

Nachiketanjali

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Navaratri

at Nachiketa Tapovan, Kodgal



*Mother Durga
Culmination of all forms*

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Nachiketa

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...infusing values

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- 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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Matru Vahini : Translating feminine energy to transform the society

Vanaprastha Vahini : Serving the humanity with rich experiences

We are in the process of forming committees from village to national level.

You can be a member of Nachiketa Seva Vahini



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Nachiketa

इडावा-इहाक्ति

...a spiritual calling

Is Streeshakti a mere title? Come, let's break the stereotype! Welcoming woman power that moulds, nurtures and transforms the world. Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram is a sanctuary where our most beloved Adhyatmik Praneta, Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri, is here to guide and initiate women

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- Our gentle appeal is not to consider Ashram as an orphanage or old age home

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Cover Story

Kartik Damodara (Kartik Maas)

Kartik is the holiest month in the Hindu lunar calendar. It usually overlaps with the months October & November in the English calendar. *Kartik Maas*, also known as *Damodar Maas*, is described in the scriptures as the best among months for performing austerities. Observing *vrata* in the month of *Kartik* is glorified in the *Puranas*. The *Padma Purana* describes the month of *Kartik* as Lord Krishna's favorite month. Devotional activities performed during this holy month are rewarded with greater spiritual results than usual so devotees often take vows to increase their spiritual practices or to simplify their material needs for the entire month. It is a way that they can remember Krishna more and increase their service to Him.

Lord Shri Krishna says, "Of all plants, the sacred Tulasi is most dear to Me; of all months, *Kartik* is most dear, of all places of pilgrimage, My beloved Dwarka is most dear, and of all days, *Ekadashi* is most dear." (*Padma Purana*, Uttara Khand 112.3)

"As *Satya yuga* is the best of *yugas* (ages), as the Vedas are the best among scriptures, as Ganga is best of rivers, so *Kartik* is the best of months, the most dear to Lord Krishna." (*Skanda Purana*)

Kartik Purnima or *Tripurari Purnima* is celebrated as '*Dev Deepavali*' that is the Diwali of Gods and Goddesses. As per Hindu mythology, the Hindu Gods descend to Earth and have a holy dip in sacred rivers. *Vaishnavas* perform *Satyanarayana vrat* on this auspicious day and devotees of Lord Shiva perform *Rudrabhishek*. *Kartik maas* is significant for both Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva.

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Does God listen to our Prayers?

But they are mistaken. Didn't Lord Krishna accept the humble offering of *poha* (beaten rice) from His friend Sudhama? Even mere ardent *Pranams* (respectful salutation) is accepted by God. He is happy with the love we have for Him and he takes up the responsibility of guarding us all the time. Once *Bhakti* or devotion sprouts in the seeker, God waters the sapling of devotion, fences it and helps it grow with the fertilizer called Grace. He is the *Vanamali*- the Gardener of *Bhakti*.

Spirituality is drawing many seekers into its path. Having read from books or listening to spiritual discourses, awareness and curiosity is created in some to try out this path. Some drop out early, but there are a few who pursue the path sincerely and slowly and become steadfast *Sadhakas*. In their pursuit, *Sadhakas* or spiritual seekers get many doubts. They wonder if their efforts are noticed or accounted by God. "Does God know that I am yearning for Him? Among lakhs of His devotees will He know my miniscule efforts to have His *Darshan*?" These doubts are quite rational but have to be addressed in order to move forward in the spiritual pursuit.

First and foremost, a seeker should understand that God is all-pervading. He is the creator of this universe and hence everything comes under His surveillance. Even a leaf cannot move without His knowledge. Secondly, when the seeker's goal is God Himself then how can He not know about His devotee's yearning?

God resides in every living being and hence within us too. Then how can He not know our thoughts or efforts? Will the eyelid search for the eye? Isn't the eyelid part of the eye? Similarly God is part of us and he doesn't need to search for his devotee. He is inside us and watches all our efforts very keenly. He is pleased even with small efforts made by the seeker to know his true nature. Some might feel that they should worship God with laborious prayers and rich offerings.

However, He puts us through various tests to check our faith. It is here that many drop out as they feel that God didn't listen to their prayers and hence, there is no reason why they should continue in their pursuit. However, the earnest seeker doesn't give up. He continues his search and God helps him reach his goal and reveals Himself to the seeker at the opportune moment.

When a seeker utters the Lord's name he might feel it is he who initiates the utterance. But one would be surprised to know that even before we utter the name it reaches God through our thoughts and the sound reflection comes out through us verbally. Then, how does the question arise whether God has heard our prayers?

It is to be noted that it is only through God's grace that we get the opportunity of chanting His name. It is with the blessings of God alone that a *Sadhaka* decides to tread the spiritual path. So rest assured that God's grace is always with you. Chant whatever name you like. It can be Rama or Shiva, it doesn't matter. Your prayers are heard. The humble devotional drops in your prayers are received by God even before they drop down, like the Chakora bird which receives the raindrops even before they fall on the earth.

So pursue your path with immense confidence. He will not only reveal Himself, but also make you understand that you are one with HIM. Then the outpour is only BLISS...BLISS...and BLISS.

- *Subhadra K.*

Gaurang an epitome of silence!

There lived a saint who had nothing of his own, yet had a sense of completeness. He had many disciples. He always used to shower his blessings on all. He never differentiated or discriminated against anyone, yet, at times, it was as if Gaurang, a young boy was given more importance by the Guru. Seeing this, the other disciples used to get jealous about Gaurang. Gaurang was young and was also quite aware of the happenings around. But since it was always a call from his Guru, he had to obey his every command. This added to his frustration. Disciples started hating Gaurang, who was really a very simple and humble boy. And that started reflecting very badly on all other activities too.

Though Gaurang was aware of everything and never wanted to hurt his friends, he was silently doing whatever he could for his friends. But the more intense, the Guru's command, the more lively and prominent Gaurang would become. This went on for long. Quite long. Within the next two years Gaurang, who turned 14, became well-known to the world as a great *Yogi*, touring all over the world to inspire mankind.

When Gaurang was back to the *ashram*, he felt that while all regular activities were going on as usual, 'life' was hardly noticeable around. One day, when gardening work was going on; Gaurang fell down and was almost unconscious. Even though his friends around were watching him, no one felt the need to go to him and help him. He was gasping for breath and no one even felt the need to fetch a glass of water for him.

After work, when everyone came to the evening *satsanga*, the Guru looked at the gathering. After observing keenly, he became restless and enquired about Gaurang. No one answered anything. He understood that there was something terribly wrong. But since, it was the time for *satsanga* and he had to speak, he closed his eyes for a while. Then he said, "We are already a part of everything, but it is our preoccupied mind that doesn't allow one to experience that which needs to be experienced or to see and know the truth in its pristine form. Just as a child cannot be separated from its parents, similarly no one can be separated from the Divine Mother. We are already



part of every play and eventually part of the Divine Mother. It is just the feeling or kind of awareness for oneness, of oneness, with oneness, by oneness that we should be aware of and we would know everything by ourselves.

Dear *jigyasus*! Gaurang in fact is an embodiment of Divinity. I sensed it long back and started grooming him, but never neglected anyone present here. You all have learnt the same lesson and were provided with the same food and time. But only Gaurang could utilize everything properly. He exhibited whatever was necessary without even thinking about himself. He was not just the obedient child or honest boy; he also demonstrated what true selflessness is. He in fact was more worried about your welfare than his. He wanted you all to get groomed properly. He spoke to me on many occasions about you all. He is a genuine signature of selflessness. He never wanted any post or special attention, nor have I ever showered any special blessings on him. He simply wanted to serve mankind. Whenever we were together, there was nothing special going on, but it was a sincere attempt to make the best use of the little life that he has left in him.

Dear *jigyasus*, whenever we spent time together, we used to plan about the organization and its growth. He is such a wonderful boy that even after knowing about his health issues, he was never worried. He always focused on activities and nothing else. It was more or less thinking about mankind and welfare of the organization and nothing else. And if at all I favored him, it was to make his journey more meaningful and purposeful and nothing else, since he is suffering from cancer which is in the fourth stage and there is very little time left for him."

This was shocking news even for the elderly disciples. There was pin drop silence, a big pause as if everything got frozen in that moment. The Guru once again closed his eyes for a long time and said, "Please, let us go and see Gaurang." When they rose to their feet and started marching towards the hall, no one understood, but it was as if heavy bodies were moving towards the Dormitory. All proceeded to meet Gaurang who was lying on the mat and was looking very pale

and weak. Seeing the Guru, Gaurang tried to get up but the Guru said, "No, my dear child. Take rest. Look, all your friends have come to meet you. They want to share so many things with you. Please take care. Soon, we shall see a doctor." And the Guru left the hall, leaving the children behind with their heavy hearts. The hall was filled with silence. Only moist eyes were communicating. No words were spoken and yet volumes were spoken through eyes. Silence started pervading all over. They say, 'The more intense the silence becomes, the more clarity and selflessness it brings.' A kind of feeling, feeling of oneness in the silence, feeling of selflessness in the silence, takes over. Silence empties one completely to get refilled with silence. And that was what was happening in the hall and also in the minds of the young disciples. For how long they spent time there or when Gaurang's eyes got closed and everyone left, no one remembered. What they did remember was Gaurang's pale but blooming face, his moist but sparkling eyes and silence within and without!

