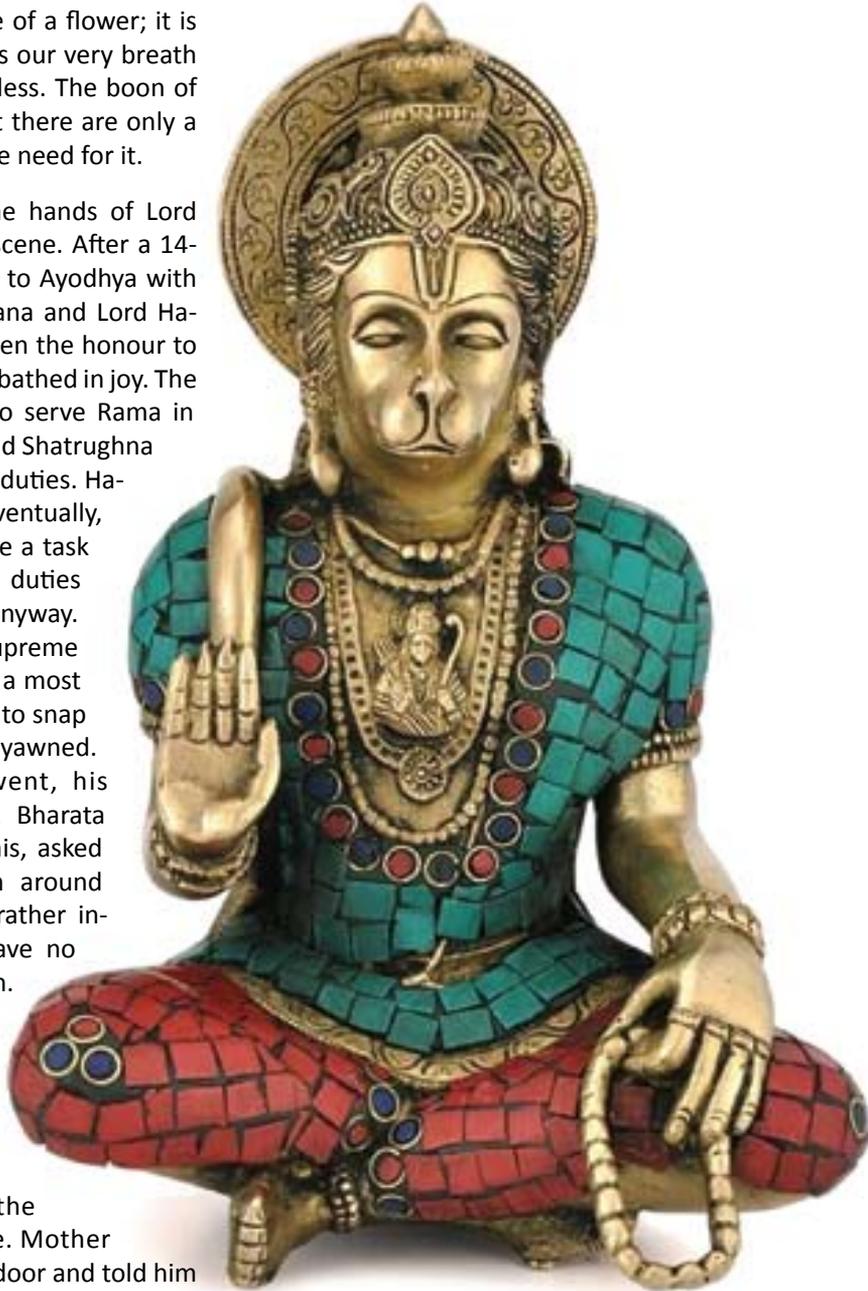
# The Embodiment of Intense Devotion

## Lord Hanuman

Devotion is the fragrance of a flower; it is the essence of life. Devotion is our very breath without which life is meaningless. The boon of devotion is available to all but there are only a precious few who even feel the need for it.

After Ravana's defeat at the hands of Lord Rama, Lanka was a different scene. After a 14-year-old exile, Rama returned to Ayodhya with Mother Sita, brother Lakshmana and Lord Hanuman. Rama was lovingly given the honour to be the king, and the town was bathed in joy. The citizens of Ayodhya wanted to serve Rama in every possible way. Bharata and Shatrughna were given the task to list out duties. Hanuman was not in the list. Eventually, Hanuman was asked to choose a task for himself, assuming all the duties were assigned to everyone anyway. Hanuman, known for his supreme intelligence, appeared to take a most insignificant duty – He wished to snap his fingers each time Rama yawned. And so, wherever Rama went, his shadow, Hanuman, followed. Bharata and Shatrughna puzzled at this, asked Hanuman why he was seen around Rama constantly. Hanuman, rather innocently, said to them, "I have no idea when our Lord will yawn. Therefore, I have to be with Him constantly." This is how Hanuman earned himself the privilege of being with Rama all the time.

