

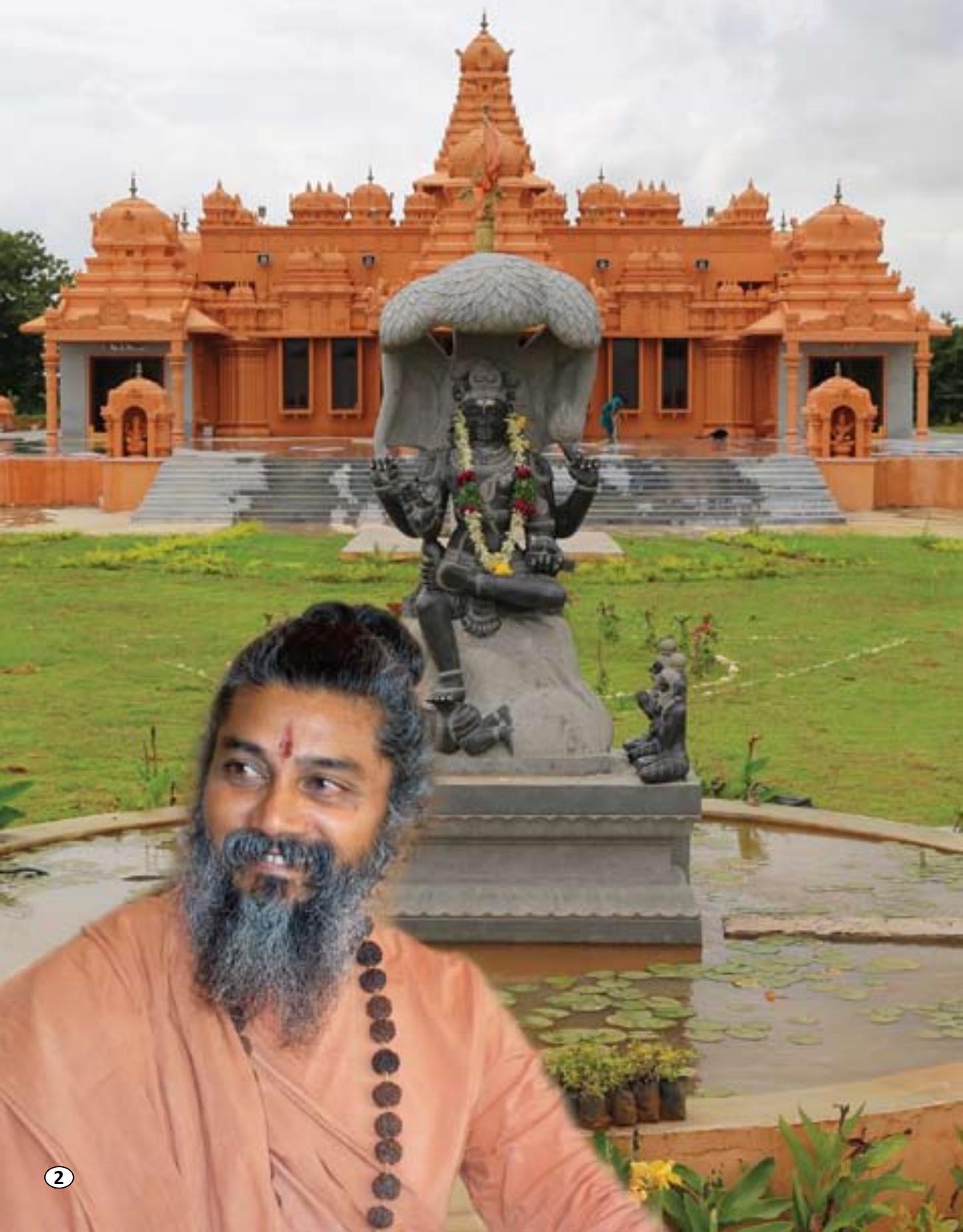
Nachiketanjali

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Happy Birthday Swamiji!!!

Volunteers, Teachers, Children & Karmayogis of Nachiketa Tapovan





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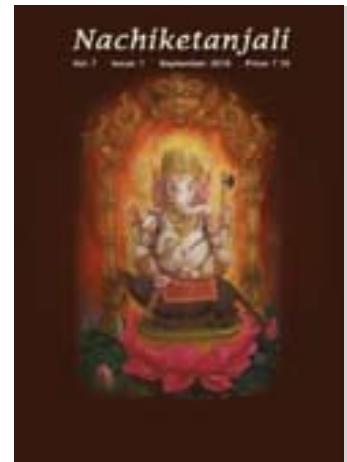
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**Cover
Story**



Sri Ganeshaa

*Eka-Dantam Catur-Hastam Paasham-
Angkusha-Dhaarinnam |*

*Radam Ca Vara-Dam Hastair-Bibhraannam
Muussaka-Dhvajam ||*

*Raktam Lambo daram Shuurpa-Karnnakam
Rakta-Vaasasam |*

*Rakta-Gandha-Anulipta-Anggam Rakta-
Pusspais-Supuujitam ||*

Meaning:

(The visible form of Ganapati is as follows) His Face has a single Tusk (*Ekadantam*); He has Four Hands (*Catur-Hastam*); with two of His Hands, he is holding Noose (*Pasha*) and Goad (*Ankusha*),

With His third Hand He is holding a Tusk (*Rada*), and with His fourth Hand He is showing the gesture of Boon-Giving (*Varada Mudra*); His Flag is having the Emblem of a Rat (*Mushaka*),

His Form is having a Beautiful Reddish Glow (*Raktam*), with a Large Belly (*Lambodara*) and with Large Ears like Fans (*Shurpa Karna*); He is wearing Red Garments (*Rakta Vasam*),

His Form is anointed with Red Fragrant Paste (*Rakta Gandha*), and He is worshipped with Red Flowers (*Rakta Pushpa*).



*E*veryone has the right to question. Even so, questioning one's own self is exceedingly important. 'Who are you'? This is the common question we pose to others but the question 'who am I' has become a rarity. Nevertheless, this is the question that serves as the first step to reach the peaks of true knowledge. Stay assured, once we set our foot on this first step we are sure to go ahead though at our own pace. There is no looking back. The answer might manifest the very next moment, or after some years or maybe after a few births. Never mind! We have embarked on the quest and that is more important.

Who we were, prior to this birth or our previous destination might not be known to us. What role we have played on the material stage is also a mystery. Where we might go when the curtain falls is also enigmatic. Quite frequently, we encounter death of a known or an unknown person. Even a moment spent in giving a thought to the mysterious cycle of birth and death will push us onto the path of seeking the reality. Our search is on!

We human beings are blessed with the intellect of finding out the source of our existence. No other creature in this world is blessed with this faculty. Then what is it that stops us from utilizing our gifted faculties in knowing the truth? We are indeed gifted

with the questions and also the solutions. The interest to probe lies with us alone. No one else is going to do the job for us; neither our own blood relations or for that matter even our Gurus. A guru will show us the path but he cannot walk the path for us. He might talk to you about the taste of the fruit but it is you who have to eat to know what it tastes like.

A person's true stature lies in the space between birth and death. One should never get swept away in the tide of time without acquiring the true knowledge of who he really is? Our search will lead us to the depths of the ocean of knowledge. We might encounter waves but ignore them. Our pursuit is to grasp the profundity. And once we are there we are encompassed by the light of true knowledge. Our quest ends here for we have understood 'who we are'! Our query 'Who am I', has found the answer.

Be wary, there are no shortcuts in this path. It is a straight path with no curves or bends and it leads us straight to the source!

So, 'Who are you'? OR 'Who am I'?

What do you think is more precise?

- Subhadra K.

I am not a Mystic... Neither am I, a Mistake...!



Like our Ashrama there are many Ashramas and in one of the Ashramas, an incident took place. There were many disciples, and *grihasthas* also were visiting this Ashrama. They celebrated all festivals. And whenever such programs were going on, one particular disciple was keenly observing them... He was trying to understand why it was going on this way. What he observed was, similar type of activities were performed by his Guru and all his disciples. He felt, my Guru also eats and we also eat, my Guru also sleeps and we also sleep... my Guru also bows down to Shiva, Maa Kali, Rama and Krishna just like us, then what is the difference? Though he started thinking in this way, yet he could not find any difference. He felt, 'When there is no difference between us then why should I bow down to

my Guru? He might be a scholarly person but I am also learning Vedas and I can master them. Then what is the difference?" Now you tell me, if such similar thoughts are entertained by some people what can we say to them? ...

If Guru is eating and *Shishya* is also eating there should be some difference... In the same way there should be some difference in their sleep and bowing down before deities, isn't it? It is very important to know the difference... very, very important. The Guru tries to fulfill all his bodily *karmas*. But when a *shishya* eats, he eats for his own body requirement. A *shishya* tries to sleep to rest his tired body. But a Guru doesn't sleep for his own needs. There is a vast difference. Externally it might appear similar. But internally there is a vast difference and

we have to understand where the difference lies. If Guru is working somewhere for some cause, there should be a reason behind it. And that reason may be because of hundred other reasons. There is a divine reason behind! It is a selfless desire to serve. A disciple has not reached to that level, so he doesn't have that clarity.

The Guru is selfless. The disciple who hasn't reached to that level is selfish. He works for himself. A Guru is in the least bothered about his body or mind. The difference lies there. Ramana Maharshi stands as a great example. He had cancer and many surgeries were done with the disciples' insistence. But when his time was up, he refused to have any further treatment. He knew his body was going to perish. He knew why he had got that body...

I am not a **MYSTIC**, who can perform great wonders, but I came to know that I am not a **MISTAKE** also! There is a vast difference between mystic and mistake. If you have that very clarity that you are not a mistake in this universe and in Divine Mother's play, then you have achieved everything. Even if you know that you are a mistake, you can always start changing yourself. I am not bothered about mystics. I don't even pay much attention to them. But if people realize that they are not a mistake in Divine Mother's play, I would bow down to such souls... Because they have grown!