The night passed peacefully for Gaurang, but for others it was not the same. What they had eaten or done that whole night was not clear, except being aware of the silence that pervaded all over. Minds were blank and merged in the silence. For the first time they felt as if they lost everything to gain the most important lesson of life... for life.

No doubt, Gaurang will be back, back with many more Gaurangs. This is the hope that keeps us alive and allows us to keep learning the lessons of life. It is not bad to understand silence from the adversities of life, but when there are plenty of activities that can bring silence, then why should one not seek it, rather than waiting for such adversities. Silence is always there, it is only our sincere efforts, selflessness and service to the mankind that can bring it to the surface. Remember, Gaurang is back if we are selfless... Gaurang is back if we feel for others... Gaurang is back if we expand our awareness... Gaurang is back if we find Gaurang within us!

- Swami Nachiketananda Puri



Amritadhara

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to have regular conversations with his devotees. Here is one of them.

SHYAM BASU: “Sir, what remains after one throws away both thorns?”

MASTER: “*Nityasuddhabodharupam* — the Eternal and Ever-pure Consciousness. How can I make it clear to you? Suppose a man who has never tasted ghee asks you, ‘What does ghee taste like?’ Now, how can you explain that to him? At the most you can say: ‘What is ghee like? It is just like ghee!’ A young girl asked her friend: ‘Well, friend, your husband is here. What sort of pleasure do you enjoy with him?’ The friend answered: ‘My dear, you will know it for yourself when you get a husband. How can I explain it to you?’



“It is said in the *Purana* that Bhagavati, the Divine Mother, was once born as the daughter of King Himalaya. After Her birth, She showed Her father Her many forms. The Lord of the mountains, after enjoying all these visions, said to the Divine Mother, ‘May I have the vision of Brahman as It is described in the Vedas!’ Then the Divine Mother answered, ‘Father, if you want to have the vision of Brahman you must live in the company of holy men.’

“What Brahman is cannot be described in words. Somebody once said that everything in the world has been made impure, like food that has touched the tongue, and that Brahman alone remains undefiled. The meaning is this: All scriptures and holy books — the Vedas, the *Puranas*, the *Tantras*, and so forth — may be said to have been defiled because their contents have been uttered by the tongues of men; but what Brahman is, no tongue has yet been able to describe. Therefore Brahman is still undefiled. One cannot describe in words the joy of play and communion with *Satchidananda*. He alone knows, who has realized it.”

Addressing Dr. Sarkar, Sri Ramakrishna continued: “Look here. One cannot attain Knowledge unless one is free from egotism. There is a saying:

When shall I be free?

When ‘I’ shall cease to be?

‘I’ and ‘mine’ — that is ignorance. ‘Thou’ and ‘Thine’ — that is Knowledge. A true devotee says: ‘O God, Thou alone art the Doer; Thou alone doest all, I am a mere instrument; I do as Thou makest me do. All these — wealth, possessions, nay, the universe itself — belong to Thee. This house and these relatives are Thine alone, not mine. I am Thy servant; mine is only the right to serve Thee according to Thy bidding.’”

Source: Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna
By Swami Nikhilananda



“Our goal should be intense practice. No low or high aims when it comes to Sadhana as either of them could be detrimental to one’s spiritual growth.”

- Swami Shivananda Puri

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Vivekanjali

DEAR PANDITJI MAHÂRÂJ, (Pandit Shankarlal of Khetri.)

Your letter has reached me duly. I do not know why I should be undeservingly praised. "None is good, save One, that is, God", as the Lord Jesus hath said. The rest are only tools in His hands. "Gloria in Excelsis", "Glory unto God in the highest", and unto men that deserve, but not to such an undeserving one like me. Here "the servant is not worthy of the hire"; and a Fakir, especially, has no right to any praise whatsoever, for would you praise your servant for simply doing his duty?

... My unbounded gratitude to Pandit Sundarlalji, and to my Professor (With whom he read the Mahâ-Bhâshya on Pânini.) for this kind remembrance of me.

Now I would tell you something else. The Hindu mind was ever deductive and never synthetic or inductive. In all our philosophies, we always find hair-splitting arguments, taking for granted some general proposition, but the proposition itself may be as childish as possible. Nobody ever asked or searched the truth of these general propositions.



Therefore independent thought we have almost none to speak of, and hence the dearth of those sciences which are the results of observation and generalization. And why was it thus? — From two causes: The tremendous heat of the climate forcing us to love rest and contemplation better than activity, and the Brâhmins as priests never undertaking journeys or voyages to distant lands. There were voyagers and people who travelled far; but they were almost always traders, i.e. people from whom priestcraft and their own sole love for gain had taken away all capacity for intellectual development. So their observations, instead of adding to the store of human knowledge, rather degenerated it; for their observations were bad and their accounts exaggerated and tortured into fantastical shapes, until they passed all recognition.

So you see, we must travel, we must go to foreign parts. We must see how the engine of society works in other countries, and keep free and open communication with what is going on in the minds of other nations, if we really want to be a nation again. And over and above all, we must cease to tyrannize. To what a ludicrous state are we brought! If a *Bhângi* comes to anybody as a *Bhângi*, he would be shunned as the plague; but no sooner does he get a cupful of water poured upon his head with some mutterings of prayers by a *Pâdri*, and get a coat on his back, no matter how threadbare, and come into the room of the most orthodox Hindu — I don't see the man who then dare refuse him a chair and a hearty shake of the hands! Irony can go no further. And come and see what they, the *Pâdri*s, are doing here in the *Dakshin* (south). They are converting the lower classes by lakhs; and in Travancore, the most priest-ridden country in India — where every bit of land is owned by the Brahmins . . . nearly one-fourth has become Christian! And I cannot blame them; what part have they in David and what in Jesse? When, when, O Lords shall man be brother to man?

Yours,
VIVEKANANDA.

Source: Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda



The Concept of Trusts – A Primer

Property is a bundle of rights, like the right to own, possess, dispose and destroy. With this comes responsibility. It is not always possible for a person to look after his own property. Also, he may wish to accomplish some purpose which he may not be able to do by his own or in his lifetime. A person may also wish to employ his property for charitable purposes.

In all these instances, inter alia, Trust comes to the rescue of the person. A Trust is an equitable obligation, binding a person (the trustee) to deal with property over which he has control (which is called the Trust property), for the benefit of certain other persons (who are called the beneficiaries). Our culture lays greater emphasis on community rather than an individual. The Rig Veda refers to some elements of collective social entrepreneurship which manifested in the form of charity / faith based philanthropy as a duty and responsibility of a conscious human being. During the reign of the Mauryas and Guptas (4th century BC to 5th century AD) and even later, a strong village community based on collective entrepreneurship and social cohesion was in existence across the country. The modern concept of social capital may partly be thought of as an offshoot of the above tradition.

With the growth of industrial revolution, the concepts like human rights and social equality gained greater ground. Our country, which was in the shackles of British rule, was undergoing a huge social change. Gradually, with the ideologies of patriotism and service for the nation, took root the idea of Trust. Towards the end of the 19th century, corporate houses began establishment of Trusts for the benefit of the public. The first Trust to be established in our country was the J N Tata Endowment Trust, in 1892. A major contribution of this Trust was the establishment of the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, Karnataka. So holy was the purpose considered that when J.N.Tata approached the ruler of Karnataka requesting land for establishing the Institute, the ruler asked him to take any stretch of land which he could fence! Besides, the religious laws of different people also contained regulations in the spirit of a public charitable Trust. Gifts for charitable and religious purposes were impelled by the desire to acquire religious merit.

Trusts are used for various purposes, some of which can be identified as: to enable property, particularly land, to be held for persons who cannot themselves hold it; to enable a person to make provision for dependents privately; to tie up property so that it can benefit persons in succession; to protect family property from wastrels; to make a gift to take effect in the future in the light of circumstances which have not yet arisen; to make provision for causes or non-human objects, example the furtherance of education; to facilitate investments through Unit Trusts and Investment Trusts which enable a small investor to acquire a small stake in a large portfolio of investments and to minimize the income tax. Of late, the provisions relating to Trust are being used for the protection of environment.

