



# PEACE

A Quarterly Journal of Peace and Illumination

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Editor : Secretary, Sri Shanti Ashram

Vol. 88. DECEMBER - 2014 No. 04

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From *Kaivalyopanishat*

विविक्तदेशे च सुखासनस्थश्शुचिस्समग्रीवशिरश्शरीरः ।  
अत्याश्रमस्थस्सकलेन्द्रियाणि निरुध्य भक्त्या स्वगुरुं प्रणम्य ।  
हृत्पुण्डरीकं विरजं विशुद्धं विचिन्त्य मध्ये विशदं विशोकम् ॥

*viviktadeśe ca sukhāsana-*

*sthaśśucissamagrīvaśiśśarīrah,*

*atyāśramasthassakalendriyāṇi*

*nirudhya bhaktyā svaguruṃ praṇamya,*

*hṛtpuṇḍarīkaṃ virajaṃ viśuddhaṃ*

*vicintya madhye viśadaṃ viśokaṃ ..*

May the pure striver sit in a comfortable posture in a secluded and sacred location keeping the neck, head and the trunk erect. May he abide all stages of life. May he withdraw all the senses and prostrate to his preceptor with devotion. May he focus the mind on the lotus-like heart, which is pure as it is untainted by worldly activity. May he abide in the self-shining and afflictionless Brahman.

The Detailed explanation of this Mantra can be had from Kaivalyopanishad (mantra 5).

*(Tattva Prakāśikā by Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati)*

## Prayer

### VERSE 2

श्रुतिशतनिगमान्तशोधकानप्यहह धनादिनिदर्शनेन सद्यः ।  
कलुषयति चतुष्पदाद्यभिन्नानघटितघटनापटीयसी माया ॥ २

*śrutiśatanigamāntaśodhakānapyahaha  
dhanādinidarśanena sadyaḥ,  
kaluṣayati catuṣpadādyabhinnān  
aghaṭitaghaṭanāpaṭīyasī māyā. 2*

अहह *ahaha* = lo and behold!; अघटितघटनापटीयसी *aghaṭitaghaṭanāpaṭīyasī* = capable of making the impossible possible; माया *māyā* = illusion; श्रुतिशतनिगमान्तशोधकान् अपि *śrutiśatanigamāntaśodhakān api* = even those who explore the Upanishads of the hundreds of branches of the Vedas; धनादिनिदर्शनेन *dhanādinidarśanena* = by displaying wealth, etc.; सद्यः *sadyaḥ* = at once, चतुष्पदाद्यभिन्नान् *catuṣpadādyabhinnān* = no different from quadrupeds, etc.; कलुषयति *kaluṣayati* – sullies.

Lo and behold! The power of *māyā* makes the impossible possible. It taints even the scholars who explore the Upanishads of the hundreds of branches of the Vedas and tempts them forthwith by presenting wealth, etc., before them.

(Śrī Śaṅkarācārya's *Māyā Pañcakam*)

## MEDITATION

स्वकृतविचित्रयोनिषु विशन्निव हेतुतया  
तरतमतःचकास्स्यनलवत्स्वकृतानुकृतिः ।  
अथ वितथास्वमृष्ववितथं तवधामं  
विरजधियोऽन्वयन्त्यभिविपण्यव एकरसम् ॥

*svakṛtavicitrayoniṣu viśanniva hetutayā  
taratamaḥcakāssyanalavatsvakṛtānukṛtiḥ,  
atha vitathāsvamuṣvavitathaṃ tavadhāmaṃ  
virajadhiyonvayatyabhivipaṇyava ekarasaṃ.*

Having projected by Your *māyā* the different bodies, You have entered into each one of them. Therefore, You appear to be different and modified, though in reality You remain the same and untransformed. It is like the fire apparently taking the forms and contours of the different substances it consumes.

Your unmodified and unchanging nature, which is the same and constant even while entering into various and varying forms, is realised by sages who are bereft of all attachment to sense objects and impurities of the mind and who, by their very nature, are free from the desires for the fruits of actions.