By nightfall, Rama entered the inner chambers of the palace. Mother Sita stopped Hanuman at the door and told him she was the only one to follow Rama to serve Him in the night. Hanuman had every knowledge in the world and wondered what was the extra qualification needed to serve Rama in the night. When Mother Sita was questioned, she



realised she did not have a proper explanation; she quickly remembered the *Kumkum* on her forehead and pointing to it said, "I wear this *Kumkum* on my forehead and you do not. It is

worn so that Rama has a long life.” Hanuman wasted no time, bounced out and raced back with his entire body smeared with kumkum. This devotion is possible only if one has simplicity.

Ayodhya was verily heaven since Rama’s return from Lanka. However the *Vaanaraas* seemed a sad lot because they began to miss their families. Rama decided to give a grand farewell to the *Vaanaraa*-soldiers. The programme ran into hours and finally when Hanuman’s turn came, he was absent. Hanuman was crying his heart out behind a pillar like an innocent child. How could he even think of separation from his Lord? Rama called out to Hanuman several times but there was no response. He then sent his soldiers to look for Hanuman. Finally, Hanuman came with tears in his eyes, “I am too weak to bear any separation from You.” Rama, the omniscient Lord, assured Hanuman, “Hanuman, you are my true devotee for you remember me every moment and sing my glory. I assure you I will never leave you and you will never leave me.” Thus Rama offered Himself to His dearest devotee, Hanuman. Indeed Hanuman’s unimaginable devotion and total surrender won Rama’s heart. Hanuman and Rama were inseparably ONE. The only goal of Hanuman’s life was to chant Rama’s name breathlessly and serve Him in every possible way with utmost humility, reverence, gratitude and devotion.

A saint told a devotee, “You will have to pray to Lord Hanuman for pure devotion for only He has the secret to merge with Lord Rama.”

“O Lord Hanuman, please grant us the boon of ceaseless devotion.”

- Dharmendra Kalita, III Yr. B.A.,  
Prasanthi Nilayam



## CUCUMBER

Common Name: Cucumber

Scientific Name: Cucumis Sativus

### BENEFITS

- ❖ It helps to cure Obesity, Blood pressure, Diabetes, Arthritis (Gout) etc.
- ❖ It prevents Head ache, Cancer, Dehydration, kidney stone
- ❖ It will help to stimulate hair growth
- ❖ The high water content, Vitamins A, B & C and presence of Magnesium & Potassium make cucumber as essential part of skin care

#### 100 gm of Cucumber Contains

|                  |   |          |
|------------------|---|----------|
| Energy           | - | 15 kcal  |
| Carbohydrate     | - | 3.36 g   |
| Protein          | - | 0.65 g   |
| Dietary fibre    | - | 0.5 g    |
| Folate           | - | 7 µg     |
| Pyridoxine       | - | 0.040 mg |
| Pantothenic acid | - | 0.259 mg |
| Niacin           | - | 0.098 mg |
| Thiamin          | - | 0.027 mg |
| Vitamin A        | - | 105 IU   |
| Vitamin C        | - | 2.8 mg   |
| Vitamin E        | - | 0.03 mg  |
| Vitamin K        | - | 16.4 µg  |
| Sodium           | - | 2 mg     |
| Potassium        | - | 147 mg   |
| Magnesium        | - | 13 mg    |
| Calcium          | - | 16 mg    |



## Baddha Konasana

(Correction in Yoga Page)

*In* March 2015 issue of Nachiketanjali, an error occurred in printing the pictures for Baddha Konasana (Pages 16 & 17). We regret the error. The correct postures of Baddha Konasana are given in this issue.

**Mataji illustrates Baddha Konasana**



**Thanks to Donors**



**We are extremely thankful to**

**Well Wisher**  
for his kind donation of ₹ 80,000/-  
Corpus Fund - Annadanam

**Sri Sumanth Katta, Florida, USA**  
for his kind donation of \$ 500  
Corpus Fund -  
Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir



**NACHIKETA'S  
GO GREEN CLUB**

*We convey our thanks to all the participants of the WOW initiative. You helped us earn Rs. 18,130/- in the month of February and helped in keeping Mother Earth cleaner by recycling about 2590 kg of plastic and paper waste material.*

PEOPLE ARE  
GOING TO JUDGE  
YOU ANYWAY.  
SO FORGET  
EVERYONE AND  
BE YOURSELF.