The moment you think you are a mystic, then you can close the book. You have put a full stop. You think that you have rewritten your entire history and there is nothing else to know. The one who realizes whether he is a mistake or not a mistake has more stability. He has more scope to grow. That is the difference! So somewhere when you feel you have to make changes in your life style you have to start doing it. It is not a process that ends somewhere. It is a process that goes on continuously... nonstop! Somewhere we have misunderstood this entire concept, like they say how Vedanta is the end of all knowledge and beyond that there is nothing

*“I am like the mala
in your hand, not
even the Mantra. The
person sitting in front
of you and talking
to you is just like a
japamala.”*

to explore; similarly if one thinks he is a mystic and there is nothing else to explore then he is mistaken. There are many more dimensions to explore and there is no end to it. It is an ongoing process... and in this process a beautiful *tattwa* or essence comes to the surface and that becomes a part and parcel of your life. And that *tattwa* is nothing but Guru *tattwa*...the essence of the Guru. That essence of Guru is everywhere. It is not only in Adishankaracharya or Totapuri, or Ramakrishna or Vivekananda or Saradadevi. It is there in all of us. The only difference is, as I said initially, they are selfless souls and function from different levels. They know exactly as to what has to be done and where to stop. They have the clarity, whereas we calculate so many things in order to take a step. That is how we function. But the one who has experienced the Guru *tattwa* does not need any external communication for he is always communicating with his Self, his inner essence. That is why they always take the right step in this world.

Believe me, no one is a mystic... It is only a difference in degree. Somewhere someone is vibrating with hundred miles per hour and in another case 10 miles per hour...it is just a



difference in degree and nothing else... A survey was done in Los Angeles and they have stated that on Purnima Day, divine powers are very high and people go mad with these energies. ... These energies can be expressed in many ways. You can become a good singer, or a good artist or a good mother and so on. It is there in me and it is there in you also. So try to understand that we need not be mystics, but at the same time not mistake also.

God has created you and me...and how can we take credit for His creation? When somebody else has created and that someone is complete without a single mistake, how can anything be a mistake? If at all there is, then it can be only the mystic, not the mistake. It is a divine thing. Do you think there will be a mistake in God's creation? ...It is only because we don't have proper awareness of our own contribution. That is the reason why when somebody asks my opinion about Hitler or Pakistan, I take a pause. Many things can happen in that pause, but that is a secondary thing. What the divine opinion is I don't know, then how can I give my own opinion?

If you are dozing off here, I can tell the reason, it is because you are tired. But for your presence here, there is some reason behind it. It is divine reason. How this situation is going to change your life's scenario after 10 or 20 years, no one knows... We have a very tiny mind and understanding. We are not able to go beyond that small mind. We need to expand our understanding and transcend ourselves. But we are so confined to our own boundaries that we make no attempts to expand our understanding and there is a beautiful world out there... If you truly will, to bring a change within, then you have to come to the surface and work towards it. It just takes a single, sincere thought and things would start happening. Believe me! No one can stop you from changing if you really have that strong will.

Every day is Guru Purnima, it is not just a festival... Every moment is fresh. If someone wanted to celebrate Guru Purnima and has

missed out this moment, it doesn't make any difference. As far as I am concerned it is very clear to me. Whether I speak or not, whether I am here or there it doesn't matter to me, because I know, the very moment I leave, I live in the moment...I am present in that moment. That is the reason why I said, I am not a mystic but neither am I a mistake... Somewhere down deep I can understand my role. What about you? Even if you have done mistakes, you can always change yourselves. You just need the will to change. Are you willing to change yourselves?

I am like the *mala* in your hand, not even the *Mantra*. The person sitting in front of you and talking to you is just like a *japamala*. When you do *japa*, a stage should come where your body and mind becomes still, your *japamala* drops from your hand and you experience the state of *ajapa*. So my role in your life is like the *japamala*. How long you want to hold that *mala* is left to you. There are great souls who even after achieving the greatest state have held the *mala* in their hand till their last breath...

To become a mystic is quite easy but knowing that you are not a mystic is a big thing!

So, remember, every day is Guru Purnima. Every day you can do *manasika japa*. Guru is not somewhere outside. He is inside you. Ultimately we have to experience that *tattwa* or essence within. Guru is not separate from you. He is one with you. There is no two. There is only one. And that one has to be experienced. You have to reach to that state to realize that essence.

It is okay if you are not able to attend any Gurupurnima celebrations. You can stay where you are and experience the Guru *tattwa* within you...

Hari Om Tatsat!!!

- *Swami Nachiketananda Puri*

(Swamiji's Guru Purnima Message)





Amrita Dhara...

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

Religious quarrels condemned

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 court pundit of the Maharaja of Burdwan. Once at a meeting, the pundits were discussing whether Śiva was superior to Brahma, or Brahma to Śiva. Padmalochan gave an appropriate reply. 'I don't know anything about it', said he. 'I haven't talked either to Śiva or to Brahma.'

Single-minded devotion

"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 Vrindāvan- 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 Kāli 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.

The Master sang a few more songs in praise of the Divine Mother. Then he said to the devotees: "It is not always best to tell householders about the sorrows of life. They want bliss. Those who suffer from chronic poverty can go without food for a day or two. But it is not wise to talk about the sorrows and miseries of life to those who suffer if their food is delayed a few minutes. Vaishnavcharan used to say: 'Why should one constantly dwell on sin? Be merry!'"

While the Master was resting after his midday meal, Manohor Goswami, a singer of *kirtan*, arrived. He sang about the ecstatic love of Gauranga and the divine episode of Vrindāvan. The Master was absorbed in a deep spiritual mood. He tore off his shirt and said, to the melody of the *kirtan*, assuming the attitude of Radha: "O Krishna, my Beloved! O friends, bring Krishna to me. Then you will be real friends. Or take me to Him, and I will be your slave forever."

The musician sat spellbound at Sri Ramakrishna's ecstasy; then he said with folded hands, "Won't you please rid me of my worldliness?"

MASTER: "You are like the holy man who went about the city after first finding a lodging. You are a sweet person and express many sweet ideas."

MUSICIAN: "Sir, I am like the bullock that only carries the bag of sugar but cannot taste it. Alas, I myself do not enjoy the sweetness of divine bliss."

The melodious music went on, and all were filled with joy.

Source: Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna
By Swami Nikhilananda



Sri Siddhivinayak Ganapathi Temple

The Birth of Shree Siddhivinayak Ganapati
Ganesha the Divine!

The old temple was consecrated on Thursday, 19th November 1801. According to our Hindu Calendar it falls on Kartik Shuddha Chaturdashi, Shake 1723 in "Durmukh Samvatsar". Its built-up area was 3.60mtr. x 3.60mtr. square. It was ground floor structure. It had 450mm thick brick walls and old type dome, again of brick with a *Kalash* above. Around the dome, a parapet wall with grills was the structure of the temple. The floor level of the temple and road level were also the same.

This temple is on the corner of Kakasaheb Gadgil Marg and S.K.Bole Marg in Prabhadevi, which is facing heavy vehicular traffic. It was built by a professional contractor, Late Mr.Laxman Vithu Patil as per the financial support and instructions of Late Mrs.Deubai Patil, who was a rich lady of Agri Samaj from Matunga. Although she was rich enough, she had no child.

The idea of the construction of the temple struck to Late Deubai during the prayer time, she humbly requested Lord Ganesh and said, "Although I cannot have a child, let other ladies who are childless get the pleasure of child on visiting the temple and praying to you". Looking at successful subsequent history of the temple, it appears like the Lord Ganesh nodded to this humble request and pious thoughts and deeds of Late Deubai Patil.

It is, therefore, this Siddhivinayak is famous for it and known as "Navasacha Ganapati" or "Navasala Pavanara Ganapati" in Marathi (Ganapati bestows whenever humbly genuinely prayed a wish) among devotees.

The idol of Shree Siddhivinayak was carved out of a single black stone and is 2'6" (750mm) high and 2' (600mm) wide with the trunk on the right. This is rather an unusual appearance of Lord Ganesh. The upper right and left hands hold a lotus and an axe respectively while the lower right and left hands hold a rosary (*japamala*) and a bowl full of "Modak" respectively. As it resembles the sacred thread, a snake appears on the left shoulder and descends to the right side of the belly. On the forehead of deity is an eye, which almost looks like the third eye of Lord Shiva. On both sides of the Lord Ganesh idol, are placed one idol each of Riddhi and Siddhi Goddesses, who appear as though they are peeping out of the Ganesh idol from behind. Because of these two deities along with Lord Ganesh, this temple is known as the Siddhivinayak Ganapati Temple. These Goddesses signify sanctity, success, wealth and prosperity.

Around 125 years ago, Shri Akkalkot Swami Samarth's great disciple, Late Ramakrishna Jambhekar Maharaj, who was also an ardent devotee of Lord Ganesh and Gayatri Mantra was blessed with *Assyssinian* (*Siddhi*). One day Swami Samarth asked Shri Jambhekar to bring divine

idols. Out of the idols, except two idols, Swami Samarth told him to bury in the front courtyard of the house of Swami Samarth's another disciple Shri Cholappa, where Swami Samarth used to temporarily reside. Shri Jambhekar was also told to inhume remaining two idols in front of Lord Ganesh that he usually worshipped. During his attendance with Swami Samarth, Shri Jambhekar foretold that a *Mandaar* tree (hibiscus) would grow on the place after 21 years and *Swayambhu* Ganesh would appear on the sacred place. From that time onwards people's devotion would grow in leaps and bounds.

After few years, Jambhekar Maharaj whose Math is near the sea-shore at Dadar, Mumbai, asked the Late Priest Govind Chintaman Phatak to look after, perform regular religious pooja etc. of Shree Siddhivinayak Temple. The predecessor of Priest Phatak, there was Late Namdev Kelkar performing priesthood job in the temple.

From the available information and records, the land of the temple complex was around 2550 sq.mtrs. There was a lake towards eastern and southern side of the temple ad measuring approx. 30 x 40 sq.mtrs. This lake was built by Nardulla in early 19th century, to overcome the scarcity of the water, faced by the area. The lake was, later on, filled up, and now it is a playground and a part of Kakasaheb Gadgil Marg.

There was also a rest house or *Dharmashala* and a pair of beautiful 3.6 in high, stone masonry "Deepmalas". There was also a dwelling unit for the owner of this complex. In the earlier days there were not many structures of residential and commercial type in its neighborhood area. The devotees in large numbers started visiting the temple only after 1952 and the long standing queues were seen from 1965 onwards.

Since the owner had divided the original plot and subleased it to different parties, naturally the space available around this old temple reduced and became quite small. After 1975, the number of devotees visiting the temple started growing by real sense of Geometrical Progression. It became difficult to enter the temple or even to have "*Darshan*" of Lord Ganesh as the devotees were finding it quite troublesome to enter through the two small doors.



The Hindu religion encompasses various deities for worshipping. Devotees put their faith in the deity they worship. For instance, Shree Samarth Ramdas was a devotee of Shree Ram. He made worshipping of Shree Ram as his sole life duty. Sant Eknath was ardently devoted to Shree Dattatreya.

Shree Ganesha being the primary deity is always worshipped prior to worshipping of any other deity.