- from *Sṛtigīta* by Swami Gabhirananda

## *Greetings*

*Blessed Immortal Atman ! My hearty Pranams.*

*Wish you all a Happy New Year, 2015.*

*Time advances according to the divine dispensation. Just as the rising Sun progresses towards dusk, time too marches on ceaselessly. The invaluable human birth befalls without anybody's prior invitation and the journey of life goes on without anyones permission. Time is fleeting. Neither great intellectuals nor enlightened beings can transgress time. It is like a serpent biding its time to attack.*

*Therefore, in this New Year, 2015 do sadhana without wasting even a single second, to attain the goal of life viz., Supreme Peace. What is Supreme Peace? It is not the peace one experiences when all things around go well. Supreme Peace is that when one experiences Bliss, when one attains liberation in the ultimate fulfillment of life.*

*One cannot attain Supreme Peace through worldly objects. But it can be attained by total surrender of body, mind and intellect to God through pure Buddhi Yoga and by developing "Soham bhava" in every breath.*

*May Swami Omkarji Maharaj bless you all with mental and moral strength to attain Supreme Peace.*

*Om Shanti Shanti Shanti*

*Mata Jnaneswari*

## **THE SOUL OF CHRISTMAS**

Swami Omkar

Here is Christmas again fast approaching, our 'PEACE' contains a message every year on Christmas. It can never be a Christmas to me if I cannot give my Christmas message, merging within, in the Soul of Christ.

All are getting busy with the Christmas--celebrations—the rich with their elaborate preparations and the poor with their humble and simple festivities. Christmas is a busy season for one and all, especially in the West. To realise how restlessly busy everyone is, one should only go out to see the streets and stores in the Christmas week.

My homage to those few blessed souls who are getting busy to serve the Lord, in cold and hunger. It is blessed to serve Him not only on one day but on all the days of the year.

Alas! how sad it is to see that most of the people should be occupied with the outer formalities, to meet the demands of Christmas, instead of preparing to be worthy of the spirit of Christ and to realise the Soul of Christmas.

What shall I eat on Christmas day? Whom shall I invite to Christmas dinner? What presents shall I give to my friends and other dear ones? How and where should I entertain my guests on Christmas day or after Christmas dinner?

These are some of the thoughts prominent in those that are getting ready for Christmas. Is this the proper way to celebrate the birth of Christ?

As the Christmas is approaching, I try to merge deeper and deeper within myself, to feel the spirit of Christ in the stillness of my

heart so that I could share a true message with all of you.

I have a beautiful portrait of VIRGIN MARY in my room. Often my eyes wander towards the Holy Mother and I gaze at her innocent, pure and blessed face. As I look at her blessed face, the message flashes that it is only the pure in heart that can conceive Christ. In spotless purity, universal love and infinite Peace Christ is born.

What is Christmas, dear friends? It has nothing to do, with the outer formalities of exchanging Christmas gifts, greetings and entertaining friends and relatives etc. It has very little to do with the outer activities, but everything to do with the inner life.

How many more years shall we allow to pass without realizing the true spirit of Christmas? Let each one of us ask the vital question in the silent moments of his or her life. WHAT IS THE SOUL OF CHRISTMAS? THE ANSWER COMES IN STILLNESS THAT THE SOUL OF CHRISTMAS IS CHRIST-CONSCIOUSNESS. CHRIST IS THE SOUL OF CHRISTMAS. Where is Christ-consciousness in our endless hurry, needless worry and restless activities! How pathetic it is to forget and deny the Christ on his very birthday in the name of outer Christmas!

Dear friends! I request you to join me in the name of God, the Indweller of our hearts, to purify ourselves to be worthy of the great day of Christmas. Let us crush the little self, the selfish ego, to face and behold Christ. We have still time to celebrate this Christmas in the proper way. Let us not allow this Christmas to pass away without consciously recognizing the living CHRIST PRINCIPLE. Time is too precious to be wasted in little things or in doing nothing. Let us make this Christmas a real Christmas, assimilating Christ's Life, Light and Love.

Let us try to understand now; what is a real Christmas gift. The only Christmas gift that can never be rusted or stolen by thieves is

the living Truth. It is the assertion and manifestation of one's Divinity. Hence in the stillness of our pure and loving hearts let us kindle that flame of Christ consciousness and share it not only with our dear and near ones but with the whole of humanity. This is the only real offering that we ought to offer and share with those whom we love. Instead of being sad and dejected for being poor in the goods of the world, with the thoughts -- O! I cannot entertain my friends or I am not rich to give proper presents to my dear ones, let us be happy with the thought of sharing Truth about Christ with all those whom we love. This is the richest gift, the immortal life-giving and soul-awakening offering that you can give to one and all—to kings or peasants, to friends or foes, nay to the whole of humanity.