# SHUBHA MAHA SHIVA DINAM & RATRI

*A* 7-hour retreat on the day of holy Maha Shivaratri, Swami Nachiketananda explained the meaning of Shiva. The deeper meaning of the term (*yogārtha*) can be understood by considering its components ‘Sha’ + ‘ee’ + ‘Va.’ ‘Sh’ stands for ‘*sharira*’ (body), ‘I’ for ‘*ishwari*’ (*Shakti*) and ‘va’ for ‘*vayu*’ (one of the *panchabhutas*). Without ‘ee’ or *Shakti*, what we have left is ‘*shava*’, i.e., a corpse. Swamiji then helped *sadhakas* understand the significance of *kriyas*— ‘*kriya*’ means ‘action’ or ‘activity’ – and it is through *kriyas* that we can activate our *Shakti*, and develop ourselves to realize our own *Shiva-tattva*.

At the retreat were forty *sadhakas*, mainly from Hyderabad and Mahaboobnagar. Guided by Swamiji, they learned *Maha Chaitanya Kriya* and *Shakti Sanchalana*. After that, they practiced ‘*mauna*’ (silence) in two ways—in the first session, how to arrest thoughts using a *mantra*, or ‘no’ or ‘I am witnessing’, and in the second session, to allow the natural flow of thoughts flow while cultivating the awareness of ‘I am witnessing.’ In both cases, thoughts tend to cease, and the entire process takes us from body consciousness to mind consciousness and furthermore to an awareness of ‘self’ as distinct from the mind and body.

People from Nachiketa ashram’s neighboring villages and towns began to pour into the Ma Yoga Shakti Peetham right from early morning. Gathered there on the *mandapam* (platform) of

the temple, some five hundred *bhaktas* enjoyed the *bhajans* and dance and drama presentations by the students of Nachiketa Tapovan Hyderabad and Nachiketa Tapovan Veda Vyasa Vidyalaya. The celebrations were followed by a *Shivaratri homam* conducted by Mataji, and then *Abhishekham*, where each and every one of the hundreds of devotees had the opportunity to enter the sanctum sanctorum and offer *Abhishekam* to the *Yoga Lingam* personally. The day-long fasting (*upavāsa*) and night-long waking (*jaagaran*) was a shared and elevating experience for the entire community.

## Naishtika Brahmacharya Deeksha:

A highlight of the Maha Shivaratri celebration was the conferring of *brahmacharya* on a dedicated 16-year old student from Nachiketa Tapovan. Previously known as ‘Basavaraju,’ he is well-known to ashram residents and visitors as well as to our school students in Hyderabad for his tireless and selfless service and deep, quiet *sadhana*. Readers of Nachiketanjali may remember that this is one of the students we are so proud of. He completed his final year at Nachiketa Tapovan and has been taking coaching in Ayurveda entrance exams.

Mataji gave Basavaraju *Brahmacharya deeksha* in the morning before Maha Shivaratri, and at night, conducted his ‘*naamakaranamu*’ or naming ceremony- he is now renamed as *Brahmachari Prema Chaitanya*. Br. Prema Chaitanya received



Volunteers exhibit their creativity in drawing a replica of YOGA LINGAM inside Ma Yoga Shakti Peetam

the blessings of – and '*bhiksha*' from ashram residents, visitors and volunteers. As his birth-mother and other family members were also present to celebrate the occasion, Br. Prema Chaitanya was doubly blessed. Swamiji was euphoric as he explained internal readiness and external symbols, as well as how this is only a reaffirmation of the brahmachari's sacrifice, dedication and service for the community (and not to be mistaken as a withdrawal). Br. Prema Chaitanya will continue his studies, as well as study spiritual literature such as the Vedas and Upanishads. The significance of this occasion was felt by all those who were present— Br. Prema Chaitanya marks a new generation of spiritual leaders at Nachiketa Ashram.

*- A Sadhaka*



**Mataji applies *tilak* and blesses Basava Raju**



**Cultural performances**



**Mataji introduces Br. Prema Chaitanya to the audience**



# ASHRAM NEWS

## *Prajapita Brahmakumari, Jadcherla*

On 9<sup>th</sup> February 2015, Prajapita Brahmakumari, Jadcherla centre invited Swamiji and Mataji for Maha Shivaratri Celebrations. *Didi*, Head of the four districts enlightened the gathering with her talks on Shiva *Tattva* and *Shivamahima*. Mataji as usual spoke from her heart about *sadhana*. She said one should crave for God the same way as one would crave for food when hungry. Her simple and sweet words have enthralled the *ganas* of Shiva. Swamiji, spoke about *Matru Shakti* and appealed to the audience to become a role model like all *Didis* who have sacrificed their lives for the welfare of society. The program went on very well. There was flag hoisting at the new centre followed by sumptuous meals.