During the road extension project of Sayani Road near Elphinstone Road in Mumbai the workers of Municipal Corporation unearthed an idol of Shree Hanuman.

They placed it on the roadside and continued with their work.

Devotees coming to Shree Siddhivinayak Temple brought this event to the notice of the then head priest Shree Govind Phatak. He immediately brought the Hanuman idol and built a compact temple for Lord Hanuman. This was around 1952.

The renovation has given the Hanuman temple a new look and the present temple as it stands today.

From dawn to temple closing hours, the Hanuman Mandir has its own schedule of *pujas*, *naivedya* & *aartis*. Every Saturday, devotees are supplied with the traditional offerings of oil and Rui garland at a minimal cost on coupon basis, a day when many devotees flock to the temple.

Source: Siddhivinayak Temple History



HINTS ON PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY

(Delivered at the Home of Truth, Los Angeles, California)

... You often note, when people are discussing as to what man and woman can do, always the same mistake is made. They think they show man at his best because he can fight, for instance, and undergo tremendous physical exertion; and this is pitted against the physical weakness and the non-combatting quality of woman. This is unjust. Woman is as courageous as man. Each is equally good in his or her way. What man can bring up a child with such patience, endurance, and love as the woman can? The one has developed the power of doing; the other, the power of suffering. If woman cannot act, neither can man suffer. The whole universe is one of perfect balance. I do not know, but some day we may wake up and find that the mere worm has something which balances our manhood. The most wicked person may have some good qualities that I entirely lack. I see that every day of my life. Look at the savage! I wish I had such a splendid physique. He eats, he drinks, to his heart's content, without knowing perhaps what sickness is, while I am suffering every minute. How many times would I have been glad to have changed my brain for his body! The whole universe is only a wave and a hollow; there can be no wave without a hollow. Balance everywhere. You have one thing great, your neighbour has another thing great. When you are judging man and woman, judge them by the standard of their respective greatness. One cannot be in other's shoes. The one has no right to say that the other is wicked. It is the same old superstition that says, "If this is done, the world will go to ruin." But in spite of this the world has not yet come to ruin.

Source: Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda
Volume- 2



Nachiketa

सेवा वाहिनी

...infusing values

*Do you wish to bring a change around you?
Help yourself! Help the people around you!*

Nachiketa Seva Vahini is a wing of Nachiketa Tapovan to spread the moral, spiritual and cultural values through samskaravargas and service activities.

Nachiketa Tapovan invites eager minds

- who wish to make a difference in the world around them
- who are passionate to serve the society irrespective of age
- who think this change is vital in creating a positive impact at a larger level

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Vanaprastha Vahini : Serving the humanity with rich experiences

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Guru is considered as a realized soul, who has the experience of profound truth, or the ultimate reality. In our shastras, Guru is considered to be an authority higher than the God. It is understood through Sant Kabira's Doha. He says that if God and Guru stand together, first he would offer salutations to his Guru, because Guru led Sant Kabira to experience that ultimate reality of life and the universe. Guru is the one who spends his precious time and shows us the real abode of the self.

- Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri



FEARS

*I*t's funny what fear can do to you. How one single emotion can control a human being completely, and leave them trembling from head to toe. Whether we are children or adults, fear is something that has the power to govern all of us. Each one of us has our own fears- for some of us it is heights, for others it is reptiles. My fear you ask? Meeting new people. Socializing has always been my Achilles heel, because I've always been shy. Whenever I see a new person my immediate thoughts are "What if they don't like me? What if I say something wrong when I speak to them?" My fear of other people and what they think of me has always been my greatest weakness. Well, this summer, I signed up for a course in neuroscience in the USA. The moment I signed up, I was enveloped in fear. I was going to be faced with the challenge of meeting many new people- and that too in a completely different country!

The day of the course soon arrived. I trembled miserably, while my fear rejoiced. As I encountered the huge crowd of people in front of me I wondered "What am I going to do?!" But then, something I hadn't expected at all happened. The group of people standing before me smiled at

me and said "Hi there! Want to be friends?" The rest was history. Words came easy after that, and we became friends in an instant. My fear of new people vanished, and I was able to make friends with other people as well, with my new-found confidence. I realized- our fears are never really as bad as they seem. We can overcome them- as long as we try. I found that meeting new people wasn't so scary after all- and the joy that came with making new friends was worth all the fear that had consumed me before I met them.

The moral of this story- don't let your fear take over you. Fear is a malevolent force, trying its best to pull you back from all you could accomplish. Instead, **you** take over **your** fear. Step forward and conquer what scares you the most- and soon you'll discover that it really isn't as terrible as you thought it was. Let your weaknesses become your strengths. But you know what's really the best part about overcoming your fear? The happiness and satisfaction of knowing that you have!

- Ria Thimmaiahgari

Grade 11

Indus International School, Hyderabad

GITA – The essence of the Upanishads

The Upanishads are the essence of the Vedas and the Gita is the essence of the Upanishads. The Upanishads are known as *Vedanta Sastra*, because they reveal the highest truths of Vedic literature. They are also known as the Crown (head) of the Vedas, as they comprise the most important aspect of the Vedas, in the same way as the head is the most important organ of the human body. The Upanishads occupy the central place in spiritual literature. It is natural that earnest seekers should wish to study and understand the Upanishads which are the finest fruits of the mighty Vedic tree. But the language and thought of the Upanishads are not easy for the common man to understand. How can they appreciate their sweet music? How can they understand and experience the knowledge inculcated through them? This was a difficult problem. The Lord set himself the task of solving it and thereby did the greatest service to humanity. The Upanishads are the cows, Arjuna is the Calf, Lord Krishna himself is the milkman

and thus he milked the supreme knowledge of Self from the Upanishads and distributed it to all seekers after truth. The Gita is the milk drawn from the Upanishads.

Thus the Vedic knowledge is made available to the common man through the easy literature of the Gita. Generally people think that Gita is taught to Arjuna. The fact is that it is taught to all mankind. After all, the share of milk that goes to the Calf is very little. The rest is for others. All pure-souls seeking for liberation share the wisdom of Gita alike. The Gita is not the mythical drink of the Gods but the spiritual nectar of absolute Sachidananda. Easy in style, sublime in style and thought, the Gita as the essence of the Upanishads, is offered to us by the Lord Himself. It is therefore the duty of every one to read: understand and practice the teaching of the Gita and transcend the ills and sorrows of earthly life.

Gita Makarandam
By Swami Vidyaprakashananda



ROLE & RESPONSIBILITY OF TEACHERS

in building up modern India

I am very happy to come here and be with you, the teachers of three big schools of our capital. My time for this function is very limited; but any opportunity to meet our teachers and students is always welcome to me. I shall spend my time with you to discuss the subject which you have often heard and asked about:

Role and Responsibility of Teachers in Building up Modern India. Whenever I speak on such subjects in any institution, the first thing I do is to help the listeners to see the subject in its proper perspective. Every one of you must be fully conscious of the context in which you are living and working. Our culture is nearly 5000 years old and is very rich and variegated; and education, with its acquisition and diffusion of knowledge, had been the strength behind this culture. It has contributed to and enriched the sciences, the arts, philosophy, religion, and socio-political thought. But during the last few centuries, we had become contracted, had lost our freedom, and have been under continuous foreign subjection.

FREEDOM: WHAT NEXT?

Now we have achieved our political freedom and established a sovereign democratic republic. Post-freedom India is faced with the question: Freedom: What Next? In our Constitution, we have made very big promises to our people and proclaimed that, through freedom we shall solve the problems and reshape the destiny of India according to our own ideas, ideals, and needs. The first great problem posed by that freedom is the dismal poverty and backwardness of nearly half of our 700 million population. The second problem is the illiteracy of millions of them. The third problem is posed by the divisive caste and communal loyalties, weakening our infant democratic state.

All these problems have to be solved by our people, by ourselves. No foreign power is going to help us, nor is it desirable to ask them to solve them for us. This national responsibility has

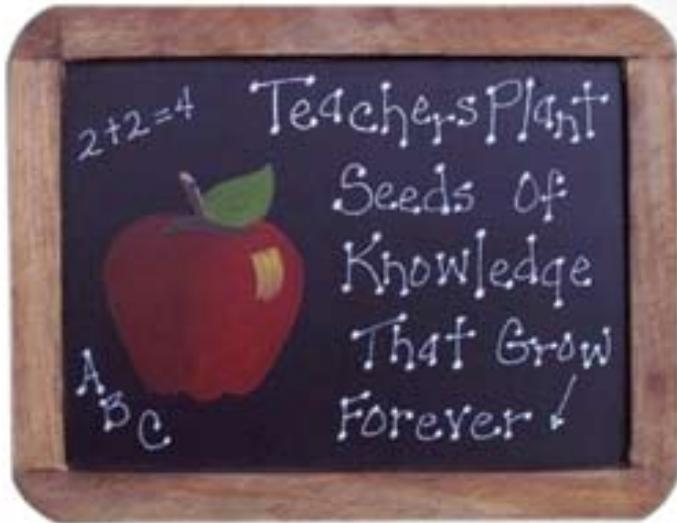
descended upon us as soon as we became free, and this sense of national responsibility should be experienced **by every citizen** of free India. **And this situation proclaims the role and responsibility of our teachers all over India and provides the dynamic context to discuss the theme we have chosen today.**

I have specially used the word citizen. It is a great word. As soon as we became free, we became citizens of India. Before that, we were referred to as subjects of the British Empire. There is a world of difference between the subjects of a foreign power and citizens of a free state. We develop a richer personality and a higher stature, when we become free citizens. But it is unfortunate that, though we have become free, we have failed to understand its meaning and live according to its true message. That is why our nation has not progressed, as it could have progressed, if our people had understood the meaning of this change in status from subject to citizen. This applies to all sections of our people — our politicians, administrators, teachers and other professional people, and our scheduled and backward castes and tribes. **Of all people, our teachers need to understand its true implication and convey to our nation's children the privilege and responsibility involved in being citizens of a great country...**

Education, particularly in our rural areas, has been very much neglected, as much by the teachers concerned as by the state itself. Today, we are experiencing the pressure of that responsibility... We are seeking a change in our educational goals and methods so as to make it nationally-oriented and universal...

In this context, what is your work, what is your role, and what is your responsibility, in our democracy? Education plays the greatest part in a democracy. You, as teachers, have to train and mould the minds of our young people so as to make them worthy citizens of our democratic state. Whatever training you give them will change the





nation. That change must make for a better and healthier nation. That means that a tremendous responsibility rests upon the teachers. A child remains, ought to remain, in school for nearly 15 to 16 years, beginning from the age of three till about 18 or 19 years of age. At present, many of them drop out even before completing the lower primary level...

