

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and the ensuing Lockdown, the YVFA Press has not been functioning since 25th March 2020. Therefore, we have not been able to print 'The Divine Life' and 'Divya Jeevan' magazines from April to June. The pandemic situation is still very critical as the Covid-19 cases are rising day by day. The YVFA Press will start functioning only after the situation improves.**

**However, to benefit the spiritual aspirants and devotees, the Ashram has decided to upload the digital version of some salient features of the magazines on the website every month from July onwards until the situation comes to normalcy.**

**— The Divine Life Society**



# THE DIVINE LIFE

*JULY 2020*

## **PRASNOPANISHAD**

CHATURTHA PRASNA (QUESTION IV)

SAURYAYANI AND PIPPALADA

यदुच्छ्वासनिःश्वासावेतावाहुती समं नयतीति स समानः ।

मनो ह वाव यजमान इष्टफलमेवोदानः स एनं

यजमानमहरहर्ब्रह्म गमयति ॥४॥

4. Because the Samana distributes equally the oblations, the expiration and inspiration, he is the priest (Hotri). The mind is the sacrificer, the Udana is the reward of the sacrifices; he leads the sacrificer every day (in deep sleep) to Brahman.

## महागुरुवर्णमातृकास्तोत्रम्

### MAHAGURU-VARNA-MATRIKASTOTRAM

(*Jnana Bhaskara Mahamahopadhyaya Sri S. Gopala Sastri*)

ओंकारात्मकमप्रमेयममलं ब्रह्माद्वयं संसृते—

रोघावेगनियन्त्रणाय सततं ध्यायन्तमोजोनिधिम्।

औषध्याढ्यकलाधरस्य कलया भ्राजिष्णुमूर्जस्वलम्

ओंमाध्वीमधुरास्यपद्ममतुलं श्रीसद्गुरुं भावये ॥९॥

9. I devoutly worship Sri Gurudev of unparalleled glory, who constantly meditates upon Para Brahman, the one without second, the embodiment of Pranava, incomprehensible, spotlessly pure, to triumph over the terrific currents of the ocean of worldly existence; who is the abode of splendour, shining radiantly with the divine ray of Lord Siva and whose lotus-face is sweetened with the honey of Omkara.

औदार्यादिगुणोज्ज्वलं परशिवानन्दं चिदम्भोनिधिम्

औद्धत्यान्धकदैत्यदर्पदमनं दीनानुकम्पाम्बुदम्।

अकांछितसर्वमङ्गलमगावासप्रियं गङ्गया

भ्राजत्कं द्विजराजसेव्यमतुलप्रज्ञं भजे सद्गुरुम् ॥१०॥

10. I worshipfully adore Sri Gurudev who is adorned with the divine virtues like generosity, magnanimity etc., who is an embodiment of supreme auspiciousness and bliss, who is an ocean of divine wisdom, who has overcome the pride of the demon of vanity, who is blessed with all fortunes and is a cloud of compassion towards the poor, who loves to live in mountains by the sacred banks of Ganga, who is devoutly served by the spiritual seekers and who is endowed with unique intellect.

**(To be continued)**

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**GURU POORNIMA MESSAGE****THE INTUITOR OF REALITY<sup>1</sup>****(Sri Swami Sivananda)**

Seekers of Truth!

The desire to seek help, to search for light, to look up to higher powers, is inborn in all beings. The incapacity to achieve the ideals of the aspirations that spring from the heart, the anguish which accompanies such incapacity, and the knowledge of the existence of superior powers, obliges the individuals to take shelter under those that are endowed with the ability to lift them up to higher levels. The world is a dramatic scene of dependence of beings on others that can fill up what they lack. Love for God means the yearning to reach the highest, to become perfect, and this is not easy for all who wish to be so.

Perfection has its centre in the core of the seeker himself and hence, the difficulty of knowing the exact technique of realising it, which is God, Self, and all that is best. The key to the door that opens into the

realm of truth and perfection does not lie in those who see through the intellect, but those who intuit the reality in integral comprehension, not as an object lying outside but as rooted in the very meaning of the subject. These are called the seers or the sages, the Brahmanishthas who can communicate the spiritual consciousness even through a glance or a touch or through a single command. They are the Gurus or the Masters who teach the truth and shower God-consciousness on the mortals. Patanjali Maharishi says that Ishwara himself is the greatest Guru, for He is the most ancient and is omnipresent and being the seed of omniscience, He is the teacher of all teachers unsullied by the changes of time. To surrender oneself to God is, therefore, to seek shelter under the origin of knowledge, the source of power, the Lord of creation itself.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken From DL 1949

Guru is not the human personality. Guru is the Divine Being, the immortal essence that shines through the human person. The perishable body constituted by the physical elements should not be mistaken for the Guru. The real teacher is the one Brahman that manifests Itself as and when It likes. Man can learn only from a man and hence God teaches man through a human body. The human body of the Guru is an occasion to worship His universal nature of Supreme Light, a nail to hang the shirt on. The human side of the Guru is not what is important; it is the unseen but the only real Atman, the ubiquitous principle that underlies it, that is the true Guru. When we pray to God, we pray not to a body. When one resorts to a Guru, he does not do so to a material form. The dignified substratum of life, light and joy, the grand consciousness that soars above the paltry grandeur of the universe—that is what is to be seen in a Guru! “Hit it, O Saumya”, says the Upanishad. That is the target of meditation and the object of devotion, the teacher and the saviour, the support and the

goal. Lord Krishna says, “Know Me 'in truth'” where He emphasises on the fact that His form, the body, is not to be mistaken for the Eternal. Guru is God and God is Guru, and the Svetaswatara Upanishad says that the truth is revealed to that high-souled one who does not consider God and Guru as two different beings.