Swamiji addresses the gathering



## *Val Leivers...*

A real soldier, a true educationist, a compassionate soul, a symbol of hope, a guide and our true friend, dear Val spent her 8 valuable days from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> February 2015, with us and conquered the hearts of our tiny children. From teaching to interacting, visiting Ma Yog Shakti Peetham to Peddabhai Tanda, dancing with them to understanding their basic needs, silently visiting their tiny and thatched huts to silently shedding tears for their poverty stricken lifestyle, cleaning up the flooring of Ma Yog Shakti Peetham to cleaning up the minds of children to take them to the next level, and sharing whatever possible to feeling for their life... Val has done great work. She was seen playing every possible role that can take our society to the next level. Before departing with tears in her eyes, she made a promise to come back next year for one month and in future to spend more time with the children of immortality.



Val Leivers



Being one with them!

## *Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's Birthday Celebrations*

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's Birthday was celebrated at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram on 20th February 2015. *Abhishekam* was performed and *Arathi* given by Brahmachari Prem Chaitanya and *prasad* was distributed to all.



**Br. Prema Chaitanya performing Arathi**



**Swamiji & Mataji interact with the children**

## *A visit to Kalidindi Ranga Raju School*

On 21st February 2015, Swami Nachiketa-nanda Puri and Swami Shivananda Puri visited 'Kalidindi Ranga Raju School' at Podagatlapalli Ramachandrapuram in East Godavari district and conducted games for children to improve their concentration. Mataji narrated a story on environment and advised the children to respect the '*panchabuthas*'. Children enjoyed their presence.



# EVENTS & CELEBRATIONS



## Sports conducted by HCL

On 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015, a group of employees from HCL company visited Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir and conducted different games for higher grade students.



## Workshop on Teaching

On 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015, one of our volunteer Mrs. Pushkala Raman conducted a workshop on teaching techniques on English grammar to all the teachers of Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir.



## Butterfly Fields

On 5<sup>th</sup> February 2015, Sri P. Rama Naren (Trainer) from Butterfly Fields held a session of science experiments for students of Grades 7<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> of Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir. The students took a keen participation and had great exposure. The entire Nachiketa Tapovan team is thankful to Butterfly fields.



## Val Leivers Visit

On 10<sup>th</sup> February 2015, Mrs. Val Leivers from Nottingham, UK visited Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir and interacted with the children.



Children enjoy Mrs. Val's presence



A beautiful presentation!

## Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Jayanthi

On 19<sup>th</sup> February 2015, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa *Jayanthi* celebrations were held at Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir. Stories and quotations of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa were presented by few students.



**Turn around their future!**

**For ₹ 1 Lakh**

**Your donation will last a lifetime**

**Appeal for Sponsor-a-Child Corpus Fund**

**Nachiketa Tapovan runs a Vidya Mandir, a free Home Schooling for underprivileged children:**

Nachiketa Tapovan aims at imparting, man-making education rather than bread-winning academics, so the syllabus is designed in such a way that it can suffice SSC/CBSE/NIOS curriculum. 250 children receive education in English as medium of language offering levels 1-10. Apart from education Yoga, Arts & Crafts, Vocational Training, Music, Dance, Samskrit and Computer classes are also part of the curriculum. All these services are rendered by 50 volunteers and 12 coordinators.

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% 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 Coordinators' Honorarium, Uniforms, Educational material, Building Maintenance and Housekeeping, Field trips, Excursions, Celebrations and Extra Curricular activities.*

✓ *At present, we only have 68 corpus sponsorships, help us reach all of our 250 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 at Nachiketa Tapovan.**



# Only Because of YOU...



Only because of kind-hearted well wishers like you Nachiketa Tapovan is able to provide free education, stationery and nourishing milk-n-meals to 250 children attending Nachiketa Tapovan's Vidya Mandir - a free home school organized with the help of 12 Coordinators, 50 volunteers and community participation.