All the time, in school, he or she is receiving knowledge and ideas. Education at these pre-university stages has a special importance because these are the years when the human mind is most impressionable, and also because most of the students will leave off formal education after completing class XII. It is only a percentage of these that go to a university. So a majority of the students are under the care and influence of the pre-primary, primary, and secondary school teachers during the most formative years of their lives. **That places a tremendous responsibility, and confers a great privilege, on all our teachers, at these levels.** To discharge that responsibility, they themselves have to be nationally-oriented; then alone can they give this national orientation to their students...

TEACHERS: NOT ONLY TO INSTRUCT BUT ALSO TO INSPIRE THE STUDENTS

A teacher has to generate that energy in oneself and handle it in one's work of educating the boys

and girls that resort to him or her. **A teacher has not only to instruct but also to inspire the students;** he or she has to influence the life and character of his or her students, and equip them with ideas and values which will fit them to enter the stream of national life as worthy citizens. You have to do all these during the years they are under your influence in the school.

You have to educate them on the need to recognize the equality of men and women in our democracy, to discard all caste exclusiveness and pride, untouchability, and communal distinctions and antagonisms, and to strengthen 'the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation', as our Constitution proclaims.

The students must be educated to become the instruments to develop an integrated nation out of our diversities...

The role of a teacher is to shape the minds of the younger generation. That shaping will be on positive lines; development of a scientific and humanistic attitude and temper, self-discipline, concern for other people, an ecological awareness and concern, a firm conviction that democracy thrives on tolerance, and a firm commitment 'to break wits' and 'not to break heads'.

Eternal values for changing society
- Swami Ranganathananda

A Warm Thanks to Every Teacher

A few days back, I happened to watch the movie 'Chalk and Duster' which focussed on the issue of commercialization of private education. The portrayal of a few teachers in the film took me back in time to my own school, to my dear teachers who very affectionately cared for all of us. They had children of their own, but when they were with us, they treated us like their own. They instilled values in all of us, not by preaching but by practicing, so that we could observe and imbibe.

I remember one particular instance in which we had requested our teacher who taught us Telugu, to prepare 'sambar' for us. And lo! She obliged us the very next day, with a huge container of the tasty dish, and personally served it to each one of us. Then there were events like the exhibitions on Science and Children's Day celebrations. There were times when teachers did not leave school before 9 pm, staying busy after school hours making preparations for these events. Not once did they complain. They seemed to enjoy every bit.

A recent article in a newspaper identified and discussed the challenges of present-day teachers in detail. Starting with the ancient times when teaching was a holy act, to the recent past where teaching was not such a rigorous job, the article

explained the present scenario. Though the salaries are not up to the mark (despite spike in children's fees), teachers are expected to put in hours of drudgery. With the majority of parents concentrating on nothing but grades, there is little scope for innovation (thankfully, this has begun to change, in howsoever a small way). While enrolment of children has been on the rise owing to active promotion of education by the Government and awareness among the people, the number of teachers has not risen proportionately. As a consequence, a teacher is held responsible for a number of students, sometimes greater than she can effectively handle. Add to this the modern day challenges like information technology that the children are quick to adopt. Along with parents, the teachers also ought to be alert to protect the children. With rising expectations, a noble service has grown to become just another job.

Commercialization of education is certainly an evil. While we cannot expect the purity of the '*guru shishya parampara*' in the present day, when everyone needs resources to fulfil their needs and wants, a little love and passion on the part of the teachers and lot of respect and affection on part of the students would go a long way in making the system more acceptable.

Through this piece, I warmly thank my teachers and every teacher who is working towards the country's future. We may not say it personally each time, but we are eternally grateful to these wonderful people who laid the foundation of our lives with great care and compassion. A warm 'thank you' also to all, who through their deeds, leave an imprint on the heart and mind. Happy Teachers' Day!



- **Neetika Gogula**

An advocate and has passion for writing on social issues.



Notes to Myself

I have been thinking & introspecting about certain aspects of life, myself, people & relationships in the past few weeks. In the past weeks & months, so many things have happened or needed to happen, for me to arrive at this point...a moment of 'expressing' myself in the form of this 'Notes to myself'...

One aspect that has been coming up in several conversations & exchanges, is about 'being a mother to the world' and the other about 'becoming a mother', and what these two statements imply and how they correlate with each other... In case of the latter, nature has endowed and blessed only women with the ability to experience the magic and immensity of 'becoming a mother' and 'giving birth to a child'... Sadhguru says, 'The process is so phenomenal and immense in itself, that if a woman is in a particular way within herself, if a caring, protective and nurturing environment is created around her and if she is sensitive to the changes that are happening within herself as she creates a new life, the process has the potential to enlighten her.'

The other aspect is about 'being a mother to the world'...this topic has come up in several ways, aspects and depths in the past many months. 'To be / become a mother to the world', one has to delve deep within oneself. The possibility of becoming a mother to the world exists in each and every human being, but it requires, conscious effort to be in a particular way (till that effort becomes effortless effort, as Swami Ji says). And this is not possible without arriving to a particular kind of acceptance and love within oneself. This acceptance and love needs to be in the form of an 'offering', an offering to whoever is in front of us in that moment...an offering to all 'life' and the very source of life...

I was sitting with Shiva Maa one day, when she said something so profound and sublime... She said, "to recognize 'a mother' in another person, one has to become a mother themselves", now this could either be by way of 'becoming a mother to



the world' or through the process of giving birth to another life. Both are based on unconditional love, a nurturing spirit and a deep sense of offering'.

The other aspect is introspecting about where I am within myself...am I really as refined as I imagine myself to be, people perceive me to be? The answer is obviously a clear 'no!!!', I'm not as refined and enlightened as people perceive me to be. I have still not overcome many negative aspects of myself and many of my karmic patterns, which are still happening in a compulsive way.

I am just an ordinary person with a lot of distance yet to cover to attain his liberation. I have many impurities and compulsions, with an impure ego and personality soaked with arrogance and pride... I am yet to evolve completely, to become a pure presence from the current impure personality, that I am right now.

Every day I fall, I fail. I wonder what my Guru(s) feel about me...what they think of me...and then I realize that I am perhaps not yet there, to be worth their thought or feeling or time...I am a nobody, I am just a person **talking / writing** about spirituality and enlightenment...but '**walking**' the path is a completely different thing...and the silence that I have been longing for, for years now, to go into silence for months at a stretch, stems from this longing to walk the path to enlightenment...

I pray that my Guru shows me the way.

- Gautam Vir

Ladakh Festival

Ladakh, tucked away in the bitterly cold reaches of the Himalayas, lies cut off from the rest of the world for the better part of the year. But, come summer and the entire region suddenly comes back to life, in a vibrant burst of vitality which lasts through the all-too-brief summer. It's a period of warmth and joy, when Ladakh plays host to thousands of visitors from across the globe. The fun lasts till late September, when winter starts setting in again; but before that happens, there's one final round of partying, in the form of the Ladakh Festival. The Ladakh festival is an annual fiesta organized by the J&K Tourism Department, in association with local communities and district administrations of Leh. The main aim of this

festival is to revitalize and bestow a spectacle of Ladakh's deep-rooted culture, traditions and heritage for the world to admire and enjoy. The festival provides a wonderful opportunity for the tourists to experience the culture and lifestyle of the people in Ladakh. It is a weeklong extravaganza of dances, music, handicrafts and sports.

The festival begins with a long procession, of local leaders, school children and dancers, which makes its way through Leh. What follows is seven days of lion dances, yak dances, craft stalls and excellent local food. Archery contests are held at Skara (near Leh), and polo matches, white-water rafting expeditions and treks are organized as well. All in all, it's one of the best times to visit Ladakh- a time when you can get a really good feel, at close quarters, of this wildly beautiful cold desert.

Festival Dates in 2016: 18th-25th September

Source: Leh & Ladakh Tourism



SIVA JNANAM

Japa and meditation of the sacred names of Lord Siva will free you from all sins and lead you to the attainment of Siva *Jnanam* or eternal bliss and immortality. Siva-nama is the very soul of all *Mantras*.

Lord Siva has manifested in the world in sixty different aspects. Vrishabharudha, Harihara, Nataraja, Bhairava, Dakshinamurti, Ardhanarisvara, Bhikshatana, Somasekharamurti, Urdhvyanatana, Kalasamhara, Jalandhara, Surasamhara, Lingodbhava are His forms.

Siva means that which is eternally happy or auspicious, *Parama-mangala*. Om and Siva are one. Mandukya Upanishad says: '*Santam Sivam Advaitam*'. Even an outcaste can meditate on the name of Lord Siva.

Siva manifests in the Gayatri Mantra, Agni and in the Sun. When you repeat Gayatri and when you worship the Agni and the Sun, you should meditate on Lord Siva.

Japa of *Panchakshara* and meditation of Lord Siva should be particularly done in the *Pradosha Kala* or just before the sunset. The *Pradosha* on the thirteenth *Tithi* after a full moon or a new moon day, is known as the *Mahapradosha*. The Devas visit Siva temples for the worship of the Lord at this period. You can worship the Devas also if you visit temples during *Mahapradosha*. Devotees of Lord Siva observe full fast on *Mahapradosha* days.

A devotee of Lord Siva should apply *Vibhuti* to his forehead and body. He should wear a *Rudrakshamala*. He should worship the Sivalinga with leaves of the Bilva tree. He should do *Japa* and meditation of the *Panchakshara* 'Om Namah Sivaya'. Lord Siva is propitiated by every one of these actions. *Vibhuti* or *Bhasma* is very sacred. It is worn by Lord Siva Himself. The bead of a *Rudrakshamala* represents the third eye on the



forehead of Lord Siva. *Bilva* leaves are regarded to be one of the five abodes of Lakshmi or the Goddess of wealth.

It is Siva only who causes bondage and *Mukti* for the *Jivas*. It is Siva who makes the *Jivas* realize their essential Divine Nature. Siva made Maya as the body, senses and the Universe and thrust the *Jivas* into the Maya. He created the idea of egoism, 'I'-ness in them. He bound them in *Karma* and made them experience pleasure and pain according to the nature of their *Karmas*, virtuous actions or vicious deeds. This is the stage of bondage of the *Jivas*.

Gradually it is Siva only who releases them from the fetters of egoism, *Karma* and *Maya* and makes them shine as Siva. This is the state of *Moksha* or freedom. It is only through the grace of Lord Siva, they attain the state of final emancipation.