My dear readers of Peace in the East and the West, I beg you to draw nearer, pray, open your hearts attune yourselves with the Universal Energy to accept my humble gift—CHRIST CONSCIOUSNESS—THE SOUL OF CHRISTMAS—on this blessed day of Christ's birth.

The Christ for whom we have been waiting and waiting is verily throbbing in our hearts, sparkling in our very eyes, expressing in our very cells and surrounding our beings at all times, from eternity to eternity.

May silent adorations be unto the soul of Christmas—the living Christ, Who is shining in all of you? May Peace and Good-will abide forever all over the world. - AMEN.

OM! TAT! SAT! OM!

## **EACH FOR HIMSELF**

- Swami Omkar

In spite of philosophy outside in the temple and street, religion inside the house and heart of man's life somehow seems to be centered on the slogan 'EACH FOR HIMSELF.' First comes himself, then his wife, children, relatives and his other dear and near ones. As man evolves he extends his love to his community and nation. Only when he is perfect his love extends to the whole world wherein no one is excluded but all are included.

Except for a few blessed exceptions in rare case, the average man wakes up from his sleep with the thought of self, works with the thought of self and goes to sleep with the thought of self. His self comes first middle and last, nay, uppermost in all the thoughts, words and deeds.

Man begins the day with the consciousness of himself, filled with the thought 'what shall I eat, how shall I dress how much shall I amass?'. Without the 'ego', the 'I', he cannot breathe work or live. It is because of the 'I' that he exists. It is for making the ego fat that he works and finally dies in ignorance, clinging to the selfish 'I', the ego the root cause of all agony and suffering in the world.

This is the old, old beaten and overcrowded path of self, leading man to destruction, slow and sure death in ignorance. But there is also the noble path of selflessness, which is a rather lonely path, where man thinks of others rather than of himself. The happiness of others, the welfare of others and the Peace of others has always been the selfless man's happiness, welfare and Peace.

Instead of the selfish thought of What shall I eat?, he is imbued with the noble thought of How shall I feed the hungry? Instead of the thought of How shall I dress?, his thought is how shall I clothe the naked? Instead of scheming to amass more, a selfless man is thinking of sharing what he has with the less fortunate, with the needy and suffering. His one thought day and night is How can I serve the sick and poor? Verily, this is the Christ-thought or God-thought which alone

will help in the long run, leading man to completeness or perfection, the goal of precious human birth.

Some householders say that they must have selfishness to maintain and protect their children, wife and other near ones. But they need not exclude others. They need not live in a tiny well, ignoring the ocean. If they identify with a form and name ignoring all the rest of the world, then what is the difference between a hog and a man? The hog breathes, works and lives only for itself and its family. Hence, it is high time for man, the ignorant and selfish man, to realise as a child of God, nay, as a perfect image of God, that he cannot be selfish always. Hence, he has to come out of the well of selfishness into the ocean of selflessness.

There is some excuse for a householder who clings to the body of flesh and blood and is attached to his wife and children. But there is no excuse for a sadhu or Sanyasi who has left and renounced the world for the sake of humanity. In the name of conviction of wisdom if he also lives the life of learned or conceited hog, clinging to his selfish salvation, ignoring the world of suffering and bondage he is not a genuine Sadhu or a Sanyasi. Can one man be happy while all the rest of the world is in pain and agony?

Individual Peace must lead to Universal Peace. The selfish should aspire to be selfless for the Peace of their souls as well as for the Peace of the world. EACH FOR HIMSELF should be changed to EACH FOR ALL or ONE FOR ALL. When one is for all, the all will be for the One.

Each for himself leads to the downward path of degradation and destruction in the long run. Each for All or One for All leads towards the heavenly path of freedom or illumination.

Blessed are the people who are living for others, ignoring the little self, the ego the root cause of all sorrows, suffering and selfishness in every form in the world.

My loving reader are you living for yourself, for the finite self or for the good of others, the higher self? Merge within. Examine your

heart and its cravings, the latent desires. Let your devoted life be consecrated to the service of others who are no other than the different aspects of your own self, the Higher Self, the One indivisible Truth or God-head.

May all homage be unto those who are living for all, the embodiments of the Higher Self.

May Peace be unto all

OM OM OM!

### **THE REAL ADJUSTMENT IS WITHIN**

All adjustment must start from within,  
From the source of peace in your heart.  
Don't think of reforming others,  
To adjust yourself be your part !