**anna dAnam mahA dAnam; vidyA dAnam mahattaram**

**Celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, festivals and special occasions with children at Tapovan by sponsoring:**

### Donations towards operation costs

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Vidya Daanam (Education)                      | ₹ 6500/year/child |
| Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)                   | ₹ 5500/day        |
| Alpa Aharam (Snacks)                          | ₹ 800/day         |
| Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)                      | ₹ 900/2 pairs     |
| Stationery Supplies (Copier Paper)            | ₹ 5000/term       |
| Medicines (For needy people)                  | ₹ 5000/month      |
| Sponsor any Festival at Ma Yogashakti Peetham | ₹ 20000           |

### \*Corpus Fund Options

|                             |           |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Sponsor a child             | ₹ 1 Lakh  |
| Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals) | ₹ 60000/- |
| Alpa Aharam (Snacks)        | ₹ 10000/- |

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

- One child's education annually.
- Mid-day Meals for children for one day annually.
- Snacks for children 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         |
| IFSC Code          | : SBIN0012655         |
| SWIFT Code         | : SBININBB214         |

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



**"How can there be any progress of the country without the spread of education, the dawning of knowledge?"**

*- Swami Vivekananda*



## FREE SUMMER CAMP

### Personality Development Camp for Children

Nachiketa Tapovan's 16th year Summer Camp will be held  
from **May 3rd to 10th 2015**

**Time: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

**Age Limit : 12-15 years**

**Last date for Registration 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2015**

**This program helps your children learn**

- |                     |                   |              |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| ★ Positive Thinking | ★ Self Confidence | ★ Creativity |
| ★ Decision Making   | ★ Yogasanas       | ★ Pranayama  |
| ★ Meditation        | ★ Power of Prayer | ★ Values     |

**First come First serve**

**Registration forms are now available at the Venue:  
Nachiketa Tapovan, # 70, Phase-1, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur, Hyderabad**

**For details call : 9849168937**

2



Mahavir Jayanathi

## Festivals & Events of APRIL 2015

29



Sarva Ekadasi

3



Good Friday

21



Akshaya Trithiya

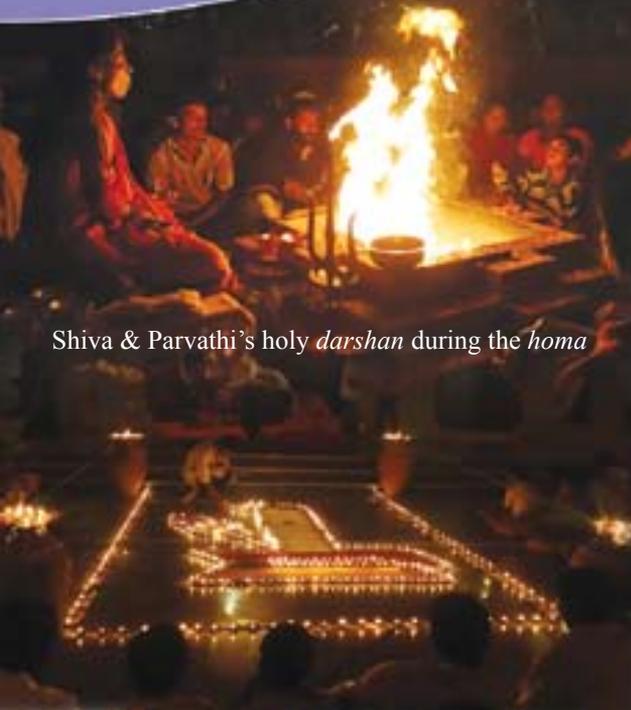
23



Sri Shankaracharya Jayanathi

# Mahashivaratri Celebrations

Yoga Lingam  
at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram



Shiva & Parvathi's holy *darshan* during the *homa*



Swamiji & Mataji address the gathering



Basavaraju's Mother gives him the holy bath before Brahmacharya Deeksha



Cultural Performances by students

Today you have a choice, tomorrow may be too late...

By the year 2025, 2.8 billion people, one third of the world's population will experience water scarcity. About 25 to 30% of the population in Gujarat, Rajasthan, the Gangetic Plains, West Bengal and the North Eastern Areas will have practically no water.

Consequently the water crisis will dwarf the oil crisis.

Ignore the crisis and be a part of the problem, evaluate your option and be a part of the solution. The choice is simple, so is our contribution, a *Dual Flush*.

Flush the *Superflo* way, use the *Dual Flush*.

It's small, it's smart, it's a start.



\*Superflo Dual Flush Valve  
Indian Patent Nos. 196441 & 200284

Every  
Drop  
Counts

A Dual Flush is a valve, which gives you the flexibility to discharge varying amounts of water depending on the usage.

It can be adjusted to discharge less quantity of water say 3 liters (half flush) or 6 liters (full flush).

All the leading Sanitaryware Manufacturers have chosen the *Superflo Dual Flush*.\*

Use a dual flush; be a part of the drive – a drive to save the most precious resource of our planet... *water!*

*Water is the very core of life, It is life's mother (source) and medium.*

*There is no life without water. It is high time we realize & accept this truth.*

*– Gautam Vir*