The *Jivas* have no independence, when they are under the influence of the three impurities, i.e., *Anava*, *Karma* and *Maya*. They are endowed with a little knowledge (*Alpa�nana*).

The *Jiva* must first know his nature and his relationship with Lord Siva in order to attain His grace. Life or *Prana* is in the body. Lord Siva is within the *Prana*. He is the *Prana* of *Pranas*, and yet He is distinct from the *Pranas* and body. If there is no *Prana* in the body, the body becomes a corpse. It cannot perform any action. Siva is the

support for this body, *Prana* and *Jiva*. The *Jiva* cannot do any action without Siva. It is Siva who illuminates the intellect. Just as the eye cannot see without the light of the sun, although it is endowed with the power to see, so also the intellect cannot function without the light of Lord Siva.

The four *Sadhanas*, viz., *Charya*, *Kriya*, *Yoga* and *Jnana* are the four steps to attain Salvation. They are like the bud, flower, unripe fruit and ripe fruit.

Lord Siva gradually frees the individual souls from egoism, *Karma* and *Maya*. The *Jivas* gradually become disgusted with the sensual pleasures. They become balanced in pleasure and pain. Through the grace of the Lord they understand that *Karma* is the cause for births and deaths. They begin to do actions for the Lord, serve the devotees of the Lord and attain purity of mind. They understand that the soul or Siva is distinct from the body, senses and mind and is beyond the reach of mind and speech. They get initiation into the significance of 'Om Namah Sivaya', the *Panchakshara Mantra* and meditate on Siva.

They practice Siva Yoga. Their hearts melt. Seer, sight and seen vanish. All the activities of senses, mind and intellect cease. They bathe Lord Siva with the stream of Divine Love that is generated in their heart and offer their heart as flower unto the Lord.

They hear the sound '*Chilambosai*' and march forward through the path of the sound and behold the vision of Nataraja in the *Chidakasa* and are immersed in the ocean of Sivananda. They become one with the Lord, just as camphor melts in the fire.

Lord Siva and His Worship
By Sri Swami Sivananda

An Appeal

Basic education is a distant dream for hundreds of underprivileged in and around the villages of Jadcherla Mandal. Education is the fundamental right of every child. Nachiketa Tapovan Vidyamandir strives to make basic education an achievable goal for these children.

Help us Build! Help us secure a safer place!

ONGOING PROJECTS: Classrooms



The rapidly rising costs of building materials have placed a great strain on our ability to complete the projects. With your helping hands we aim to change the course of many.

Our Requirement, Our Request

Particulars	Specification	Amount	We need
Single Classroom accommodating 25 children	Outer Dimension 30'.0" x 30'.0" Construction area: 980 sq.ft	₹ 8 Lakhs per classroom.	8 classrooms

About How You Can Help:

- ◆ by contributing to our Building Fund
- ◆ by donating building materials (steel, cement, bricks, sand, electrical fittings, tiles, flooring, paint, window glass, etc.)
- ◆ by donating classroom requirements like desks, mats, blackboards, e-learning kit, stationery etc.
- ◆ help us raise Corpus Fund for projects to become self-sustainable.

All Donations are exempted from I.T. Under 80-G & accorded permission under FCRA

Bank details: State Bank of Hyderabad, Ac No. 52012846158, Jubilee Hills Branch, Hyderabad. IFSC code SBHY0020458, Branch code 20458 (Note: IFSC code contains the number "zero" not letter "O")

For further details please contact:

Nachiketa Tapovan, Kodgal: 8008882828,

Nachiketa Tapovan, Hyderabad: 9849168937

SMS to Swamiji: 9908234545

nachiketananda@gmail.com; admin@nachiketatapovan.org

Website: www.nachiketatapovan.org

Put yourself in their place



I was going on a road trip with my family for my birthday. We had rented a car, an Innova. The thing about this car is, it doesn't have speakers at the back, and we all wanted to listen to music. So when I turned on the music, my cousins and I couldn't hear anything because, we were in the back seat. So we kept asking my father (who was driving) and my uncle (who was in the passenger seat) to increase the volume. They did, but they stopped doing it after a little while and didn't listen to us anymore. Yet we still couldn't hear much. So, the three of us retired to using our respective headphones. Sometime in the afternoon, I switched with my uncle as the navigator. Then when I switched on the music, I realized how loud it was up front. What was music to your ears at the back of the car would make your ears bleed up front. Only then I understood why they hadn't increased the volume any higher.

Similarly, many of us don't understand why different people do different things. We just blame them for being stupid or paranoid or even for being rude. It is true that we shouldn't be rude to anyone, yet some people may just be tired of being nice. For example, we might have seen flight attendants or vendors in trains, and condemned them for being unpleasant and foul. Yet, have you ever thought how irritating it is for them to handle thousands of passengers with different needs and different understanding levels, every single day. If you were in their place, you honestly wouldn't be in a better mood than them after serving a hundred customers and then arguing with five very stubborn customers

and then tending to the needs of an elderly passenger. It is a very challenging job and it saps the niceness from a person.

Before you look at someone and judge them for their actions, put yourself in their place. There are so many variables in their equation that you don't know. You don't know their past, their background or their experiences, which define their actions.

Many times, when parents and elders tell us not to do something, we call them paranoid and dominating. Agreed, that a lot has changed since then and now. Agreed, that the generation gap exists and mindsets are different. But there are some things that never change. Many times it's better to learn from others' mistakes than from your own. Your parents, for example, have much more experience than you in life. If they say, leave early to the airport or the station, understand that they might have missed an important train some time in their life, and don't want that to happen to you. If they say, keep money with you for emergency and don't spend it, try to put yourself in their place and see that they don't want you standing in the middle of nowhere without the money to get back home safely, because it may have happened to them.

My mother always gives me extra money if I need to go out. She says, "Just in case." Once it so happened that I took only 10 rupees for the bus ticket and decided that my friend would drop me back. Luckily, my mother gave me an extra hundred. That day, I couldn't find a bus, so I had to catch an auto, and on the way back,

my friend didn't drop me and I had to catch a bus. Our parents have been through this kind of situations, and met this kind of people, which is why we must put ourselves in their place and understand that whatever they say, they say it for our own good, whether it is right or wrong.

So from now on, when you think a person is rude or paranoid, put yourself in their place and think what you would have done in their situation.

Because, it is impossible to understand from one's face, what it is like, to be in their place.

N. Rohan C. Govind

Class 12,

GT Aloha Vidya Mandir, Chennai



A World of Wonder

Dedicated to anyone who wants to make the world a better place

Sometimes I like to wonder,
How the world would be.
If the poor would have money,
And the blind were able to see.

The ones who were scared would never have a fear,
And the ones sad at heart would not shed a tear.
The ones who are at war would lay down their weapon,
and the ones filled with hatred would show some affection.

No one would be bullied, abused or even shoved,
The world would have nothing, but happiness and love.
A boy could like pink, if that's what made him happy,
Religious beliefs and views would be accepted by society.

Everyone belongs, acceptance is a must,
All would be treated with some kindness and some just.
A world as great as this, seems too good to be true,
Because we have all experienced suffering,
But isn't there anything we can do?

There's a soul in every body
That we're just yet to find.
But all we really need,
Is an open heart and mind.

- Pratya Poosala

The Message of VIVEKACHUDAMANI

*Amrtatvasya nasasti vittena iti eva hi sruthi;
Braviti karmano mukterahetutvam sphutam yatah – 7*

There is no hope of immortality by means of riches- such indeed is the declaration of the Vedas. Hence it is clear that works cannot be the cause of liberation.

The idea conveyed in the previous verse continues that any amount of work by itself is not going to bring about immortality. It is a rare blessing that comes out of an extraordinary type of experience of oneself as the atman. Shankara here conveys this idea by referring to a beautiful portion of the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad known as the Yagnavalkya-Maitreyi Samvada. It is a fascinating dialogue between Yagnavalkya, the great philosopher of that Upanishad and his spiritually oriented wife, Maitreyi. Yagnavalkya wanted to renounce the world and enter the monastic fold. Before that he wanted to settle his wealth between his two wives, Maitreyi and Katyayani. Katyayani was satisfied by receiving her share. But Maitreyi, spiritually oriented as she was, asked: "Will wealth bestow on me immortality?" Yagnavalkya's reply was an emphatic "No". Then Maitreyi objected: "In that case, what shall I do with this wealth which will not make me immortal?" Yagnavalkya then made a conclusive statement. "Wealth would at the most help you live a decent social life as many others do, with lot of comforts and sensory pleasures, but there is absolutely no hope of attaining immortality through it." How then immortality is to be attained is the central theme of that wonderful portion of the aforesaid Upanishad. That is the pure science of spiritual realization.

Shankara in this verse refers to that passage. He says there is no hope of immortality by means of riches – such is the declaration of the Vedas (*amrtatvasya nasasti vittena iti eva hi sruthi*). Accumulation of wealth doesn't make us immortal. Even the desire for immortality won't come as long as we are attached to wealth. Work and wealth are inseparably connected, the former



generating the latter. So Shankara says that work cannot be the cause of liberation (*braviti karmano mukterahetutvam sphutam yatah*). Any amount of work, rituals, or wealth cannot bring about immortality. There is absolutely no causal relation between spiritual freedom and work or wealth. "The uncaused is never caused by any action," says the Mundaka Upanishad. Immortality or spiritual freedom is not the effect of anything. It exists eternally. Even now we are free and immortal. We are that infinite reality known as Brahman, one with all, but we don't know it because of ignorance. In the Brhadaranyaka commentary Shankara makes a beautiful remark:

Even before the realization of Brahman, everybody, being Brahman, is really always identical with all.

Wealth as well as work done with a selfish motive, will never take us towards spiritual illumination. But if we learn the technique of squeezing our actions to produce knowledge, then it becomes spiritually fruitful and leads us towards illumination. Otherwise, mere work, without the touch of self-awareness in it, is akin to the work done by a bull going round the treadmill. It produces oil, but the bull remains the same as ever. It gets only a little grass for its labour. Most of us labour in life like the bull in the treadmill, motivated by our greed for a few grass-heaps of wealth and comforts. Thereby we only turn the wheel of nature and serve its purpose. There is no hope of attaining immortality that way.

Immortality is attained through self-realization, the way to which is paved only through renunciation and never through enjoyment.