Therefore, the multiple purposes for which Trusts can be, and are employed, today emphasize the importance of Trust in modern society. They also make it apparent that one of the greatest advantages of Trusts is the flexibility of purpose for which they can be used.

– **Neetika Gogula**

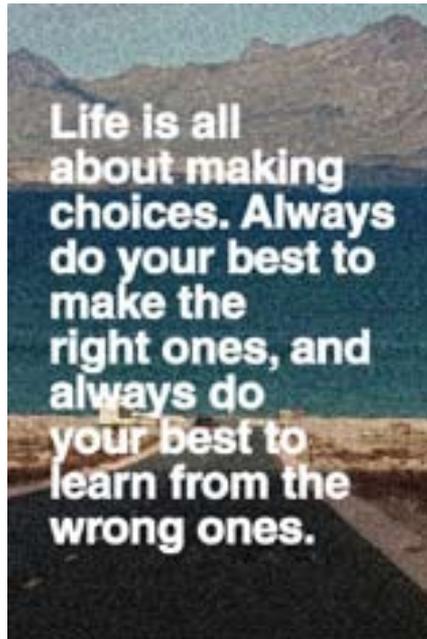
An advocate and has passion
for writing on social issues

“I am not a product of my circumstances, I am a product of my decisions”

- Stephen Covey

I joined college a few months ago and am living in a hostel. Now in such an environment we all know the one thing that is a constant. Ragging. Fortunately for me, my college, and my seniors are not the extreme-physical-ragging kind. It's mostly just positive interactions where the seniors get to know us. But even this can get out of hand sometimes. So, we have two kinds of seniors. The ones who rag us, and sometimes cross the limit; and the other kind, who stop the former from doing so. After sometime, I started to get to know some of my seniors and observed that the guy who ragged me yesterday, and the guy who saved me from him, were both, in their first year, ragged by someone worse than the guy who ragged me. So where did the difference come from? They both were treated the same way. They both went through pretty much the same feelings. But they both turned out to be complete opposites. Why? Because, each of them made a choice. What happened to them changed them both. One of them wanted to do to others, that which had been done to him. And the other wanted to make sure that no one else had to go through what he had to face. This small decision made them two completely different people.

Everyone has heard of Harry Potter. Many of you may have read the book or watched the movie. Did you ever notice the similarities and the sharp contrast between Harry and Voldemort? Both of them were orphans at a young age. Both of them were treated badly by their caretakers/guardians. Both saw Hogwarts as a place of solace and a new



beginning. Both of them grew popular. But then, Harry chose the path of righteousness, while Voldemort chose the dark path. They made their decisions and that led them to very different places. But in the end, we know what happened.

What we need to take away from this is that, we must never give in to our circumstances. Life always presents us with two paths in any situation. The easy path, and the path of righteousness. It is up to us which we choose. Although the first one might seem fun and easy, it isn't the right thing to do. The happiness or enjoyment you get out of it is

only temporary. However, the righteous path may seem difficult, ridden with potholes, throwing in difficulties every step of the way. But in the end it is the path which will give you satisfaction for having taken it. At the end of this path, when you look where you would have been, had you taken the easy path, you will feel good.

Look at it this way. The right path is a road, barely wide enough to fit two Lorries. It is under construction and has too many potholes. Every few miles you see an exit that will take you to the easy path. Now the easy path is a six lane highway, smooth as glass. It seems like paradise. It would be the best place to drive, but halfway through, the road ends. There is nothing further. You're stuck. Whereas, at the same point on the road of righteousness, the potholed road, now turns into a beautiful road. It takes you wherever you want it to go now. It is the way you wanted it to be. That is the difference between the right path and the easy one.

In the first example I gave, about the seniors, the one who ragged me gained nothing but may be momentary enjoyment. Whereas, the one who saved me, gained my lifelong respect. It's not easy to come and stand up for a junior when all your batch mates don't share the same view about them as you do. But what's important, is to do the right thing. Everything else will automatically fall into place. In a TV show my mother used to watch, there was a similar example. Two men lost their fathers to a murderer. One of them grew up to become a police officer, while the other became a criminal. Both of them wanted the same thing - to avenge their father's death. The way they did it, was completely different.

We are faced with different situations every day. The choice that we make is what defines us. Whether we give in to the situation or stand up against it to do the right thing. That is what matters in the end.

In any situation,

Making the right choice, is something that you will later rejoice!

N. Rohan C. Govind
1st year, National Law College,
Jodhpur



White cuffs of foam
Encircle endless waves.
Caressing the shore
Moving closer
Then farther

Silver sand slips away
From underneath
But I remain still
Tied to the shore
And to all that it owns

I stand entangled
In the midst of a future
Sure of neither my sail
Nor my sands

One side beckons me
With careless freedom
With the chance to be
Washed away

With the chance to forget
With the chance to let go
With the chance to lose
My way

In Between



But the shore holds me close
And sings softly to me
About my hopes
And about my dreams

About thoughts forgotten
As time passed by
They remind me
My future isn't the sea
But the sky

My future lies above me,
And my freedom lies beyond.
But my choices
Lie within

White cuffs of foam
Encircle endless waves
Caressing the shore
Moving closer
Then farther
And I
Am in between.

- Ria Thimmaiahgari



Gita Makarandam

The aspirant should follow the well-established paths for God-realisation. Undesirable customs and practices not only fail to achieve the expected aim, but positively harm the seeker by causing mental disturbance and physical injury. Hence the Teacher of the Gita enumerates some of the erroneous and harmful practices and warns the devotee to avoid them carefully.

Performing Yajna to satisfy desires:

Spiritual life and sense-pleasures do not agree. One is antagonistic to other, like fire and snow. He who desires sense-pleasures cannot attain liberation. Pleasures in this world or upper and lower worlds are the same in effect. They cause the downfall of man from spiritual ascent. Perhaps the pleasures of Heaven may be more subtle and refined, but they are of no use for the spiritual aspirant.

The good acquired by *Yajna* is soon exhausted by enjoyment in Heaven, and down he falls into this world to start again his spiritual life from the very beginning. Tempted by sense-pleasure, men ascend to Heaven and descend to earth, and in this way countless number of births are wasted without permanent joy or peace. Therefore Lord Krishna prohibits all practices which whet the appetite for sense-pleasures. All those practices which deviate from the aim of spiritual bliss and freedom should be considered worthless and dangerous by the real aspirant, whether such practices lead to enjoyments here or in other worlds. So long as the mind runs out for sensual pleasures, it cannot acquire one-pointed concentration, without which there is no hope of liberation at any time. That is why the Teacher of the Gita dismisses such pleasure-seekers as unlearned and thoughtless people.

Spiritual life and sense-pleasures do not agree. One is antagonistic to other, like fire and snow. He who desires sense-pleasures cannot attain liberation. Pleasures in this world or upper and lower worlds are the same in effect. They cause the downfall of man from spiritual ascent.

Therefore instead of wasting precious life in the performance of *Yajnas* which unhinge the mind and rouse passions of pride and pleasure, it is imperative for the real aspirant to practice desireless disciplines such as *Japayajna*, *Swadhyaya*, *Jnanayajna* and the like, which directly lead to the bliss of liberation.

- *Swami Vidyaprakashananda*

News Letter Hyderabad

Class I



Students learnt that people contribute to their community by choosing to do many different types of work. They gained knowledge on -Places people work, Different types of work,

Reasons for working and People working together towards the betterment of the society.

Students also are aware that plants grow from seeds with the help of air, water and sunlight. Children planted the seeds and are amazed to see the baby plants coming out of seeds, after which we started observing the plants around and discussed about different plants and plant parts.



Class II

‘Eat Right Grow in Might’ is what our second graders have learnt. They also have learnt about food pyramid, different food groups and what do we need to eat to grow big. Students can now identify foods from all five food groups, match specific colors to each food group and classify foods into the appropriate food group.

Students are learning Genders and they are glad to say whether he or she is a Boy or a Girl.

Class III



Students were taught about the significant role water plays in our society. We also discussed about water conservation. Students have learnt about various causes of water pollution as well as the ways our environment is affected. Students decided to follow the ways they can

help to keep the water clean. We also had mini projects on Deserts, Forests and Water cycle. Students presented a skit on ‘Water impurities’.

Class IV

Students of Grade 4 are excelling in their Math, English, EVS, and Telugu and also travelled back to 300 years to know what happened in Khejadli village.



Khejadli village in Rajasthan got its name from the Khejadi trees that grew there. People living in Khejadli village realised that we cannot survive without plants and animals so, they protected plants and animals. Birds and animals are losing their homes because people are cutting trees. Our Grade 4 students and teacher took an oath to take care of trees and animals.

Students were successful in making robotics from junk material.

Class V

Students are able to represent large numbers in Indian, International and Roman forms. They have done an experiment on fungus.



Hindi is our national language and we take it seriously. Students of class 5 are very clear with ‘vilom shabd’ and ‘shabdhardh’.