The sacred relation of Guru and disciple is very ancient one. Even from Vedic times, we hear of the necessity of the aspirants' seeking Brahma-Srotriyas and Brahma-nishthas being stressed upon. “Examining the worthless nature of the action-bound world, the wise one should get disgusted with it, for the eternal cannot be reached through action. For the sake of knowing That, he should resort to a Guru, well versed in spiritual lore and also established in Brahman-consciousness”, says the Mundaka Upanishad. Though the Guru does not actually give anything not already possessed, he becomes the means to dig out the spiritual wealth that is buried under the ignorant mind

of the aspirant. Since all experiences in the world are the effects of the interaction of the knower and the known, the spiritual experience too is in a different way the effect as it were of the union of the subjective endeavour and the object presented before it, be it physical or purely psychical, be it embodied teachers or bodiless mental forms or ideas.

It is from the Guru that the seeker gets the influx of spirituality and Divine Bhava. What the aspirant receives, he intensifies and multiplies a thousand-fold through earnest Sadhana. This is the duty of all aspirants. The Guru is the gateway to the transcendental Truth-consciousness, but it is the aspirant that has to enter through it. The Guru is a help, but the actual task of practical Sadhana falls on the aspirant himself.

In truth, the Guru dwells in your heart. The Guru is ever by your side. You have only to think of him with real Bhavana and you will at once feel his spiritual presence without fail. In proportion to the effacement of the lower ego does the Guru

manifest in you and appear before you. Therefore, be ever ready to receive him and empty yourself of all contents so that he may fill himself in you.

Guru Poornima is the moment for you to invoke and rouse up the Sadhana Shakti in you through an intense renewal of Guru Bhakti and by sincerely surrendering afresh the impure self-will and Ahamkara. Even as Sannyasins take to the study of the Brahmasutras and the Upanishads during the "Chaturmasya" or the four months beginning from the day of Guru Poornima or Vyasa Pooja, those belonging to the other Ashramas too should study their religious texts like the Vedas, the Bhagavadgita, the Bhagavata, the Ramayana, the Yoga-vasistha, etc., and contemplate upon their central theme that the Absolute Brahman is the only reality which the Vedanta so boldly proclaims.

May the grace of Bhagavan Vyasa and all the Brahmavidya Gurus be upon you all! May you attain Self-realisation through Guru Bhakti and faithful and sincere practice of the teachings of your preceptor.

## GURU POORNIMA MESSAGE

# THE GREATEST GURU DAKSHINA<sup>1</sup>

*(Sri Swami Chidananda)*

Radiant Atman! Today, Thursday, is the day of contemplating the Guru. Let us consider the question: What is the best reverence, what is the best worship, what is the best devotion, Guru Bhakti, and what is the best service, Guru Seva that we can offer to the Guru?

The best Guru Bhakti is to love all, to be kind and compassionate towards all and never hurt any living creature—to try as much as possible to benefit life around us, to be good, do good, and to serve, so that out of us only good comes, only help comes, only service comes, only usefulness comes. All that is positive, creative, constructive, auspicious, good, beautiful—that only should come to all life around us, all God's creation, through our thoughts, words and actions. Anything that is negative, anything that is destructive, harmful or injurious should never come.

Thus, there is no greater Guru Bhakti, there is no greater

Guru Seva, there is no greater worship and adoration of the Guru than to become embodiment of kindness, compassion and doing good to others. This is the greatest Guru Dakshina (gift to the Guru) also. This is the hallmark of discipleship.

What is the greatest worship of the Guru, the greatest reverence we can offer, the greatest Bhakti and Seva? Truthfulness is the greatest Guru Dakshina, the greatest Guru Bhakti, the greatest Guru Seva. This is the second great way of worshipping and adoring the Guru. There is no greater way.

All that contradicts truth, contradicts Guru Bhakti, contradicts your reverence to the Guru. Reverence becomes a parody, an anomaly; it turns into an empty nothingness if we do not live to uphold that which the great Gurus of all time stood for, that which they proclaimed. Truthfulness, therefore, in all things, integrity, therefore, in all things is the highest Guru Bhakti, the highest Guru Dakshina, the

<sup>1</sup> Taken From DL 1996

highest Guru Seva.

What is the greatest Guru Seva, Guru Bhakti and Dakshina? Control the self, conquer the mind and its desires and be established in concentration and inner meditation. There is no Guru Seva, no Guru Bhakti, no Guru Dakshina higher than this. This is the highest way of paying reverence to the Guru. Be a person of self-control. To be a person of self-control, who has mastered his mind, its desires, vagaries and fantasies, to be established in self-control, overcoming the mind and successfully centering it upon God—that is the greatest Guru Bhakti and Dakshina. That is the greatest Guru Seva and it is true reverence to the Guru who is Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshvara.