Man wants to adjust, rearrange, and remake everything in the outside world. But he does not try to adjust himself. Yet the real adjustment, the real orientation should begin with himself, from within. When there is adjustment within, there is adjustment without. When there is Peace within, in the heart, all is peace without also. Hence all adjustment and arrangement must start from within.

But alas, the man of the world, when there is some thing wrong, wants to adjust everything else, except himself. He tries to reform this man and that man, but lo, he has not yet reformed himself! He drops a letter to this man, he puts in a word to that man, trying to smooth things over and adjust them. But he does not go to the Source and does not adjust himself. If the individual wants Peace, he must first adjust himself, reorient himself and this endeavour should begin from within.

(from cosmic flashes )

OM TAT SAT OM !

## **EVERY DAY A NEW YEAR'S DAY**

- Swami Omkar

I am always happy when the New Year comes. I am happy when the new month begins,. I am also happy everyday when it is dawn because of the new day.

I should learn too, to be happy at the birth every hour; why not at the approach of every minute and second. How blessed are they who realise the joy and preciousness of every moment. It is only in that way that one can silently grow from moment to moment towards Godhead.

It is on this New Year's day that many people make fresh resolutions bidding adieu to the old life of bondage and shackles, but by the time the next New Year's day comes, the same thing is repeated again and again.

Thus man is winding and unwinding himself, in making resolutions on New Year's day and in breaking them all through the year.

We are winding and unwinding ceaselessly, we are climbing the steps and getting down again without reaching the heights. A little anger, passion or egoism unwinds all the progress we make through our prayers and meditations.

Through loopholes of these endless desires, our life's energy is ceaselessly flowing into the dry deserts of waste.

May we sincerely determine on this special day, never to unwind, but only wind and wind, spin and spin, climb and climb, under all conditions of life until we reach the goal of our precious human birth, namely Conscious Realisation of the one indivisible Presence.

May we feel now in the stillness of our hearts a spark of His love and resolve to intensify that Divine spark into the configuration of millions of suns, so that we are conscious of THAT within and without.

Above all may we realise the viciousness of time and so make use of every moment as a new birth, evolving from moment to moment till we reach those Blessed Heights, realised by all Saviours and Sages in the East and the West where there is no more unwinding, falling down or turning back from untruth.

May Peace and Goodwill abide in the heart of all.

Om, Om, Om!

(from the Voice of Omkar )

### **GOOD LUCK**

Good Luck! Say so many, good luck indeed!

But my soul's luck itself, what else does it need?

Realisers of God- they have every thing,

Having luck in them

I have on my table a Christmas greeting card, with a picture of black cat, wishing Good Luck. The cat's eye are fixed with two glass beads, and for its tail it has some fluffy stuff. Every time I glance at it, I read, "GOOD LUCK." Good Luck indeed! Is not my soul itself Good Luck? What other luck or fortune does the Soul need?

The knower of the Self, the realisers of God, need no Good Luck. They are themselves Good Luck. Their integral experience of the Divine is their Good Luck. In it they have every thing.

(from cosmic flashes)

OM TAT SAT OM!

## **ON LIBERATION**

- Swami Sivananda

(continued from September 2014)

Sikhidhwaja collected his deerskin, rosary, kusha grass, earthen vessels and wooden bowl in a pile, and set fire to them with dried fuel. He set fire to his hut of dry leaves. He then said to Kumbha Muni "I think I have now attained true and perfect renunciation. O divine boy! Is there anything still to be renounced by me? What more should I do now?"

Kumbha Muni replied "What a great pity! You have not renounced anything!"

Sikhidhwaja thought within himself; "I now possess only this body composed of a heap of flesh, blood and bones. I will forthwith ascend to the top of this mountain and let it fall to be dashed to pieces on the ground. Saying thus, he ascended to the summit of a high cliff and was about to hurl his body down when his monitor, Kumbha Muni interrupted him."

Kumbha Muni said, "What a great foolish act you are doing! Why do you attempt to destroy this innocent body of yours? How could this body stand in the way of your obtaining knowledge of the Self? Annihilation of this body will not constitute true and perfect renunciation. There is an enemy of this body which agitates it, which puts the body in motion and which produces the seed of all births and Karmas. If you can get rid of this enemy of your body then only will you have truly renounced everything (Sarvatyaga)."

Sikhidhwaja asked, "Tell me, O Kumbha Muni what is it then that agitates the body? What is the root of our rebirths? What is the root of the ,doings and sufferings of our future lives? What is it by avoidance of which we avoid and abandon everything in this universe of opposites? Tell me, O divine boy the means by which I can avoid that which moves or agitates this body."