We collected information on pilgrimages and places of interest in Telangana.

In grammar, students learnt Synonyms, Antonyms, Adjectives and Nouns.

Students of LKG to V class geared up for SPECTRUM (Open house) which was held on 18th September, 2017.

- Sreelatha



Rama and all his wild devotees

*S*itaa... SitaA maa...Ramaaa... Sitaaaa...
Raaama... Sitaarama... were the only names
heard by the fish, tortoises and sharks in the
sea, wondering if it's the Lord of the ocean who
was uttering this *mantra*, but doesn't seem like
though! "Who could it be? Hey, look it's a giant
monkey flying across the ocean. Is he a *Rakshasa*?
May be not, He looks like God himself...Let us all
make way for these floating stones and let us be
careful, these bears might eat us up!"

Hence, the most unbelievable era of times
on the earth was to happen; a giant army of
monkeys, bears, squirrels, eagles, and every
creature on earth whose sole purpose was to help
their beloved God-like king Rama and his beloved
brother Lakshmana, were throwing the heavy
stones into the oceans, directed by Nala- the chief
engineer monkey. Piles and piles of dust and stones
were gathered, everyone were busy in their given
tasks, squirrels blessed by the touch of Rama's
fingers were busy writing the name of Rama on
every stone, bears rushing towards the mountains
to carry more rocks and feeling sorry now and
then by stepping on few monkey tails, small and
big monkeys carried the stones according to their

sizes chasing one another towards the ocean. Eagles
flew swiftly launching the stones like bombs and
drenching the poor monkeys. Jambavan was
the wisest and the mightiest, and he carried tons
of rock pushing the little monkeys out of his way.
Terrified by his fearsome body few monkeys jumped
into the ocean to save themselves. In the midst of
this hustle every creature turned back to look at
their Rama, feeling sorry for him by every glimpse,
their tears turned into fire which burst into anger
by whipping the mountain down. The mountain
bore the pain as it feared to act against the fierce
Rama. No one could stand against the mighty and
yet the gently prince, who was loved by all.

Days and nights passed by but the work was
never on halt. The agony in Lakshmana's beautiful
face only made the workers more gruesome, not
a single creature took a break to drink a drop of
water, so much love for their master only made
Rama more shy and yet confident towards victory.
Meanwhile a devotee of Rama was silently weeping
on the thought of his mother-like Sita, whom he
just met and gave her the assurance to bring her
husband who will kill the monster Ravana. Sita's
eyes were filled with misery; her gloomy face was
piercing Hanuman's heart. When the young prince
Angada of Vanara army was told about Sitama's
anguish, the entire army fell on to the ground
weeping, tears drenched the Mother Earth, and
she silently caressed them with her essence.

Suddenly there was a cry in the midst of the army. Sugriva, the king, was alerted about the visit paid by the brother of the demon named Vibhishana, who has come to Rama's aid and with an intention to follow *Dharma*. Pleased by his motives, the kindest of all Rama accepted him as one of his own and blessed him. Cheers and applauds were heard from every corner, as their army grew by adding Vibhishana and his four followers. Sweat and blood were all poured and hence there it was lying in the middle of the sea, turning the impossible to possible, the bridge for Rama named as Rama Sethu made by his devotees which turned the fate of the Lanka.

Sea creatures trembled with fear and yet, were mesmerized by the look of Hanuman carrying the two princes on his shoulders. They were awestruck and then silently prayed for the victory of Rama, blessing the rest of the creatures passing by. The ocean played a beautiful part of its own during the war. There it was, the mightiest army ever gathered, standing at the entrance of Lanka, like a hungry lion waiting for its prey. The war began, every creature fought to its might, some badly injured, some died, some cried for mercy from the pain, handicapped, lost the loved ones on the battle field, every creature had a story to tell, yet none stopped. *Rakshasas* flew everywhere, few monkeys drew their enemies into the sea, the sea creatures fought the battle unseen. Bears and monkeys covered all the sides of their beloved master Rama, protecting him from danger, wounded, yet stood still as a wall that can be untouched, and when things turned ugly, Rama himself protected them from danger. Creatures helping Rama, Rama shielding them from threats!

Days passed by, none of them were exhausted. This was no war that was pleasing for the celestial Gods who were watching from heavens. Rama's vehicle Garuda flew from heavens to kill the snakes which was the black magic shot by Ravana's cruel son Meghanadha and helped Lakshmana and Rama himself from the poison. An army without weapons; the army's sole support were only rocks and giant trees to kill *rakshasas* and they did their best. Hanuman carried the herbal mountain Sanjeevani to help the wounded army, recovered

and again ready to fight, turns after turns and finally the Monster king Ravana's sons were all dead.

Grief stricken Ravana was sent back to his courtship to return to the fight later, so kind and merciful was Rama. If only Ravana knew to control his senses and respected *Dharma*, none of this would have happened, none of his followers would have been laid dead on the battle field and his Lanka would have been saved from the great danger caused by Rama's arrows. Still Ravana walked into his own cave of death. No one could withstand the power of Rama's arrows. A fierce fight between two great warriors; arrows tagged with *mantras* flew at each other's will, everyone was astonished to see such a glorious fight. No one can change the fate of an *Adharmi*. Ravana's death had finally approached and he was fortunate to die in the hands of Rama, the mighty. And that was the end of Ravana's era.

All the creatures that helped Rama in the war came back to life and all the wounds were healed by the boons given by the celestial Gods, and finally peace and happiness filled in each and everyone's heart. Finally Sita arrived with tears of joy. All the pain in the heart just flew away with the wind, her eyes were set on Rama alone, and the rest of the creatures' eyes were set on their Mother. Few monkeys jumped on to the shoulders of the bears to see Sita closely, and then the army formed a gap between Rama and Sita, step by step Sita's feet trembled towards Rama, side by side all the little creatures walked towards Rama. The army fell on the ground greeting Sita and watching her with affection. Sita, who knew about the Vanara army was pleased and thanked them generously.

Rama was successful because of his devotees. Sita was brought back to her Rama only because of her devotees. The very existence of *Dharma* on this earth is only because of Rama, his Sita, his Lakshmana and his devotees.

- *Sravani*

Bharat's Super Kids



They saved their friends, parents, and neighbours from drowning, electrocution, thieves and a lot more. These children displayed immense courage and risked their lives to protect their loved ones.



Shivampeta Ruchita – 8 year old Ruchita noticed that their bus had stopped on a railway track and a train was coming towards them. Showing extraordinary presence of mind, she pushed two students out of the window and jumped off the bus herself too.



Ramdinthara, Mizoram - Ramdinthara saved two boys who were stuck on a transformer fence. The 15-year-old pulled the boys out with his bare hands and took them to the hospital. Son of a tea-seller, Ramdinthara was walking past the transformer when he saw that two boys were struggling to free themselves after falling on the fence. He overcame his fear in just a few seconds and grabbed their hair to pull them up.



Mohit Mahendra Dalvi, Maharashtra

14-year-old Mohit saved his 10-year-old neighbour from drowning in Banganga Lake last year. When Krishna Pashtye slipped into the lake, Mohit was the only one of the hundreds of onlookers who had the courage to dive into the lake and save her.

Uma Shankar Singh, Delhi

12 year Uma Shankar was on his way to school in a bus. Unable to negotiate a curve, the minibus suddenly overturned. Trapped under it were mostly schoolchildren like him, bleeding. Shankar jumped out of his bus to rescue the children. The boy crawled underneath and pulled out the kids. Now, they had to be rushed to hospital. Shankar flagged down motorists but nobody would stop.

So he lunged in front of two moving cars. The cars stopped. Six of the injured were rushed to hospital, five of whom survived.



Payal Jangid, Rajasthan

Payal Jangid is a little girl of just 14 years of age who has braved all the odds and had raised her voice against her own child marriage and child labour in her poor village Hinsala in Rajasthan. At first, she had to face numerous hurdles but was finally victorious in her attempt.



Prashanta Shandilya, Odisha

11 year old Prashanta saved her parents' lives by acting with composure and courage. She woke up hearing her father being beaten up by intruders in her house at night. She threw turmeric and chilli powder in the eyes of three of the intruders. Panic-stricken, the miscreants fled.



- Harini N.



Madam Curie

worked with were larger and heavier than her. In an advanced stage of pregnancy also, she was found working in the dungeon-like laboratory with a leaky roof. In July 1898, she discovered a new element –a radioactive element – and named it polonium after the beloved country of her birth.

Pierre Curie was a leader of science by the time Maria met him. He had discovered the principle of piezo-electricity. When a crystal is subjected to a stress, it produces a potential difference. The union between Marie and Pierre is a very fruitful union because their daughter Irene and son-in-law Frederic Joliot were the 1935 Nobel Prize winners for their work on artificial radio isotopes. Pierre was the first to demonstrate the heating effect produced by a radioactive source and he developed calorimetric methods for measuring radioactivity. He studied magnetic properties as a function of temperature. He introduced the concept of symmetry in physical phenomena.