Lord Siva has a trident. It is a weapon of destruction. He holds it and He wields it. Lord Vishnu has a discus. It is also a weapon of destruction. He holds it and wields it. Brahma has no weapon of destruction or harm. He is an embodiment of Ahimsa, non-injury. He gives life, He creates life. He holds a Kamandalu in one hand, a Japa Mala in another, the Veda in another, and He gives fearlessness with the other hand.

Therefore, Brahma is the creator of life and the embodiment

of Ahimsa. Lord Vishnu is Satyanarayana, truthfulness, and Lord Siva is ever self-absorbed, perfectly self-controlled, with mind and senses withdrawn and His entire interior plunged into a state of deep, deep meditation. These three—Ahimsa, Satya, Brahmacharya—constitute the essential part of Guru Tattva, and to reflect that in our own personality, in our own life, character and conduct, is to shine like the full moon, absorbing the light that shines in the Guru, in the Guru Tattva and embodying it in ourselves, reflecting it in all its fullness, glory and immaculate grandness and greatness.

That is discipleship. That is the greatest Guru Seva; that is the greatest Guru Bhakti; that is the greatest Guru Aradhana (worship); that is the greatest way we can pay our Guru Dakshina. To become an embodiment of compassion, kindness, truthfulness, perfect self-control and contemplation is the essence of discipleship. It is the essence of Guru Bhakti and Seva.

May we contemplate these facts, these truths of our own individual personal spiritual life, and may we realise their truth and become blessed. God bless you!

## RIGHT ATTITUDE – A NECESSITY FOR ASPIRANTS<sup>1</sup> (Sri Swami Chidananda)

Festivals, religious functions, ceremonies and other rites have twofold aspect and purpose. There are the external observances sanctified by long custom and there is the inner truth which these functions are meant to remind us of and rekindle in us so as to keep them fresh in our mind and to readily recall the true basis of life on earth viz. sublimating the ordinary human nature to that of the Divine. Each festival and ceremony is in the nature of socio-religious keyword to remind one of higher spiritual truths. Unlike ordinary symbols that are silent, these ceremonies and functions are 'symbols in actual enactment'. The truths which the different sacred observances symbolise are better understood and glimpsed when their scriptural background is impartially studied.

On the auspicious occasion of Sri Rama Navami, the sacred birthday of Lord Rama, one of the greatest divine manifestations, we have the great privilege to offer worship in the form of chanting of hymns, Kirtan, offering of Puja and glorification of the Lord. This great opportunity is specially offered to

seekers and devotees all over the land of Bharatavarsha upon this annual occasion of Sri Rama Navami. This great Avatara of Lord Rama is of great significance and very special importance to us who have dedicated ourselves to the spiritual ideal, who have, by the Grace of God, begun to feel that the real purpose of life is not to be attained by enjoyment of the perishable objects of this phenomenal world but by striving to achieve the realisation of the high spiritual ideal, by the attainment of the Imperishable, Eternal. This occasion, the manifestation of the Lord as Rama, is in the nature of practical demonstration of the laws that operate upon the inward path of the soul's ascent unto divinity.

The lives of saints and sages everywhere are living commentaries upon the scriptures, and even so the great Avatars, the Divine Personalities, and their lives and missions form a demonstration of the laws that operate upon the spiritual realm, of truths pertaining to the inner life of Yoga Sadhana and Sakshatkara. Different aspects of this inner life of spiritual practice are

<sup>1</sup> Taken from DL 1967

brought out and demonstrated by different manifestations of the Supreme Deity and their various Lilas (or divine acts in this world). If their right significance is understood, it will be of immense practical help and guide to the soul (Jiva) who is trying to attain the Supreme or the Source of all existence, the Paramatman. These incidents reveal great truths to the real aspirant, to the man of faith, of correct perception and proper receptivity.

If, for a brief moment, we consider the life of one of the great personalities in the Ramayana (I mean Sri Hanuman), we will find that in spite of great strength, learning and achievements, he was an ideal aspirant characterised by utter humility, perfect surrender, a high sense of devotion to the Lord, and his attitude or Bhava was pure in all his actions, not motivated by any selfish desire but with an one-pointed motive of service of the Lord. He was a perfect devotee, a perfect servant and he was a perfect spiritual aspirant, because he kept his ego always in subjugation and never for a moment, his one-pointed attitude or Bhava of utter self-surrender and service of the Lord changed. His strength is true love and devotion to the Lord. His strength is the strength of absolute faith in the Lord, faith in the Grace of the Lord, faith in His Name, and

as though to exemplify this, the glorious personality of Hanuman stands radiant before us in the pages of the Ramayana. So in all our doings, in our daily worship, in our spiritual practice, it is the correct attitude or Bhava that is important.

We should have an intense sense of the pervasiveness of the ever-present Lord. That ever-present spirit, the Supreme Being, should make all our actions spiritually fragrant. Our actions may be prosaic, secular (Laukika), but we should feel that we are moving in the ocean of Satchidananda which pervades everywhere. '*Yatcha kinchit jagat sarvam drishyate srutyate-api va; Antar bahischa tat sarvam vyapya Narayanah sthitah*'—That Supreme Being, Narayana, interpenetrates everything inside and outside. If we do our actions in this peaceful, blissful awareness of His presence, then our actions become spiritualised, and this is the supreme necessity.

Then we must have the Bhava or attitude that whatever we are doing is an offering and a worship to this ever-present Deity which alone is visible to us through all names and forms. '*Purusha evedam sarvam yad bhutam yatcha bhavyam*'—whatever has been and whatever is to be in the future is none else but the Supreme Being Himself. There is nothing else—'*Na iha nana asti kinchana*'. With this

Bhava, one should do all actions. Animate and inanimate is all the One Self.