- *Swami Ranganathananda*

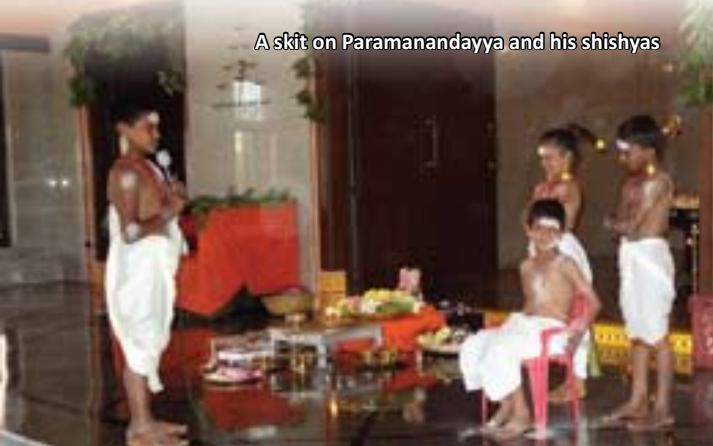
GURU PURNIMA 2016

Guru Purnima was celebrated at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram, Kodgal, on 19th July 2016. The celebrations commenced with *Abhishekam* and prayers to Yoga Lingam and Guru Dakshinamurthy at Maa Yoga Shakthi Peetham in the early hours. The first program for the morning was *bhajans*. Melodious songs were sung on the glory of the Guru. *Paduka puja* of Sri Adi Shankaracharya was performed by everyone. Children of Vidya Mandir performed skits and spoke a few words on Guru *tattwa*. Tiny tots dressed up as Vyasa and Adishankaracharya were adorable.

Swami Nachiketananda Puri's Divine discourse was very enlightening. The talk laced with profound truths revealed a great message for all spiritual seekers. Swami Shivananda Puri's talk focused on the significance of Guru Purnima. *Prasad* was served to everyone.

Havan was performed in the evening by Paramahamsa Swami Shivananda Puri and there was a meditation session in the night. All seekers experienced the matchless love of the Guru on this auspicious Guru Purnima.

A skit on Paramanandayya and his shishyas



Mataji addresses the gathering



Tiny tots of Vidya Mandir



THE POWER OF Giving...

My real life incident



The day "November 6th 2009" dawned as usual. It was still dark outside but the morning chores which I had to complete before 9:00 a.m. came to my mind and made me rush out for my morning walk. I quickly put on my walking shoes and was on the road by 5:15 a.m. As I reached the end of the colony, I failed to notice the cow dung and my right foot landed straight on it... Oh God! my shoe now was filled with the dung. I turned around to walk back the half kilometre from my house when suddenly the next moment filled me with terror as I felt my foot was held tightly and to my horror I saw my foot was in the hands of a "madman", who flung my shoe off my leg, washed it with a bottle of water, wiped it clean with a piece of cloth and gave it back to me, signalling me to continue with my walk. I put it on meekly and went along for my walk. On my return, I saw this man sitting on the culvert. He smiled and I smiled back. Thus started our friendship!

This so called "Madman" was a harmless fellow who had been living there for the past six months. He just used to talk to himself and mind his own business and so no one bothered to send him off from there.

Next day when I was ready to step out of the house, I remembered him and took with me a packet of biscuits, a boiled egg and some hot

milk in a bottle. I gave it to him. The tears in his eyes and the smile on his face made my day. Slowly I started rewarding him with different type of foods, blankets, towels etc. He accepted all these with a lot of gratitude. I asked him his name, he said he did not have any and I ended up naming him "Chandu".

With the help of my driver, I sent him to a barber shop and got his hair and beard cut. I taught him about hygiene and took the permission of the society office, who were kind enough to lend their washrooms, where Chandu had his bath and put on the altered clothes (I got it done for him with the old clothes of my husband and sons). Really, what a transformation! It was worth the pain I took.

Give and take of gratitude can deepen relationships. My responsibility for his well being increased. Later, I asked him to do some kind of work for which he wore a blank face - I asked him to come over to my house and clean our cars. My husband paid him. Chandu was so happy with his first earning. He bought a bar of Dairy Milk chocolate for me. I was thrilled. Slowly I recommended him to other people in the colony and everyone seeing my effort, obliged and within no time he had nearly 25 cars to clean.

I really enjoyed looking up what happened a few weeks ago, it became a book of nice memories. It made my happiness levels boost up.

Next step was him joining as a watchman in our commercial complex, married a sweeper there and he still lives there with his wife and two daughters.

Even now his saying of "Thank you" has a positive effect on my health which is long lasting. When someone is the recipient of unexpected kindness or gratitude, he is more likely to return the favour or pay kindness forward for he enjoys being socially valued.

He treats me as if I am his God, but for me, it is the other way round. He is the one who brought the human values inside me to the fore.

By taking time to put into words the impact that Chandu had on my life, I became infinitely more grateful and appreciative of what I have achieved in life and I have been riding the burst of positivity for years.

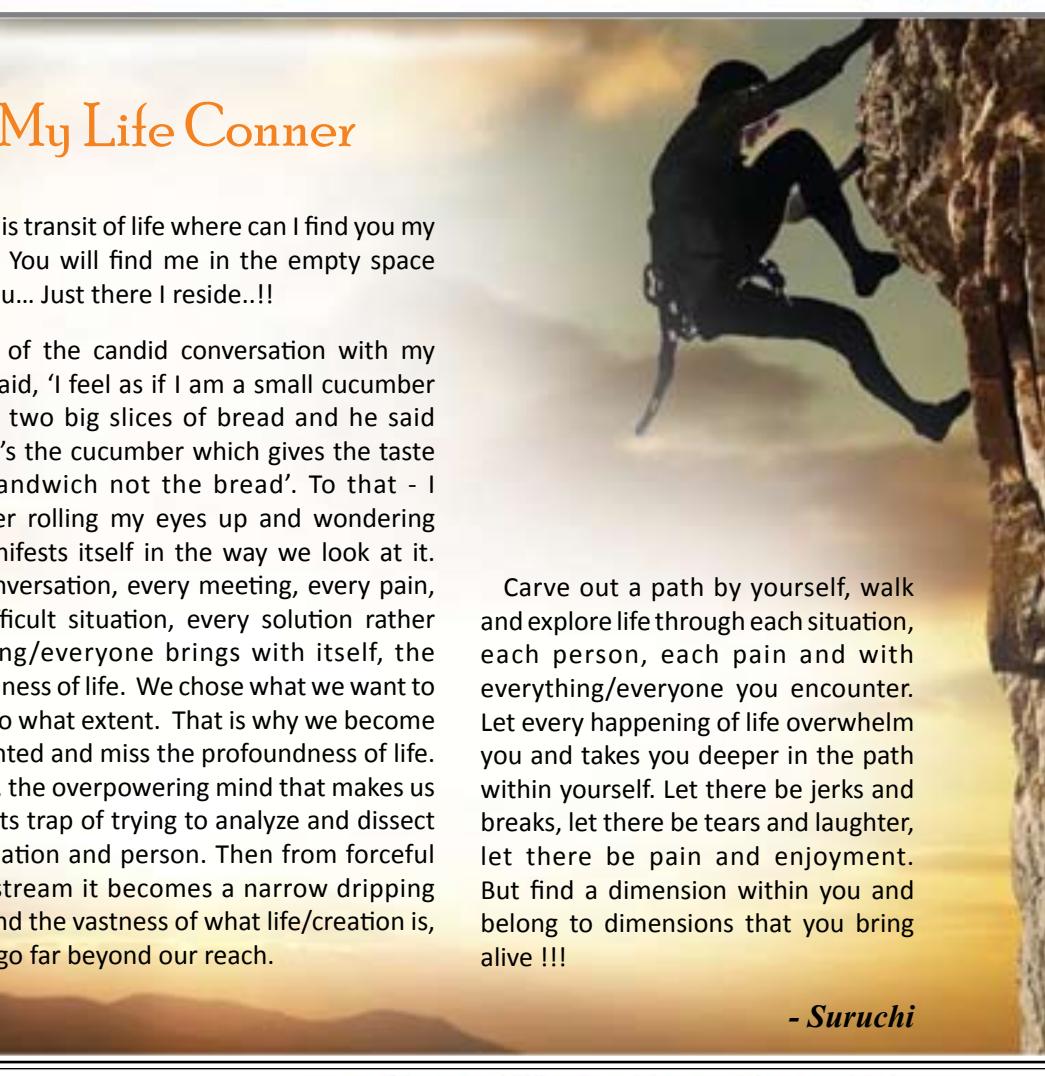
Lastly, nothing could have been possible without the immense support from my husband and children.

- **Mrudula**

My Life Conner

In this transit of life where can I find you my beloved? You will find me in the empty space within you... Just there I reside..!!

In one of the candid conversation with my friend I said, 'I feel as if I am a small cucumber between two big slices of bread and he said well..!! It's the cucumber which gives the taste to the sandwich not the bread'. To that - I remember rolling my eyes up and wondering - life manifests itself in the way we look at it. Every conversation, every meeting, every pain, every difficult situation, every solution rather everything/everyone brings with itself, the profoundness of life. We chose what we want to see and to what extent. That is why we become short sighted and miss the profoundness of life. It's again, the overpowering mind that makes us slip into its trap of trying to analyze and dissect each situation and person. Then from forceful flowing stream it becomes a narrow dripping water. And the vastness of what life/creation is, tends to go far beyond our reach.



Carve out a path by yourself, walk and explore life through each situation, each person, each pain and with everything/everyone you encounter. Let every happening of life overwhelm you and takes you deeper in the path within yourself. Let there be jerks and breaks, let there be tears and laughter, let there be pain and enjoyment. But find a dimension within you and belong to dimensions that you bring alive !!!