Madam Curie shared the Nobel Prize with her husband and Henri Becquerel for the extraction of the radioactive element, polonium. But as ill luck would have it, in 1906 Pierre was fatally run over by a heavy van. The heart-broken lady sought solace by working hard in her laboratory. She discovered radium and was awarded again the Nobel Prize.

Marie died on July 4, 1934 of pernicious anaemia brought on by deprivation, hard work and long exposure to the dangerous radiations from the very elements which she discovered.

The most pathetic and tragic period of her life extends over nearly 30 years (from 1906 to 1934). During this period, she was toiling hard in the laboratory. During the day and during the nights, she was writing letters to her dead husband describing the work she had done that day.

Sweet is the rose that grows upon a bier. Sweet is the fir bloom that grows amid rough branches. Today the whole world pays homage to this wonderful lady whose religion is science.

- K.V. Ramakrishna Sastry

*F*ate treated Marie Sklodowska, familiarly known as Madam Curie, very cruelly, about whom it is said that there are so many queens but only one Madam Curie.

Maria Sklodowska was born on November 7, 1867 in Warsaw, Poland. She ranked first in Master's degree in Physics examination and the next year she ranked second in Master's degree in mathematics examination.

To help her sister Bronya through the university, she joined as a governess in the home of a nobleman. When the eldest son of the family came home on vacation, he fell in love with her and she returned his love. Their marriage was blocked by his mother. How could a nobleman's son marry a governess? The love-sick girl wanted to commit suicide but fortunately for science, she buried her unhappy love affair deep in her bosom and joined the faculty of science at Sorbonne. She bore all trials and tribulations with courage and conviction. She is the only scientist to receive the Nobel Prize twice. She met Pierre Curie, a renowned scientist by then, and their happy union was a gift by heaven to the world of science.

Madam Curie started back-breaking feats of research in the history of science- separation of polonium from pitch blende. Her husband, Pierre, not only lent support to her but also worked with her. The caldrons, kettles and pestles she

The Stranger who smiled



Once, when I was travelling alone by bus to my grandmother's house, I met a stranger who left a lasting impression on my mind. She seemed very agitated to have to leave her house. I also noticed that she was shabbily dressed – with ragged clothes – and was also bare footed. We were waiting for our buses at the bus stop when I met her. As I peeked for a second glance, I saw that she was carrying torn bags that were patched with pieces of cloth to prevent her belongings from falling out. As a loud thunder clap expressed the grief of all the waiting passengers, we were met with the news of a delay in the timings of our buses.

As I began to talk to the woman, she told me that she had never travelled in a bus before. A seemingly simple woman at heart, she had rough hair which was not combed. Her small walnut eyes were full of tragedy and grief, though I never dared to ask why. The *salwar* that she was wearing was made of one-tone ancient cloth and seemed as if it had come out of a museum. She also smelt like she had not bathed for ages. As we talked a little more, I observed that she was a bold woman. Her voice was as loud as a speaker and did not seem to welcome anyone to join our company. However, I could see that she was understanding and kind; not at all a rude personality. I soon began to understand. In the beginning, I did not feel comfortable as her shabby nature was a misleading feature. Now I realise that we should not judge a book by its cover. She may have had her problems.

As we parted, I noticed that she, by far, was the only stranger who had ever bothered to smile at me!

- Anjali

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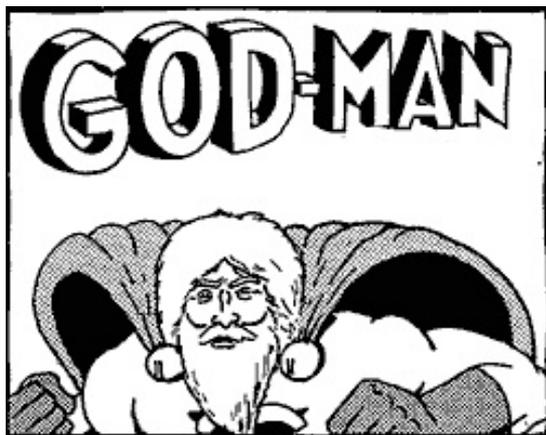
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Demystifying man-made God-man

*A*s the police are attempting to unravel the unholy world of *dera sacha sauda* and its beastly immoral self-styled Godman, I wonder if his followers are to be blamed as much for their blind faith. But when I read some objective analysis by various political scientists and sociologists, I could gather that the root cause of such a huge cult following is not faith, not religion and definitely not spirituality.

It is a deep rooted socio-political issue pertaining to social identity and financial security of a large group of poor landless peasants, who lost their social identity/source of respect in society due to casteism and also lost financial security/source of income due to agricultural crisis ... this coupled with opportunistic vote bank politics created an ideal breeding ground for socio-religio-politico demagogues like Gurmeet and his *dera* which provided false sense of identity and security to his followers by giving them handouts and making them dependent... Whereas real spiritual centers give a hand-up (not handout) to help him/her climb up and stand on his/her own feet.

It is sometimes hard for me to believe that this is happening in the land of the greatest spiritual guru Adi Shankaracharya. I wonder how people of this sacred land lost track of the valuable spiritual teachings on *Advaita Vedanta/Atman-Brahman* ... or does Vedanta make sense only after the basic physiological and psychological needs of financial security and social identity are fulfilled as proposed



by Maslow's hierarchy of needs... I think we need to recognize the fact that only in the highest stage of self actualisation (**spiritual realization**), man is in a position to enquire about *Atman-Brahman*. This higher stage comes only after fulfillment of basic physiological needs of food/security/safety and psychological needs, and identity/self-esteem/belongingness (**material realization**). Some wise man said, you cannot teach philosophy to a hungry man.

Somewhere during this lower but necessary stage of **material realization** is when a man is most vulnerable to falling prey to self-styled Godmen ... Self-styled Godmen are capable of infiltrating and flourishing in minds of men who are not yet capable of enquiring into *Atman-Brahman*.

It is during this vulnerable stage when you are materially busy and spiritually fuzzy, being unaware that *Atman* the soul and *Brahman* the *supreme reality* are one and the same, is when a true spiritual Guru can show you the path to realize the God within ... A true Godman/Guru is one who helps you realize God within yourself by making you understand that *Atman* and *Brahman* are one and the same. This external Godman disappears when man awakens to his internal, eternal *Atman* ... eventually the *Atman* also disappears/merges when man transcends into the universal *Brahman* – the one ultimate supreme reality.

(True Godman -> Atman -> Brahman)

A fake Godman is one who makes you believe that he is between you (*Atman*) and the God (*Brahman*) and that he is the messenger of God. The fact is nothing can be between *Atman* and *Brahman*... They are as inseparable as the water and its inherent quality to quench thirst.

(Atman -> Fake Godman -> Brahman)

That is exactly what the fake self-styled Godmen like Gurmeet, Asaram bapu etc. did with the poor and vulnerable peasants who were seeking fundamental identity and security in a world

riddled with socio-religio-politico problems like poverty, social injustice/inequality, vote bank politics and unemployment.

Now, the million dollar question: how to make ourselves invulnerable during the lower stages of material realization (physiological and psychological needs).

The evolution of *Advaita Vedanta* never ceases to amaze me.

The answer to this question is answered by the modern flavor of *Advaita* brought in by spiritual masters like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda who identified practical significance of Vedanta and simplified it in order to be able to apply even in the lower stages of material realization (physiological and psychological needs).

Swami Vivekananda has demonstrated how Vedantic principles can serve as the basis of morality, inner strength, courage, social justice and equality as well. The ultimate *Advaitic* principle of “Universal supreme Brahman in Everyone”, provides the basis for Sri Ramakrishna’s message of “service to man as service to God”, which Swami Vivekananda conceptualized as the new gospel of social service. In fact all the service activities of Nachiketa Tapovan are inspired by this very gospel of social service.

Great Indian mystics and monks like them have demonstrated timeless spiritual leadership by working tirelessly (*Yogi*) and selflessly (*Sannyasi*), just like it is explained in the first verse of chapter 6 of Bhagavad Gita

*anasritah karma-phalam karyam karma karoti yah
sa sannyasi ca yogi ca na niragnir na cakriyah*

Translation: One who is unattached to the fruits of his work and who works as he is obligated in the renounced order of life, and he is the true mystic, not he who lights no fire and performs no duty.

I think these are the fundamental qualities of a real Guru.