This Bhava is illustrated in a wonderful manner in the life of Ekanath. The saint was carrying the sacred Ganga water from Kashi to do Abhisheka of Ramnath at Rameshwaram, (from north to the southern tip of the land), when God seems to have tested him. The saint stood up to the test in a glorious manner by seeing his Lord in a donkey. The animal was there panting on the roadside, its parched-up tongue lolling out. Thousands of pilgrims were passing by, but none even looked at it because their Drishti (vision) was physical. But this saint who was going with the vessel of Ganga water and (what was important) he was within sight of the temple at Rameshwaram; and when he saw this beast suffering from thirst, he felt intensely for the suffering animal and soliloquised thus, "What greater act of worship can I do than attending to the immediate demands of my Lord here in this form?" He saw only the Lord and without the least hesitation, he knelt down and with his whole body filled with ecstasy, he poured the Ganga water into the donkey's mouth. During the process, he never for a moment regretted that he had wasted the sacred water,

which he had carried all along with all solemnity to worship the Deity at Rameshwaram, and that too wasted on an animal. This sacrifice was immediately rewarded. The donkey disappeared and in its place, the saint saw the resplendent form of Lord Narayana who blessed Ekanath and said, "You are My real devotee!" Many such instances we come across in the lives of saints. Saint Namadev ran after a dog. He was hungry and was eating when a dog snatched away his bread. Behind it ran Namadev with a pot of ghee, "Take this O Lord! Why are you running away with the dry bread?" That is the lofty lesson that the actions of these saints teach us. That indeed should be our vision of the objects towards which we continuously go. We must behold the Lord alone in all beings, and this attitude should always be maintained.

Even when we have this Bhava, activity usually throws the mind outward, it externalises the mind. And the Bhava can be held only if the mind is introspective. When the mind is externalised, it at once goes out and contacts the sense-objects and every one of them has got its inevitable effect upon the mind. The Bhava or correct attitude is weakened, and in its trail other emotions are evoked. What is the remedy? – Only deep earnestness,

genuine sincerity, patient and persevering practice or Abhyasa. Every time the mind gets externalised, try to keep one small portion of the mind cling to the Centre; just as the mariner's compass-needle always points to the North in whatever direction the vessel is moving. By this, the undercurrent of the mind always holds the central essential Bhava. That is to be developed by gradual practice. Then however much the Upadhis or super-impositions may come and dash against it and try to shake it, it will always be fixed in its central Bhava. A stage will be reached when this Bhava will never be entirely shaken or broken and thus the central thought of our divine attitude will not be lost. Then our entire life becomes transformed from mere living into real worship, Sadhana, Tapascharya and real Yoga. This is the purpose of life.

A few practical pointers are there to keep up and intensify day by day this Bhava of Oneness of all life. We start our day by waking and we end it by entering into sleep. So, the first idea to be impressed upon the mind when we wake up, fresh from a period of sleep, should be a prayer, 'O Lord! I awaken to worship Thee in all names and forms'. The feeling that you are Pujari (worshipper) of the Cosmic Form of the Lord

should be the first idea that should be impressed upon the fresh mind, when you get up from sleep. Devise your own prayer, 'O Lord! Whatever actions I may do, during the course of my waking hours this day, by thought, by word or by action, may it all be a continuous worship of Thee!'—

*'Namostvanantaya  
sahasramurtaye,  
sahasrapadakshi shiroru bahave,  
sahasranamne purushaya  
shashvate, sahasrakoti yuga  
dharine namah.'* With this idea, commence your day's activities.

At intervals during the course of your activities, for brief moments try to collect yourself and say, "This is all worship; whatever I do is worship of the Lord."— '*Na Aham Karta, Harih Karta*'. Try to behold the Lord in every being. Every now and then, try to remind yourself that this is your Bhava, '*Sarvam Brahmamayam*'. And, in the end, when you retire to sleep, offer up all actions of the day at the feet of the Lord. Say, 'What all I have done through hands, feet, eyes, ears, nose, tongue or mind, I offer up unto the Lord as my worship— *Brahmarpanam*'. Then go to sleep with this idea impressed upon the unconscious mind. This helps in your advancement in spirituality, this is practical spiritualisation of your life. Further, when you do certain

special actions during the day, try to see that at the beginning and at the end of each individual distinct activity, this process is gone through. For example, it is done when you sit for food, you offer up everything to the Lord and then start eating and again before you get up, you say, *Brahmarpanam*. When you sit to write a letter, mentally pray, 'O Lord, may it be a worship of Thee'; and when you complete it, say, *Brahmarpanam*. Every complete act that you perform, start with a prayer and end with the offering to the Lord.