- **Suruchi**

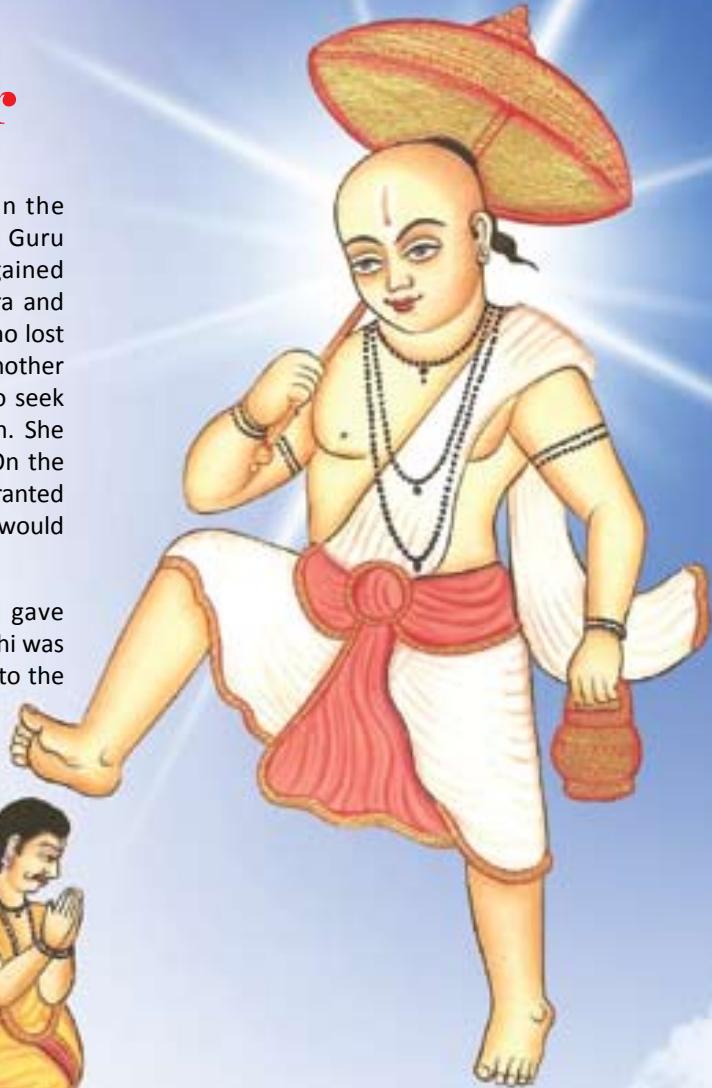
Vamanavatar

Once, King Bali had to face defeat in the hands of Indra. He sought refuge with his Guru Sukracharya. Under his tutelage, Bali regained his strength and won supremacy over Indra and gained control of the Ether world. Indra, who lost his powers, went to his mother Adithi. His mother grieved over her son's state and decided to seek the blessings of Lord Narayana for her son. She performed a powerful and intense ritual. On the last day, the Lord appeared before her and granted her a boon that he would be born to her and would henceforth protect Indra.

The auspicious moment arrived. Aditi gave birth to a son and named him Vamana. Adithi was immensely happy that she could give birth to the Lord himself. Saints and Sages shed tears of joy seeing the new incarnation of the Lord. *Upanayana sanskar* was performed for little Vamana, when he grew up.

When Vamana came to know that King Bali was performing *Ashwamedha Yaga*, he decided to pay a visit. He dressed up as a Brahmin and visited the *Yagnamantapa* (place of holy fire). When King Bali set eyes on this Brahmin boy, who was emitting radiance, he was overwhelmed. With tear-filled eyes, he offered him a high seat and washed his feet. Later he asked the Brahmin boy to ask for some wish and he would instantly grant it. Lord Vamana, in the Brahmin attire asked for three feet of land.

Sukracharya realized that the Brahmin boy was none other than Lord Narayana, in his new incarnation. He warned King Bali against granting Vamana his wishes. But King Bali said it was his prime duty to grant the boon he had promised. He picked up his *Kamandala* to do the *sankalpa* before giving *Dhana* (charity). Sukracharya, in order to stop this entered the *Kamandalu* in his subtle form and obstructed the hole from which water would come out. Seeing this, Vamana took out a *dharbha* (dry grass) and pricked the hole to



make way for the water to flow out. The *Dharbha* pierced Sukracharya's eye and as a result, he lost vision in one eye.

Once the way was cleared, King Bali performed the *sankalpa* by releasing water and granted the promised boon. Lord Vamana, placed one foot on Earth and the second in the heaven and both were granted to him. "Where should I place the third feet"? Lord Vamana asked King Bali and in reverence, Bali bowed down and offered his head. Pleased with his intense devotion, Lord Vamana placed his foot on Bali's head and in return made him king of *Suthalaloka*, and returned the Ether world to Indra.

- Nitya



Shri Ram

Quiz

QUESTIONS:

1. After visiting the hermits of different *rishis* at Dandakaranya, Sri Rama while proceeding ahead saw a *rakshasa*. Who is he and how was he?
 2. In a cave called 'Vrukshabilam' Angada and others saw a Saint. Who is she?
 3. In what proportion, did king Dasaratha give the 'holy *payasam*' to his Queens?
 4. What was the curse given by Sage Gauthama to Ahalya?
 5. Who is the Architect of Lanka Nagar?
 6. Vibhishana explained to Ravana the different ways of punishing a messenger (Rama's messenger Hanuman). What are they?
 7. Whose names did Sri Rama refer to his mother Kausalya, regarding one's obedience to '*Pithruvakra*' (father's wish)?
 8. Who were Kumbha and Nikumbha? Who killed these two?
 9. What are the *astras* used by Sri Rama on Mareecha and Subahu?
 10. In the war of Vali and Sugreeva, to recognize Sugreeva, (as both Vali and Sugreeva were looking alike) Sri Rama asked Lakshmana to put a creeper as garland on Sugreeva. What is that creeper called?

By Dr. Kalluri Venkateshwar Rao, MA Ph.D

Translated by Manjula

1. Sri Ram saw a rakshasa called Viradhu. He was like a mountain, with a big mouth, deep eyes and an uneven belly.

2. Her name is Swayamprabha. She is a glorious saint always wishing for the well-being of the humanity.

3. % of the holy *payasam*, was given to Queen Kausalya, $\frac{1}{2}$ of the remaining i.e., $\frac{1}{2}$ of % went on digging the earth and finally were dead.

4. 60,000 sons of Sagara to fulfill their fathers wish to fulfill his father's wish

5. Parasurama chopped off his mother Renuka's head to fulfill his father's wish

6. Sons of Kumbhakarna. Kumbara was killed by Sumithra

7. 1. A sage, Kanada, who was a great scholar and a great dramatma did *Go Hatyad*, (killing a cow) to produce a mark on the body)

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9. Sri Rama used an asthra called *Seetheshuva*, on Agneyasthra, was used on Subahu and he was thrown into the waters of sea and an asthra called Agneyasthra, was used on Subahu and he was thrown into the waters of sea and an asthra called Agneyasthra, was used on Subahu and he was

10. A creeper called Nagakesara, killed

ANSWERS:



THE GREEDY MAN AND THE SEASHELL

This is an ancient parable. A man prayed to God and after several years, God appeared before him. God asked the man, "I am pleased with your prayers. What can I do for you?"

The man replied "Give me something which can grant instantly, all my wishes", asked the man. "I shall certainly grant your wishes. Take this seashell and the moment you ask, it shall grant anything that you wish for", said God giving him the seashell and vanished.

The man wanted to have a try immediately. He asked the seashell for a big palace and it was instantly granted. He was immensely surprised and asked for good food and all luxuries one after another. All his wishes materialized and he lived a happy life, but not for long.

One day, a monk came along and the man asked him to be his guest in the palace. The monk told him that he heard about his secret seashell but it was not greater than what he himself possessed. "How is that?" The man asked in surprise. "I have also worshipped the Lord longer than you, and being a monk, God was more gracious to me and gave me a bigger seashell than yours. Here it is, have a look", said the monk and took out a big seashell from his bag. It was a beautiful, huge white, seashell and greed entered the man.

"What is the specialty of your seashell", the man quizzed the monk. "My shell will give me two palaces if I ask for one. Whatever I wish for, the seashell gives double", said the monk. The greedy man wanted to take possession of that shell at any cost. "Can we exchange our seashells since you are a monk and will not need multiple gifts" he pleaded with the monk. "Why not"? The monk exchanged his seashell with the greedy man and retired to his room.

The greedy man was infatuated with his new possession. In excitement, he held the huge seashell in his hands and said "Please give me a huge amount of money". The Seashell answered, "Why only that much? I shall give you double the amount of what you have asked." The man was perplexed. "All right, give me ten palaces" he asked. "Why only ten, I shall give you twenty," replied the seashell. The man was even more puzzled and disturbed.

And so on, so forth it went on... but nothing was given! Promises after promises... and whatever he asked, the promise doubled. The greedy man was frustrated. He had had enough of the shell. He realized it was giving only vague promises. He wanted to return the shell to the monk and went in search of him. But the monk had already left.



This is a beautiful parable. Isn't this how our mind functions? It is like the monk's tricky seashell. It always goes on giving us great promises, but tomorrow, not today. And tomorrow never comes. And hoping becomes our very life, just hoping and waiting. And as is said, death comes... and no hope is ever fulfilled. Even when one is fulfilled it is replaced by a second. And so it goes on...

Is there no solution? One might ask!

There is... Awareness is the key to the solution. Watching and witnessing our thought flow is a sure remedy that can put an end to our unwanted desires.

So, let us develop that awareness! Shall we?

- Sarayu



NACHIKETA'S GO GREEN CLUB...

We convey our thanks to all the participants of the WOW initiative. You helped us earn Rs. 19,400/- in the month of July and helped in keeping Mother Earth cleaner by recycling about 3233 kg of plastic and paper waste material.

NAIVEDYAM

Will God Eat Our Offerings?

Here is a very good explanation about *Naivedyam* to God. Will God come and eat our offerings? Many of us could not get proper explanation from our elders. An attempt is made here.

A Guru-Shishya conversation:

The Shishya who doesn't believe in God, asked his Guru thus:

"Does God accept our '*naivedhyam*' (offerings)? If God eats away the '*prasadam*' then from where can we distribute it to others? Does God really consume the '*prasadam*', Guruji?"

The Guru did not say anything. Instead, asked the student to prepare for classes.

That day, the Guru was teaching his class about the 'Upanishads'. He taught them the '*mantra*': "*Poornamadham, Poornamidham... Poornasya Poornaadaaya...*" and explained that: 'everything came out from "*Poorna* or Totality." (*Ishavasya Upanishad*).

Later, everyone was instructed to practice the *mantra* by-heart. So, all the boys started practicing. After a while, the Guru came back and asked that very student who had raised his doubt about *Naivedyam* to recite the *mantra* without seeing the book, which the *shishyas* did.

Now, the Guru gave a smile and asked this particular *shishya* who didn't believe in God: 'Did you really memorize everything as it is in the book?' The *shishya* said: "Yes Guruji, I've recited whatever is written as is, in the book."



The Guru asked: "If you have taken every word into your mind then how come the words are still there in the book?"