Your Spiritual Guru may be a true mystic and a liberated monk, but he can only guide you and

show the path... you need to walk the path all by yourself. There are no shortcut supernatural powers to liberate seekers just like that ... for Spirituality has the ability to positively modify your perception of reality... but not modify reality itself ... Spirituality can make you see the glass, half full instead of half empty...but it cannot make you see a full glass of water when in reality it is half glass of water. If any Guru/Godman promises alteration of reality and shortcuts to liberation, then you know what to do.

A real Guru is like the Staircase light that you switch on at the lower level to throw light on the steps to the higher level of spiritual realization ... all along illumining the steps of morality, steps of inner strength, steps of courage, steps of selfless service to man, steps of tireless unattached work and when you reach the higher level of spiritual realization you just switch off the staircase light. Guru’s job is done... Guru can only illumine the staircase, but cannot make you climb it.

Guru needn’t always be a person in flesh and blood. It can be an inspiring book, an inspiring thought/experience, an inspiring personality. It can be anything that is bright and pure within, that helps illumine those aforementioned steps to realization.

To quote *Swami Vivekananda* “*You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual. There is no other teacher but your own soul*”

This reminds me of another profound *sloka* in the same chapter 6 of Bhagavad Gita.

*uddhared atmanatmanam natmanam avasadayet
atmaiva hy atmano bandhur atmaiva ripur atmanah*

Translation: One must deliver himself with the help of his mind, and not degrade himself. The mind is the friend of the conditioned soul, and his enemy as well.

Beware of fake Godmen by being aware of *Atman-Brahman*! Believe in yourself!

Om Tat Sat!

- *Ajith Nallari*

Shri Ram - Quiz



1. What are the boons that Bhageeratha asked Lord Brahma?
2. What was the herb used by Kaushalya for the Raksha bandhan tied to Sri Rama while he was going on exile?
3. What was the gift sent by Indra to Sri Rama on the Coronation ceremony?
4. After being worshipped by Sri Rama what did Sun God tell him?
5. Who was the Rakshasa guarding the city of Lanka from the centre?
6. How did Kubera get 'Pushpak Viman'?
7. Who comes and has bath on the seashore near Mahendra Mountain on every festive day?
8. Where did Ravana keep Sita immediately after taking her to Lanka?
9. Which is the best among all Ashrama dharmas?
10. How far is Bharadwaja ashram from Chitrakut?

1. a) Let all the sons of Sagara, while the ashes of these great souls are drenched with water of Ganga, depart to heaven eternally.
b) And I pray for an offspring in our Ikshvaku dynasty.
2. "Visalyakarami"
3. A golden garland of hundred lotuses and a pearl jewel studded with different gems and diamonds.
4. Sun God standing in the middle of a troop of celestials, foreseeing the death of Ravana, he exclaimed "Hasten Up" Rama.
5. "Virupaksha"
6. Pleading Lord Brahma with his intense penance Kubera got Pushpak Viman.
7. "Indra";
8. In his palace 'Antahpuram';
9. Grihasta Ashrama.
10. Ten krosu (one krosu is equal to two miles).

ANSWERS:

By Dr. Kalluri Venkateshwar Rao, MA Ph.D
Translated by Manjula

SPECTRUM

2017

*S*PECTRUM 2017 at our school Nachiketa Tapovan, Jubilee Hills, was truly spectacular in each and every aspect.

When we started this academic year, we decided to conduct "Open House" for Primary Class twice a year, to showcase our children's talents. This being the first one in this academic year, truly stood up to its name "SPECTRUM". Dedicated Teachers and a number of Volunteers associated with the school worked with their respective grades with the able support of school Administration.

Children from L.K.G. to 5th grade demonstrated their skills and knowledge, with reference to all subjects and languages which are being taught in their respective classes, with the help of Teachers. Needless to say that our children showcased their talent with so much confidence, enthusiasm and energy, be it a simple English grammar skill or a mathematical solution. They even staged a Puppet show using simple Props and narrating the story in an interesting way. Even Socio-economic issues like saving water and Trees were not left out by them.

This proves that learning doesn't have to be purely reading out from Text Books. If children are allowed to understand and express their knowledge in an interesting way, sky is the limit for them. We hope to continue this tradition of teaching our children in an innovative way. After all, these children are the FUTURE OF OUR BELOVED COUNTRY.

- Rathi Arvind Kumar



The Proud Peacock

In that beautiful forest, a Crow had built a nest on a huge tree and lived alone. Very soon she got bored of her loneliness and went in search of other birds. She found a number of them and invited them to come and stay with her in the forest where she lived. Though they initially resisted, seeing the friendly nature of the Crow they accepted her invitation. The Crow felt very happy and helped all the birds in building nests and settling down in their new homes. She also ran on errands and helped them in procuring food. All the birds were very happy with the Crow's friendly attitude and together they lived happily in the forest.



There was a beautiful, crystal clear lake on the edge of the forest and many water birds visited the lake. The Crow was friendly with all those birds



too and helped them by all means and in return won over their love. One day, a Peacock came running to the forest and took shelter under the



big tree. The Crow realized that the Peacock was very thirsty. She flew down from the tree and tried to befriend the Peacock.

"Shall I get you some water from the nearby lake? You seem to be very thirsty. Come to my house, I can also give you some food" offered the Crow.

The Peacock looked at the Crow and said scornfully "I look so beautiful and you are so dark and ugly. How dare you invite me to your house?"

Hearing a new voice, the Parrot flew down to check what was going on and heard what the Peacock had said.

"Are you more beautiful than me?" she asked angrily. She did not like the way her dear friend Crow was insulted.

"Of course yes, look at my beautiful feathers", said the Peacock and opened up his plumage.



“Oh what a beauty!” exclaimed the Parrot loudly. All the other birds too flew down from the trees to see what was going on. On seeing the Peacock they too were awed by his beauty and asked the Parrot who this new being was.

The Peacock asked them “You have all seen how beautiful I am! Now tell me, how can I visit the ugly Crow’s house? The Crow has invited me to be her guest. I feel I would be degraded if I visit such a place...” All the birds were hurt with the Peacock’s impudence. They decided to teach him a lesson.

The Parrot decided to take the lead; “Hello, our new guest, we are awed by your beauty, no doubt. But can you sing melodiously like our Cuckoo bird?”



“Can you talk sweetly like our Parrot?” asked the Cuckoo bird.

All the other birds took their turn as well.

“Can you sing like the Nightingale?”

“Can you walk gracefully like our Swan?”

“Can you build beautiful nests like our little Sparrow?”

“Can you stand on one leg like our buddy, the Crane?”

“Or at least can you be friendly like our Crow?”

The Peacock was bombarded with questions from all around. The birds in the forest continued:

“You might be beautiful than all of us, we do agree. But what purpose does it serve when you are so conceit and prejudiced. The Crow might look ugly to you but don’t you try to look beyond to have a glimpse of her compassionate heart. The Crow is ever helpful to all of us. Her heart is filled with love for fellow birds. But you are narrow-minded. There is no place for love in your heart. God will reside only in a heart filled with love. He won’t look at your external beauty. You are far away from God. You have driven Him away from your heart.”

“You have escaped from a hunter and came running to this forest. The Crow on seeing you offered you water to quench your thirst. But you... you have insulted the Crow beyond extent seeing the Crow’s external appearance. You never tried to look into her love-filled heart. Will your beauty save you from dying of thirst? At least now learn a lesson and seek forgiveness from our dear friend.”

The Peacock understood his stupidity. He felt sad and started weeping. He went to the Crow and sought his forgiveness. The compassionate Crow embraced him and called out to the other friends, “Come, and stop this vain talk. Don’t you see that our new friend is hungry and thirsty? Let us first give him food and water. He is already repenting for his behavior. Now don’t hurt him any further.”

All the birds on hearing this, welcomed their new friend. They shared their food and together they had a sumptuous meal. The Peacock begged pardon from all of them and stayed back in the same forest enjoying the company of her loving friends.

God sees the purity of our heart, not our external beauty. Love all and serve all! This alone should be our motto. That is the way to live!

- A Story Retold

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Cashless Economy in India

Cashless economies, as the name suggests, are those that run mostly on plastic or digital money and thus with minimal cash or money in paper form. This is possible in mostly those countries where there is greater financial literacy and citizens are aware of the benefits of going cashless. A very important factor in the running of such an economy is the confidence that the people's money is safe in banks.

Because of the multiplying effect of the benefits, many developing economies are adopting the cashless approach and are going digital. This is a mammoth task and requires the infrastructure to be robust and have a reach in the entire consumer base as well as the traders and businessmen. It is up to the governing bodies of the countries to provide a push to banks and telecom companies to improve the mobile and net banking ecosystem so as to provide a seamless end to end solution to customers as well as traders.

India uses too much cash for transactions. The ratio of cash to gross domestic product is one of the highest in the world—12.42% in 2014, compared with 9.47% in China or 4% in Brazil. Less than 5% of all payments happen electronically. The number of currency notes in circulation is also far higher than in other large economies.