This is the simple secret and is a most effective and powerful way of transforming all activities of the day into Puja, worship and sacrifice. This is what also our ancient seers and saints have discovered and given to us as our priceless heritage. We have also the beautiful Sloka in the Gita which should be constantly remembered by aspirants, '*Brahmarpanam Brahmahavih Brahmagnau Brahmana hutam; Brahmaiva tena gantavyam Brahmakarma-samadhina*'— He who thinks that the act of offering as the Brahman, the sacrificer as the Brahman, the fire into which the sacrifice is made as the Brahman; and one who is thus fully engrossed in God-consciousness obtains Brahman

Himself. This is the supreme fruit which he attains by virtue of his having correct and pure Bhava or right attitude of mind in all his daily actions. The highest thing that man can achieve comes to him who allies all his faculties of body and mind with virtue, with faith and devotion, with the spirit of service, absolute self-surrender and correct Bhava or right attitude. To be ever absorbed in the repetition of the Lord's Name and to be ever absorbed in the service of the Lord is the shining ideal that the grand personalities, Avatara Purushas, present before humanity for all time. Therefore, all your activities and all your earnest efforts in spiritual pursuits, when it is allied to Dharma (righteousness), to devotion to God, worship of God, become fruitful in immortal glory, become fruitful in eternal union with the Lord. May our worship and prayers to the Lord on the auspicious Sri Rama Navami day celebration be with the right Bhava, and may this right attitude of the mind not only prevail on such yearly occasions but also in every moment of our lives day by day. May Lord Rama's blessings be upon all.

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## **WORSHIP OF THE GURU**

### **(SRI SWAMI KRISHNANANDA)**

### ***(Guru Purnima Message given in 1974)***

Blessed be the holy Sri Vyasa Purnima, holy Sri Guruji. The full moon of the presence of the Guru is what we are adoring at this moment, and are devoted to in our own hearts. This is the day especially devoted to the Lord in the form of Sri Vyasa, who is the Guru of Gurus, the Sakshat Incarnation, an avatara of Bhagavan Sriman Narayana himself. Within this great Guru of Gurus, all the Gurus find themselves an abode. They get merged in this Master, Guru Sri Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa. This is the occasion to worship the great spiritual Master, Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, our worshipful great Master. This is the occasion when we invoke into ourselves the presence of all the saints and sages of all countries, of all times, into our own hearts. Blessings, therefore, are poured into ourselves by this magnificent spiritual invocation.

The contemplation of the Guru is the art that the disciple has to learn. This art applies to any other form of meditation applicable to anything and everything in the world. Invocation is the placement of the deity in our own being. This is something to be emphasised again and again. The divinity that we are adoring is above us, of course. That is why we worship it. If it is equal to us or parallel with us, we would not worship it. One person does not worship another person. The worship is offered to that being which is superior to one's own self. The superiority consists not in an ordinarily

conceived fashion of importance.

Here the technique of yoga comes to our aid. Every form of true worship or adoration is a yoga par excellence. The yoga consists in the placement of a higher value in our own selves so that the higher takes possession of us, and for the time being there is a moment of meditation. We ourselves get transformed into the higher divinity which enters us, takes possession of us, seeps into ourselves, and becomes our Master so that it guides us through our avenues of understanding. This is the vision of a yogi.

We often think that there are many Gurus. The world has seen a multiple number of Masters who have come and gone. Inasmuch as the Guru is one who leads us to eternal existence, the Guru cannot pass away. That which passes away cannot lead us to eternal existence. Only eternity can lead us to eternity where the means and the end are of the same character, as the lower cannot lead us to the higher. It is the element of the higher present in our own selves that picks up the power to raise us to the level of that which we are adoring. Thus, we adore them even if they are no more in this world; we adore them even after they have departed from this world. Do we not keep their portrait, adore them, worship them, remember them and make them our own, though they are not in this world? We are worshiping them in the very spirit in which they were living even when they were visible to our

eyes. A dead father is no father. A living father is the father. So who is the father? The living principle is the father. The being that is about to leave this world cannot be identified with the living principle.

We, therefore, have to consider the presence of this living principle in each and every thing in this world, and as the living principle does not die, the Guru also cannot die. We need not shed tears because our Guru is no more. That which is no more is not our Guru. It is that which was present at that time, and is present now, and will be always present, that is our Guru. Remember always, spiritual objects cannot bestow upon us imperishable existence. Therefore, our Guru lives in the form of a force that is immanent in all things. If in this way we visualise things, we will find there is nothing in this world which cannot be regarded as our teacher. Everything is implanted with a higher power beyond itself. Everything, anything anywhere, is of that nature. So we can summon the assistance of anything even in this physical world, provided we adore each and every being in this world as our Guru.

Remember the great Master Dattatreya's statement in his description of his Gurus: Everything, all things, living beings and non-living beings, temporal things, spiritual things, these were the Gurus of Master Dattatreya because the Guru is that which is immanently present in all things, in ourselves included. Can we suggest to our own selves a method of bringing into a focus of attention these admonitions of yoga practice, and deeply contemplate the Guru that

is present everywhere? They say Narayana is the Adi Guru. From him comes Brahma, the creator, who is the next state of the Guru. All that Brahma produced as the first creation becomes the third state of the Guru. According to the tradition into which we have been introduced, Vasishtha was the firstborn of Brahma the creator, so Vasishtha is our Guru. Vasishtha's progeny was a great Master called Shakti. He also is our Guru, and his progeny Vyasa is our Guru. Vyasa's progeny, Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa, is our Guru. Suka is our Guru, Gaurapada is our Guru, Govindapada is our Guru, Sankaracharya is our Guru, Ramanuja is our Guru, Madhvacharya is our Guru. In this way we bring into focus a fraternity of Masters pervading all places—not dead ones, but living ones. Here they are before us in the manner suggested, regarding them as a transcendent principle, not an outward object. In this manner the Guru is to be adored and worshipped. In this manner one contemplates the great Master. He not only becomes our teacher, he becomes our daily mentor, a guide in our day-to-day existence.