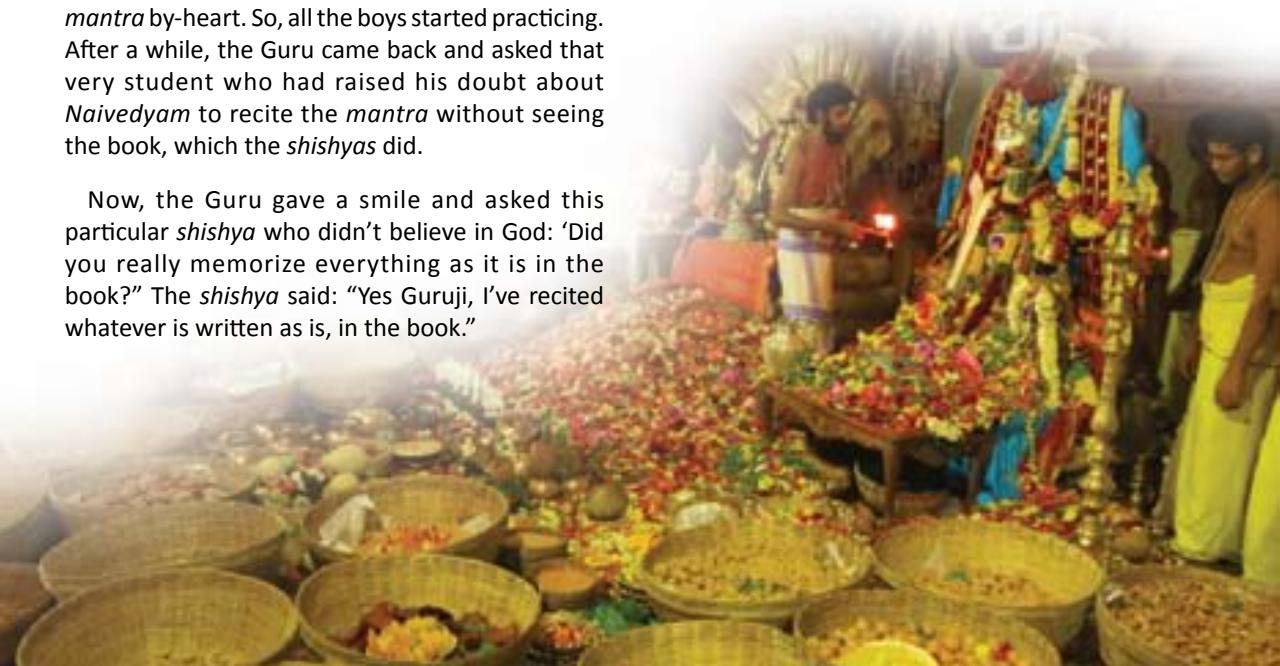
He then explained:

"The words in your mind are in the *SOOKSHMA STHITI* (unseen form). The words in the book are there in the *STOOLA STHITI* (seen)."

God too is in the '*Sooksma Stithi*'. The offering made to Him is done in '*Stoola Stithi*'. Thus, God takes the food in '*Sookshmam*', in *Sookshma Stithi*. Hence the food doesn't become any less in quantity.

While GOD takes it in the "*Sookshma Stithi*", we take it as '*Prasadam*' in '*Sthoola Stithi*'.

Hearing this the Shishya felt guilty for his disbelief in God and surrendered himself to his GURU.



Annadhatu Sukhibhava!

We thank our sponsors for their Annadanam to our Vidya Mandir children at Nachiketa Tapovan, Kodgal. The children are greatly benefited by your contribution.



Date	Name of the Sponsor
1-7-2016	Neeru
6-7-2016	Geetha (Birthday)
8-7-2016	Shanthi
10-7-2016	Vijay Kumar & Subhadra (Birthday)
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15-7-2016	C. Priyamvada (In the memory of Smt. Sarala)
17-7-2016	Anuradha
19-7-2016	Mallaiah (Lohit's Birthday) Vijaya (In the memory of Smt. A. Mangayamma)
21-7-2016	Sharada (In the memory of Smt. Kamala) Pratyusha (Daivik's Birthday)
24-7-2016	Amarjyothi K.K. Raja (In the memory of Sri Sailatha) Raj Sekhar
26-7-2016	Anuradha
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Celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, festivals, or special occasions with children of Ashram by contributing ₹4000

Contact for further assistance

Ashram: 8008882828 Tapovan: 9849168937

SMS to Swamiji: 9908234545

nachiketananda@gmail.com admin@nachiketatapovan.org

Website: www.nachiketatapovan.org

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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)	₹ 6000/day
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 1200/day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	₹ 900/2 pairs
Stationery Supplies (Copier Paper)	₹ 5000/term
Medicines (For needy people)	₹ 5000/month
Festival at Ma Yogashakti Peetham	₹ 20000

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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:

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Branch Name	:	Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad
A/c Name	:	Nachiketa Tapovan
A/c No	:	18090100004093
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Sponsor a child ₹ 1 Lakh

* 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.
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Branch Name & Code	:	Kavuri Hills-12655
A/c Name	:	Nachiketa Tapovan
A/c No	:	30953215793
IFSC Code	:	SBIN0012655
SWIFT Code	:	SBININBB214

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Nachiketa Tapovan, Hyderabad: 9849168937

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nachiketananda@gmail.com; admin@nachiketatapovan.org

Website: www.nachiketatapovan.org

SPHERICAL EARTH

Who knew it first?

*W*ho had discovered that Earth is a sphere?

Our books teach us that it was Kepler, Copernicus, and Galileo. They all belong to 16th & 17th century AD. What was ancient India's Knowledge in this regard? Don't they know that earth was round? Yes, they do. Indians knew this fact for ages, even from ancient times.

Here are a few references to substantiate this fact...

The renowned Indian Astronomer Aryabhatta (476AD) had said:

"Bhugolah sarvato vrttah" – the earth is round from all sides

(Aryabhattiyam, Golapada, sixth sloka)

He had also accurately calculated the diameter of the Earth.

(Aryabhattiyam, Chapter 1 – sloka five)

Another Indian Astronomer Varahamihira (6th century AD) in his text "Pancha Sidhanthika" said as under:

Panca mahabutamayastraragana panjare mahilgolah

("Pancha Sidhanthika" 13Ch-sloka1)

The "spherical" Earth that is made up of Pancha Bhutas (five elements) is hanging in the space, studded by twinkling stars like an iron ball hanging in a cage.

Let us observe this Vedic mantra of Rigveda:

Cakranasah parinaham prthivya
(Rig veda 1.33.8)

It says "people who reside on the surface of the Earth's circumference."

There are many Vedic verses; many of them proclaim the spherical shape of the Earth. Surya Siddhantha, an ancient Indian astronomical text reveals that,

Madhye samantandasya bhugolo vyomni tisthati (12th Ch-32 sloka)

"In the midst of Universe (Brahmaanda), the spherical earth stands firm in the space."

Bhaskaracharya (11th century AD), the famous Mathematician, in his book titled "Leelavathi", answers a question posed by the little girl Leelavathi,

"Whatever your eyes see is not the reality. Earth is not flat as you see it. It is a sphere. If you draw a very big circle and look at the one fourth of its circumference, you see it as a straight line. But in true sense it is a circle. Similarly earth is spherical in shape."

'Aryabhattiyam' the book written by Aryabhata had been translated into Latin during 13th century. This book would have influenced the Western Astronomers.

Aryabhata had even explained in his book the reasons for eclipse.

Chadayati sasi suryam sasinam mahati ca bhuchhaya

(Aryabhattiyam, Golapada, sloka 37)

"When moon shadows the Sun, solar eclipse occurs, when earth shadows the Moon, lunar eclipse occurs."

He had also calculated the accurate occurrences of the eclipses; number of days Earth takes to revolve round the Sun (365 days six hours 12 minutes and 30 seconds) and number of hours that earth takes to revolve around itself (23 hours, 56 minutes, 4.1 seconds).

Even today in most of the Indian languages, the term "Geography" means BHUGOLA SASTRA. The very word "Bhugola" means spherical earth. This shows that ages ago Indians knew that earth was spherical in shape.

Then why do we teach our children in schools that Western scientists had found this great discovery about the shape of the Earth?

- Eternally Talented India, 108 facts

Nachiketa
vidya

Blue text: An Appeal for Sponsor-a-Child Corpus Fund

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- ☞ Nachiketa Tapovan aims at imparting a value-based education along with Yoga, Arts & Crafts, Vocational Training, Music, Dance, Sanskrit and Computer classes as a part of the curriculum
- ☞ Education is received by 270 children from Vidya Mandir Hyderabad from levels 1 - 10 and 150 tribal and local children from levels 1 - 3 at Vidya Mandir, Kodgal
- ☞ Interest accruing from your donation is only used without touching the principal itself.
- ☞ At present, we only have 107 corpus sponsorships. Help us reach all of our 270 children in Hyderabad & 150 children in Kodgal
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- ☞ We express our thanks to Corpus Donors by permanently inscribing their names on the recognition board at Nachiketa Tapovan



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Invitation



We cordially invite you to attend our celebrations



VINAYAKA CHATURTHI

5th September 2016 at 10 am

Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram,
Kodgal Village, Jadcherla.



TEACHERS DAY

5th September 2016 at 10 am

Nachiketa Tapovan, Kavuri Hills, Hyderabad.
&
Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram,
Kodgal Village, Jadcherla.

Congratulations!!!

We heartily congratulate our children, Nagamani, Savitri and Sravani, who have procured Engineering seats in Vasavi Engineering College and G. Narayannamma Engineering College. We wish them all the best!

We thank all our Well-wishers, Philanthropic Partners, Sevavratis, Acharyas and Vidyanjali Core Team for supporting their education and bringing a vast difference in their lives.



Nagamani

Group: IT

Vasavi
Engineering College



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G. Narayannamma
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Savitri

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We are thankful to
Sri Venu Madhav Kandala
for his kind donation of ₹ 1 lakh towards
Corpus Fund Sponsor a Child Education

*We are extremely thankful
to the following donors for their kind
donation for Vidyanjali Higher Education*

NAME OF THE DONOR	AMOUNT
Smt. P. Girija	₹ 50,000/-
Sri Ponaka Krishna Reddy	₹ 25,000/-
Smt. M. Indira Vani (In the memory of Sri Phani Bhushan)	₹ 6000/-

kamadhenu goshala



Feed a cow/bull per day	₹ 150/-
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Corpus fund for the cow feed	₹ 1 lakh

Corpus Fund



Donations are received for Cow Feed Corpus Fund from ₹250 onwards

- ❖ Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of “Nachiketa Tapovan” and also can be transferred through online.
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 Branch : Badepally (20193)
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 Please send transfer details & address to
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A/c Name	: Nachiketa Tapovan
A/c No	: 30953215793
IFSC Code	: SBIN0012655
SWIFT Code	: SBININBB214

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Email: nachiketananda@gmail.com

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❖ Date of Publication: 20/8/2016 ❖ Date of Posting: 26th & 27th of August 2016

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.

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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 this fact and do something sensible about it.

- Gautam Vir