A cashless economy is not just an effort by the governmental bodies but a revolution which has to be brought about to make people understand the benefits and finally empower them to transact digitally in their everyday life. From one's salary to their mobile recharges, all remittances, if done electronically, will lead to a more transparent and accountable society. Digital wallets like Apple Pay, PayTM, etc are gaining popularity in cashless economies.

The advantages of going cashless are beyond imagination, not just to the citizens but to the country as well.

- One of the biggest advantages is the increase in the span of the income tax. Due to least involvement of cash, transactions have to



be done through banks where proper KYC verifications will be done prior to banking transactions and hence, it will be easier for the Government to monitor and mend the income tax evasion by the unscrupulous persons. This will, in turn, enhance the revenue received by the Government.

- It will curb generations of black money and in turn there will be a reduction in real estate prices because of curbs on black money as most of the black money is invested in real estate, which inflates the prices of real estate markets.
- In financial year 2015, RBI spent Rs. 27 billion on just the activity of currency issuance and management. This could be avoided if we become a cashless society.
- It will pave way for universal availability of banking services to all as no physical infrastructure is needed other than digital infrastructure. More currency in bank will mean more circulation of money in the economy, leading to greater liquidity, and would eventually mean lesser interest rates (according to the monetary policy of the country).
- There will be greater efficiency in welfare programmes as money is wired directly into the accounts of recipients. Thus, once money is transferred directly into a beneficiary's bank account, the entire process becomes transparent. Payments can be easily traced and collected, and corruption will automatically drop, so people will no longer have to pay to collect what is rightfully theirs.

- One in seven notes is supposed to be fake, which has a huge negative impact on economy. By going cashless, that can be avoided.
- Hygiene – Soiled, tobacco stained notes full of germs are a norm in India. There are many such incidents in our life where we, knowingly or unknowingly, give and take germs in the form of rupee notes. This could be avoided if we move towards a cashless economy.
- Reduced costs of operating ATMs.
- An increased use of credit cards instead of cash would primarily enable a more detailed record of all the transactions which take place in the society, allowing more transparency in business operations and money transfers. This will also reduce the amount of cash that people will carry and as a consequence, reduce the risk and the cost associated with that.
- Improvement in credit access and financial inclusion, which will benefit the growth of SMEs in the medium/long run.
- Crime rates will be diminished due to cashless transaction as most of the terrorist activities are funded with black money. In addition to this, other crimes such as burglary, extortion, bank robbery, etc. will also be declining.

The following are some of the disadvantages for going cashless:

- The biggest disadvantage of the cashless economy is that not everybody has the knowledge of doing digital transactions and hence its reach is limited to urban and semi-urban centers only and therefore it is very difficult to implement cashless economy in a big country where many sections of the society in rural areas are illiterate and poor. Hence, the lack of proper infrastructure and education among citizens is disadvantageous as far as cashless economy is concerned.
- Another disadvantage of the cashless economy is that although it is easy to do digital transactions, at the same time it is very risky as compared to cash related transactions. Hence, people

having half knowledge of digital payments are exposed to cyber fraud and losing their hard earned money to online scam and hacking of bank accounts and hence it is better to do cash transactions rather than doing digital transactions if one is not fully aware of the online medium of transactions.

Keeping in mind the above disadvantages, the government started many awareness programs and schemes to promote and encourage the use of digital transactions. Especially, for creating awareness in rural areas, government with the help of NITI Aayog has started many schemes whose main aim is to identify various digital payment systems appropriate to different sectors of the economy and coordinate efforts to make them accessible and user-friendly. The Amitabh Kant Committee, constituted to expedite India's 'metamorphosis' into a cashless economy, is also identifying the infrastructural access and bottlenecks affecting the access and utility of digital payment options.

The government also started many incentive schemes to promote digital payments like Lucky Grahak Yojana, Digi Dhan Vyapaar Yojana, Uttam Panchayat for Digi Transaction etc. Transaction costs involved while using digital payment gateways were removed to promote and motivate people to go cashless.

Every new change has both merits and demerits. Same is the case with going cashless. In spite of having many advantages, going cashless was troublesome in the beginning, but these hassles will be reduced as we start using it to the maximum possible extent. Above all, cashless economy will lead to the most convenient and secure economy for all.

As citizens of India, it is our responsibility to welcome the new change which will empower the entire nation and lead us in the path of development and glory.

- B.L. Himaja
B.Tech, CMA, FIII



or initiates with her eyes'.) The unique gift that Mother Meenakshi gave her son Venkataraman was the power to initiate and bless his devotees with just his look. In fact, almost every devotee of Bhagavan has talked about how the very first look from him, pushed them inwards and gave them a never before experience of joy, peace and silence. This was why, even on his last day, Bhagavan insisted that devotees be allowed to have his *darshan* - to give each one of them his final look of blessing.

After he came from Madurai to Tiruvannamalai, Bhagavan was in a state of unbroken, natural *samadhi*. While he was absorbed thus in Pthalalinga, the dark, dank, underground niche in the Arunachaleswara temple, his body was feasted on by insects and vermin while he himself remained without food or care. The Divine Mother, by her grace, first sent Ratnammal to take care of him.

The Mother Principle

In the book *Who am I?* Bhagavan says that one who operates without egoism, will look upon every woman as the Universal Mother. So, how did the Universal Mother look after her son?

After his death experience in Madurai, Bhagavan often went to the Meenakshi temple there. He would stand in front of Mother Meenakshi's idol for hours together, looking at her eyes. Tears would flow from his eyes. Significantly, Meenakshi means 'one with fish like eyes'. (The Hindu scriptures describe three kinds of spiritual initiations. One of them is the way of the fish. The fish is said to have the power of hatching its eggs by just looking at them. Therefore, the inner meaning of the name Meenakshi is 'the mother who blesses

Compilation Source: Ramana Periya Puranam
By Sri V. Ganesan



Interested writers can send articles based on spirituality or addressing social issues to nachiketanjali@gmail.com

Word limit is 300 words for one column, 500 words for full page and 1000 words for 2 pages. The best articles would be published in the forthcoming issues of
Nachiketanjali

Science SCAN



IIT Delhi researchers devise way to increase efficacy of antibiotics

Antibiotics are medicines used to treat bacterial infections. Since 1928, when the first antibiotic Penicillin was made, many new antibiotics have been manufactured. But, microbes are growing resistant to these medicines either by acquiring drug-resistant genes from other bacteria or by acquiring DNA mutations, which are random changes in DNA. Therefore, the quest for new antibiotics is a continuing one. Taking a new approach, researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi have devised a way to make the existing antibiotics more effective. They have done that by chemically attaching antibiotics to nanoparticles. This will help in delivering the antibiotics directly to the bacteria and thereby increase the bioavailability of the drug. This can also help cancer patients by targeting the bacteria residing inside the cancer cells. This also holds promise for developing many more effective applications in the future.

Rice that accumulates silver

After a study of 505 rice varieties, scientists at IIT, Madras have found an Indian rice variety, Garib-sal, that contains silver in significant amounts. This variety of rice is native to Bengal, but is not widely cultivated as it is a low yielding variety. It accumulates silver, naturally found in the soil, in the rice grain. Research indicated that nearly 1 mg of silver chloride could be obtained from 64 grams of rice. Silver chloride

can be used to extract silver. This throws open the possibility of commercial extraction of silver through farming.

MoU inked between ICMR and the International Vaccine Institute (IVI)

The Indian Council of Medical Research under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India has inked a memorandum of understanding with the IVI to collaborate in vaccine research and development. The IVI is an international organization based in Seoul, South Korea, and India became its member in 2012. IVI has been partnering with Indian vaccine manufacturers, institutes and governments on vaccine development, research and training, one of the successful collaborations being with Shantha Biotech in developing an oral cholera vaccine. The present agreement will further boost the collaborative efforts and help improve health outcomes.

New instrument to detect vision defects in infants

A team of doctors at the LV Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad have accomplished the challenging task of detecting vision defects in infants by developing a new machine, the pediatric perimeter. Previously, the defects could only be detected much later because of lack of instruments. But, this device can be used to test the eyesight of children between two and 12 months.



Our School Library

Researchers have demonstrated that school libraries have a positive impact on student achievement and that students with access to a well-supported school library media program with a qualified school library media specialist, scored higher on reading assessments regardless of their socio-economic statuses.

“The school library provides information and ideas that are fundamental to functioning successfully in today’s information and knowledge-based society. The school library equips students with life-long learning skills and develops the imagination, enabling them to live as responsible citizens.”