We need not, therefore, be in a state of despair. We are perfectly protected always, day in and day out, from moment to moment, by the leaf of a tree, by the sun that shines, by everything and anything, even by the sky. We are protected always, blessed always from moment to moment. Blessings inundate our existence. We have the grace of Worshipful Guru Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. May he bless us forever.

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## THE BLESSINGS OF GURUDEV SRI SWAMI SIVANANDAJI MAHARAJ

### (SRI SWAMI KRISHNANANDA)

### (*Aradhana Message given in 1974*)

We have just had the occasion to celebrate the Sri Guru Purnima, the Sadhana Week, and the holy Aradhana Punyatithi of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, and have seen how it is necessary to lead our personal life of spiritual aspiration, devotion to Guru, love of God and to serve our fullness of mankind, all put together in a beautiful blend.

We are fortunate because, in Sri Gurudev's incomparable goodness, he has provided a venue for us all to stay under a roof so that we may not run in the rain and hot sun for bread to a *kshetra*, like many of the Mahatmas are compelled to do on account of circumstances. Gurudev used to tell us, "Why should you fear? There is kitchari the Vishvanath Mandir. There is a Vishvanath Mandir Mooladhana Fund which has been instituted so that you may get continuous kitchari. Why do you bother? If nothing comes, no donation comes, nobody helps you, this kitchari will sustain you. And you have got the temple where you can sit, pray and do your *japa* or meditation, and a roof to live under. What else do you want?"

These were some of the simple parental, consoling, solacing words that he used to speak to us, and we have the wonderful, most unforgettable opportunity of staying on the bank of Mother Ganga.

I remember that when I was a small boy, I had heard about the greatness of Ganga and the Himalayas. I used to look at the atlas every day because I could not see Ganga. I used to see in the atlas the blue line passing from the top to the bottom, and feel a satisfaction that there is such a thing

called Ganga. I was enamoured by the name Badri because of the association of it with Lord Krishna, Nara-Narayana, Vyasa, Vasishtha, etc. These were my childlike aspirations. You cannot call them foolish aspirations. They had a great meaning, and I think they have a meaning even today.

Well, now I need not see the atlas. Somehow or other we are here for years together, breathing the most energising atmosphere of Mother Ganga and the beneficence of the Himalayas, whose subtle influence upon us, only gods can understand. Physically it is difficult to appreciate. There is the gracious hand of God on our heads, as it is on the heads of everybody, which will perhaps indicate that we are proceeding on the path of God-realisation, for which we have all left our homes and come here. But we cannot forget, at the same time, that we all must be having a sort of subtle insecurity and difficulties in our hearts, which emotions can feel but understanding cannot express.

Why should we feel insecure in our hearts, unhappy in different moments, and somehow or other have complaints and grievances against every type of atmosphere around us? It is because the next step above us is not clear to us. We do not know what will happen to us tomorrow, which is not merely a way of saying, but a great fact. We do not know what will happen to us tomorrow, whether it is physically, socially, politically, or even spiritually. In every way it is uncertain, and uncertainty is the greatest unhappiness that can come before oneself. If we are

not sure as to what is going to happen to us the next moment, well, what can be a greater unhappiness than that? This is eating into our vitals, and we are not prepared to bring it out into the conscious surface of our minds and make it an object or subject of investigation and analysis, because that is a tremendous sorrow that is in our hearts. Who would like to bring the sorrow up to the conscious mind every day and see it as if it is there like a devil in front of us? So what we do is, we bury our sorrows and outwardly we try our best to appear as social as possible, as if sociableness is all-in-all in our lives.

The social attitude is a necessary attitude, but that is only one part of the way in which life manifests itself. It is not the whole of life. That we are all eating together, having tea every day and have some provision for rations, and some security of the police so that somebody may not attack us, as well as so many other conveniences physically, does not mean that everything is all right because this is one aspect in which life manifests itself, which may make us erroneously feel that things are perfectly all right. They are not all right because in spite of all the visible fortress that may be around us, a sudden change and transformation of things can take place for reasons which human understanding is too feeble to appreciate.

Emotions are the greatest powers in man. It is the dynamo that is working in every person. We live only on account of emotions. The intellect is only the conducting wire through which the force of the emotion passes, but the dynamo which generates energy within us is the emotion. The strength in us is the emotion in us. The emotion need not always be bubbling outward, but it can subtly vibrate through every cell of our

body. This emotion, again, is a part of the psychological personality, just as our social attitude and social security are only a part of the manner in which life manifests itself. Likewise, the emotion is internally only a part of the way in which our personality manifests itself, the other part being the intellect or the reason in us. But there is something very deep in our personality which is neither accessible to the outward emotions nor to the understanding of the intellect. That is the subconscious, the unconscious, as we call it.

All this is a mess outwardly as well as inwardly when it is not properly coordinated. Much of our suffering is due to a lack of proper coordination between our inner life and our outward life. The outward life sometimes takes the upper hand, and great emphasis is laid upon it for reasons which become obvious at different times. At other times our personality takes the upper hand and we lay great emphasis on the personal aspects, and we begin to cry and complain that things are not all right because we are suffering personally.