Students of Nachiketa Tapovan are lucky to have Mrs. Pushkala, who is coordinating with classroom teachers to create independent learners by fostering students’ research, information, technology, and critical thinking skills. She also took active role in sorting books, labeling and training teachers in conducting library classes. The first function of a library according to Mrs Pushkala is to support reading and writing instruction — in school and out. To this end, outfit our library with books and other media materials is supporting student learning in the entire daily curriculum subjects. The books include materials related to science, health, mathematics, history, geography, music, art, languages, grammar, spelling, literature, computers, and other topics.

She has built an adequate collection of fiction and nonfiction materials at enough different levels to accommodate the many interests and abilities of students designing to check out books for take-home reading.

Mrs Pushkala discarded many books -old professional development and some books which are not in use. This made it possible to tweak the layout of the book shelves to accommodate more common areas in the library. In an instant, students can create a space to collaborate. Also added were several more quiet areas to give students a place to work independently without interruptions.

Nachiketans are introduced to ‘Readers Theater’. RT is a way to involve students in reading aloud. Students ‘perform’ by reading scripts created from stories. The goal is to help children read fluently with understanding and with expression. With this, reading becomes joyful.

Our Nachiketans now, love to read books and are gaining more and more knowledge. They are experiencing a variety of book genres and other reading materials in a smaller and more controlled environment. Thank you, Pushkamma for being with us!

- Sreelatha

Libraries are the wardrobes of literature, whence men, properly informed may bring forth something for ornament, much for curiosity, and more for use.

- William Dyer



Indian Women In Science



There was a time (and probably it lingers on!) when fields like engineering and scientific research were considered the preserve of men. However, proving the stereotyping to be wrong, many Indian women have made the nation proud in the field of science. Presented hereby is a glimpse of five such remarkable women:

Anandibai Gopalrao Joshee (1865 – 1887) – She was the first Indian woman to study medicine in the United States. Born as Yamuna in 1865, she was married at the age of nine to a widower who was 20 years older than her. Her husband renamed her Anandi and encouraged her to study. She was driven to pursue a career in medicine when the son she gave birth to at the age of fourteen died due to lack of medical attention. She went to the United States, braving censure from the orthodox society of the time and allurements to convert her religion. On her return, she was appointed the physician-in-charge of the female ward in the Albert Edward Hospital in Kolhapur.

Kadambini Ganguly (1861 – 1923) and **Chandramukhi Basu** (1869 – 1944) – They were the first two women graduates from India and from the entire British empire. Kadambini, a doctor by profession, was an active Brahma Samaj member and was at the forefront of social movements for the emancipation of women and the poor. Chandramukhi did her MA from the University of Calcutta and went on to become the first female head of an undergraduate college in the whole of South Asia.

Janaki Ammal (1897 – 1984) – When women of her time were taking up fine arts, she chose to study botany. She obtained a doctorate in botany from the University of Michigan. After return to India, she went on to head the Botanical Survey of India. She collected a number of medicinal plants from the rainforests of Kerala. Her stellar work earned her a number of academic honours and the Padma Shri in 1977 from the Government of India.

Asima Chatterjee (1917 – 2006) – She was the second woman after Janaki Ammal to be conferred Doctorate of Science. Graduating



Anandibai
Gopalrao Joshee



Kadambini Ganguly



Chandramukhi Basu



Janaki Ammal



Asima Chatterjee



Kamala Sohonie

with a master's degree in organic chemistry, she joined the Lady Brabourne College, Calcutta as the founding head of the Department of Chemistry. She is well-known for the development of anti-malarial and anti-epileptic drugs. She also carried out research on medicinal plants in the Indian subcontinent.

Kamala Sohonie (1912 – 1988) – She was a biochemist. After obtaining a B.Sc. degree, she applied to the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) for a research fellowship. The IISc was then helmed by Prof. C.V.Raman, who was skeptical about women's competence to pursue science. Hence, she could get admitted to IISc only after much persuasion and upon accepting certain conditions. However, her research acumen impressed her mentor and she was permitted to pursue further research. Her work on the nutritional aspects of legumes is renowned. She also won the Rashtrapati Award for her work on Neera, a drink for malnourished children.

The Message of VIVEKACHUDAMANI

Discrimination

**Brahma satyam jagan-mithyetyevam-rupo viniscaya
Soyam nityanitya-vastu-vivekah samudahrtah – 20**

A firm conviction of the mind to the effect that Brahman is real and the universe unreal is designated as discrimination between the Real and the unreal.

Shankara herein defines discrimination in a succinct manner. Discrimination is a firm conviction of the mind to the effect that Brahman is real and the universe unreal (*brahma satyam jagan-mithyetyevam-rupo viniscaya*). Brahman alone is true and this world is a passing show. At a particular point of time the world appears in one way, and in the next moment it changes. A firm conviction in this truth is absolutely essential in spiritual pursuit. This is the first item in the four-fold spiritual discipline.

Shelly, the British poet, struck a Vedantic note when he said, "The One remains, the many change and pass." Sri Ramakrishna, while speaking about God, said the zeroes have no value as long as "1" is not placed before them. After placing "1", every zero becomes valuable, and without it, even a long string of zeroes is valueless. God is that "1" that imparts value to this world. Shankara says in his commentary on the *Isa Upanishad* that is the Self, of the nature of pure consciousness that bestows value to the world, without which the world becomes a zero. It is just like what modern physics says that without the field, the particles are reduced to a zero.

The supreme truth is that Brahman alone is true. The universe, as it appears through our senses, is unreal. From Brahman this universe has come, in It the universe remains, and again the universe merges into Brahman. Everything in this universe is

in a constant flux. Human life is fleeting. Shankara says in his famous Mohamudgar (10): "As a drop of water upon a lotus leaf quivers for some time and drops down, even so is this mortal life." We realize the truth of this statement only when we begin to think. When we begin to discriminate we realize how short and fickle our human life is, that instead of striving to achieve Self-realization, we are wasting it in sensory pursuits. This kind of urgency will come to us when we know the fleeting nature of physical and sensory life. Any moment death may stalk our lives and snatch away from us everything that we hold dear. The floating Sanskrit verse says: "Death is holding us, as if, by the hair, and therefore, we have to practice *dharma*." We have to practice ethical and moral virtues and strive for liberation with all earnestness because any moment this body may go.



In Hindu tradition, when a dead body is carried in a procession for cremation, people chant *Ram nam satya hai*, which means, "God alone is true." Interestingly, only at the time of cremating a body we remember this fact, at other times we don't. Moreover this chant then makes no difference at all as far as the dead man is concerned! But if we remember this great truth in our day-to-day life, what a wonderful transformation can be wrought in each one of us. For that we need this instrument of discrimination.

In our present state of existence, consciousness muddles in the mire of the sense organs and the body, which are changeable and mortal. But, in fact, consciousness alone is the true changeless Entity behind the changeable mind, senses, and the body, which are all perishable. It is the true Self of man. It is not a concept, but the very principle of awareness that imparts meaning to all concepts. This principle of awareness, the Self, of the nature of pure consciousness, has to be realized. The way to this realization is by carefully separating it from the conglomeration of the sense organs and the mind, and by doing away with its wrong identification with the latter. But to undo this wrong identification requires extraordinary intelligence and courage. In his *Kena Upanishad*

commentary Shankara remarks: "Without extraordinary intelligence, it is not possible to overcome the identification of the Self with the organs of hearing and so on."

Therefore, this difficult task requires sharp discrimination by which one realizes that one is not the body or a mere bundle of sensations, thoughts and emotions. As Shankara later says "the man possessed of realization and discrimination looks upon the eternal *atman* as his Self and thinks 'I am the Brahman', the Self of all." Thus, it is discrimination – the first important discipline – that gradually paves the way for that great event in the inner life of every aspirant.

**The Message of Vivekachudamani
Swami Ranganathananda**

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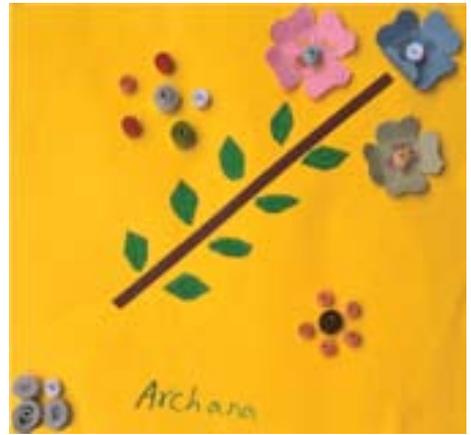
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O. Archana
Class VIII
Nachiketa Vidya Mandir



S. Dhanalakshmi
Class IX
Nachiketa Vidya Mandir



C. Shiva
Class VI
Nachiketa Vidya Mandir



P. Madhavi
Class IX
Nachiketa Vidya Mandir



*Festivals
&
Events of*
NOVEMBER
2017

1



Tulasi Vivah

4



*Kartik Purnima
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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.



PATENTED



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

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 this fact and do something sensible about it.

– Gautam Vir