The art of coordinating the personal life with the social life is a very difficult thing. Again I say that a Guru is necessary in all these subtle manoeuvrings of the forces of life. Life is an all-comprehensive manifestation which is outward, which is inward, which is visible, which is invisible, and various other faces of it are there.

So during these few minutes of our sitting here after the celebration of Master's passing, we may do well to bring to our memories the purpose for which Sri Gurudev lived, the way in which he lived, and also the manner in which he expects us to live as his followers, his disciples, his admirers, and his associates in one way or the other.

## THE FOOLISH CAMEL

*(Sri Swami Sivananda)*

Yudhishthira said, “O Venerable Lord! What acts should a king do by performing which he may become happy? Enlighten me in detail on this point. You are endowed with the knowledge of everything. You are perfectly conversant with the duties of a king.”

Bhishma said, “O my beloved Yudhishthira! Kindly hearken with rapt attention to the story of the camel. There was a huge camel in the Krita age. It could recollect all the actions of its former life. It observed rigid vows and practised severe austerities in the forest. Brahma was very much pleased with its penance. He appeared before the camel and said, “Ask any boon and it shall be granted.”

The camel said, “O Lord! Grant this boon. Let my neck become long enough so that I may catch any food that may lie at the end of even a hundred Yojanas.”

Brahma said, “Be it so.”

After getting the boon, the camel lived in the forest. It became very idle from the day it obtained the boon from the Lord. It did not go out for grazing at all. It extended its long neck anywhere up to a hundred Yojanas and obtained food without any exertion. One day there was a great storm. The camel placed its head and a portion of the neck within the cave of a mountain and waited

till the storm abated. There was very heavy rain. So it could not obtain its food. It had to starve. A jackal that was drenched by rain entered the cave in which the camel had placed its head and neck. It was very hungry. It began to eat as much of the neck of the camel as it could. The camel in vain endeavoured to shorten its neck. But the jackal continued to eat the neck of the camel with great avidity and joy. The camel died in the end. The jackal had a good meal that day. The rain ceased and the jackal came out of the cave joyfully. Thus did the camel meet with its death on account of its foolishness.

O Yudhishthira! Mark! What disastrous results accrue to one who leads a life of sloth and idleness! Therefore, abandon idleness. Subdue the senses. Use your intelligence. Do everything in this world with intelligence. Then alone you will succeed in achieving all desired objects. Manu himself has said that one becomes victorious with the help of intelligence. Those who listen to the counsels of wise persons and act after proper scrutiny, reflection and mature deliberation always succeed in achieving all their objects. Exercise your intelligence and act in this world. Be happy, O King.”

(Shanti Parva, Section CXII)



## STUDENTS' SUCCESS IN LIFE

### **Beloved Divine Children! Om Namo Narayanaya!**

Beloved Nectar's children!

The goal of life is Self-realisation or the attainment of Supreme Peace, Happiness, Joy, Bliss and Immortality. Peace is not an inert passive state. It is not a negative physical condition. It is a positive state of spiritual attainment. It is your centre, ideal and goal. Wonderful is the power of peace that brings joy and eternal bliss. Peace is not merely the absence of noise, tumult, strife or



quarrels, controversies or disputes. You may be in quite adverse circumstances. You may remain in the midst of calamities, troubles, tribulations, difficulties and sorrows and yet you may enjoy the inward harmony and peace by withdrawing the senses, by stilling the mind and eradicating its impurities. Peace can be found only within. Certainly you cannot find it in external

objects. Wealth, women, children, property and palatial buildings cannot give you everlasting peace. Attain the 'peace that passeth all understanding' by silencing the bubbling thoughts and eradicating all desires, cravings or sense-hankerings. When you are established in this, you will not be shaken by sorrow, loss or failure, and inharmonious and disagreeable vibrations. You can tide over all difficulties and crises of life easily and will come out with success in all your undertakings.

—Swami Sivananda

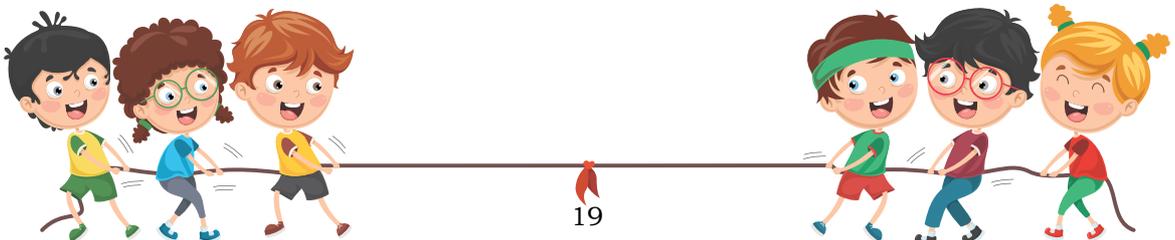
## CULTIVATION OF VIRTUES

### AMIABILITY

Amiability is the quality of being amiable or of exciting love. A man of amiability is of sweet disposition. He radiates so much of mental sunshine, love and joy that he is reflected in all appreciative hearts. He is friendly or pleasing in disposition. He is kind-hearted, gracious, genial. He has good nature. He is free from irritation.

The man of amiable character has ready affection and kindness for others, with the qualities that are adapted to win their love. 'Amiable' denotes a disposition desirous to cheer, please and make happy. The really amiable man avoids harsh words and rudeness. He has an easy disposition to get along comfortably with everyone in all circumstances.

Cultivate amiability. Let it become part and parcel of your nature.



# ERADICATION OF VICES

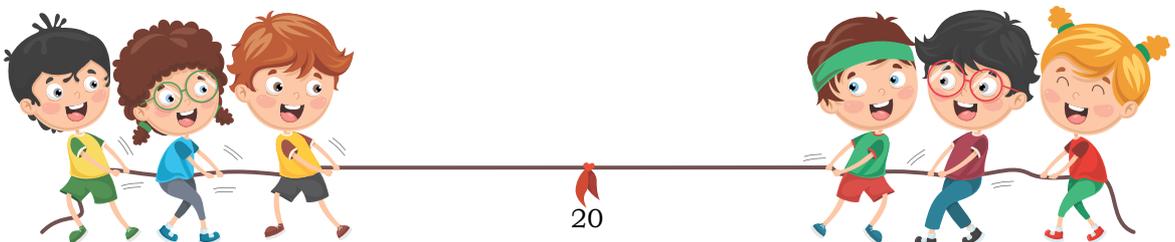
## ANXIETY

Anxiety is uneasiness or distress of mind regarding some uncertain event which may involve danger or misfortune.

Anxiety is the rust of life. It destroys its brightness and weakens its power. Anxiety is the poison of human life. Do not anticipate trouble or worry about what may never happen. Sufficient to each day are the duties to be done and the trials to be endured.

Full faith in God puts an end to anxiety. A childlike and abiding trust in God is its best preventive and remedy. The cares of tomorrow weigh a man down. Do not torment yourself with imaginary dangers or trials or reverses. Be always happy and cheerful. Trust in God and do the right. Leave the rest to God. God looks after everybody. He feeds even the frog that lives between the strata of rocks. He will do everything for you. Do not make yourself wretched by imagining catastrophes unforeseen in the distant future. Do not anticipate misfortune. Be always busy. Keep yourself ever occupied. Anxiety will take to its heels.

He who worships God, who sings His glory, who recites His Name is raised above anxiety for earthly wants.



## TRIKONASANA

'Trikona' means triangle. Since this Asana gives the appearance of a triangle, when demonstrated, it bears the name Trikonasana.

**Technique:** Stand erect keeping the feet two or three feet apart. Now stretch your arms wide on the side in a line to the shoulders. The hands will be parallel to the ground. The palms should be facing the ground. Bend the spine at the hips to your left side slowly and touch the left toes with your left hand. You can slightly bend the head also. Remain for 5 seconds and slowly come to

your standing position. Do not bend your legs or hand when you bend down and when you get up. From the standing position, bend at the hips to your right and touch your right toes with the right hand as before. Remain for 5 seconds and then come to your original standing position. This is Trikonasana. Repeat this 4 times on each side.



**Benefits:** Trikonasana tones the spinal nerves and the abdominal organs, increases peristalsis of the bowels and invigorates appetite. Constipation is relieved. The body becomes light. Those who suffer from shortening of the legs due to fracture of hip or thigh bone or bones of the leg will be benefited by this Asana. The trunk muscles are contracted and relaxed and stretched. This movement keeps the spine very elastic. For a Yogi the spine or Meru Danda is a great thing as it is connected with the spinal cord and the sympathetic system. Trikonasana practice keeps the spine in a healthy condition and thoroughly tones the spinal nerves.

—Swami Sivananda

# KAPALABHATI PRANAYAMA

'Kapala' is a Sanskrit word; it means skull. 'Bhati' means to shine. The term 'Kapalabhati' means an exercise that makes the skull shine. This Kriya cleanses the skull. So this is taken as one of the Shat-Karmas (six cleansing processes in Hatha Yoga).

Sit on Padmasana. Keep the hands on knees. Close the eyes. Perform Puraka (Inhalation) and Rechaka (Exhalation) rapidly. This should be practised vigorously. One will get perspiration profusely. This is a good form of exercise. Those who are well-versed in Kapalabhati can do Bhastrika very easily. There is no Kumbhaka (Retention) in this Pranayama. Rechaka plays a prominent part. Rechaka should be done quickly and forcibly by contracting the abdominal muscles with a backward push. When you do Puraka, release the abdominal muscles. Some people naturally make a curve of the spine and bend their heads also. This is not desirable.



The head and the trunk should be erect. Sudden expulsions of breath follow one another as in Bhastrika. To start with, you can have one expulsion per second. Gradually, you can have two expulsions per second. To begin with, do one round in the morning consisting of 10 expulsions only. In the second week, do one round in the evening. In the third week, do two rounds in the morning and two rounds in the evening. Thus every week, gradually and cautiously increase 10 expulsions to each round till you get 120 expulsions for each round.

**Benefits:** It cleanses the respiratory system and the nasal passages. It removes the spasm in bronchial tubes. Consequently, Asthma is relieved and also cured in course of time. The apices of the lungs get proper oxygenation. Thereby they cannot afford favourable nidus (breeding grounds) for tubercle bacilli. Consumption is cured by this practice. Lungs are considerably developed. Carbon dioxide is eliminated in a large scale. Impurities of the blood are thrown out. Tissues and cells absorb a large quantity of oxygen. The practitioner keeps up good health. Heart functions properly. The circulatory and respiratory systems are toned to a considerable degree.

—Swami Sivananda