Kumbha Muni replied, "This mind is the root cause of all

troubles and sufferings. It is known under the various appellations of Jiva, Prana (life), Buddhi (intellect) Ahamkara (egoism). It generates sankalpas and makes the Jiva attached to illusory objects. It is the seat of illusion. It is the source of your body. It is neither non-inert nor inert. This ever fluctuating mind forms this world. It produces bondage. Just as the wind agitates the tree so also the mind agitates and moves this body. This mischievous mind is the germ or root of all karmas. He who is under the subjection of his mind is ever subject to cares, worries, anxieties, tribulations and sufferings. It is therefore by giving up this mind that you really abandon everything in this world. Abnegation of the mind constitutes true renunciation. This alone will help you in the attainment of eternal bliss and knowledge of the Self. When you get the knowledge of the self, you will become identical with Brahman or Paramatma.”

Sikhidhwaja said, “O Muni ! what is this mind? What is its true nature? What is the cause of this mind? How can I annihilate this mischievous mind?”

Kumbha Muni replied, “Mind is the bundle of Vasanas. The true nature of the mind consists of the Vasanas. Mind and Vasana are synonymous terms. It is very difficult for the ignorant to get rid of the Vasanas or subtle desires. Ahamkara or egoism is the seed of the tree called ‘mind’. The mind is the cause of the locomotion of the body. It is the bee that flutters about the lotus of the heart. The sprout that germinates from the seed of Ahamkara is Buddhi (intellect). The body is the stem of this tree of the mind. Sankalpas are the ramifying branches. They originate from the sprout, the Buddhi. Manas assumes the four forms namely, mind, Chitta, Buddhi and Ahamkara, according to the functions it performs. When it does Sankalpa-Vikalpa, it is mind. When it remembers a thing, it is Chitta. When it determines it is Buddhi, when it self arrogates, it is egoism. Chop of the branches of the tree of the mind daily and finally destroy the tree at its root completely. The chopping off the branches is only secondary. The primary thing is to root out the noxious tree at once. The branches of Vasanas will produce countless crops of Karmas. Destroy the Vasanas with the sword of Jnana. You will enjoy peace. Burn Ahamkara, the seed of the tree of mind.”

Sikhidhwaja said, “Tell me, O venerable Muni, what is that fire which can burn the seed of the mind-tree?”

Kumbha Muni replied, “The fire that can burn the seed of the mind-tree is Brahma Jnana or the knowledge of the Self which is obtained through enquiry of the true nature of “I” or “Who am i?”

Sikhidhwaja said, “O sage! I have repeatedly enquired into the origin of “I” in a variety of ways. I am neither this body nor the Prana, neither this mind nor the intellect and neither the organs nor the ego.”

Kumbha Muni replied, “If you are none of these, what do you think of yourself in reality? If “I” was not all these, then what else was it?”

Sikhidhwaja answered, “I feel myself, O most venerable sage, to be that intelligent and pure soul or absolute Consciousness. I am unable to get rid of my egoism, the seed of the mind. I try my level best to annihilate it. The more I try to abandon it the more it clings to me.”

Kumbha Muni said, “Every effect is produced from some cause or other. This is the general law of nature everywhere. Find out the cause of Ahamkara. Explore its cause and tell me what it is.”

Sikhidhwaja replied, “Mere illusion (Maya) is the cause of my egoism. Knowledge is the cause of egoism. Tell me, O divine boy, about the means of eliminating my thoughts of external objects. How can I avoid these external appearances or names and forms?”

Kumbha Muni said, “if you tell me the cause of knowledge, then I shall be able to explain to you the process of cause and effect and the method of suppressing the thoughts and destroying egoism.”

Sikhidhwaja said, “Knowledge is produced through the illusory objects such as the body, tree, river, mountains, cow, horse, etc. If the objects do not exist, we can neither think of nor know anything. If there are no objects, we all have no knowledge of objects at all. Then egoism – the seed of Manas- will be absorbed.”

Kumbha Muni said, "If the body and other objects exist then knowledge of the visible also exists. As the body and the objects do not really exist, what then is the basis of knowledge? If you depend on your body as a real existence, then tell me, O King, on what does your knowledge depend when your soul is separated from the body."

Sikhidhwaja replied, "The body which is seen by everybody and which enjoys the fruits of all Karmas cannot be taken for an unreality by anybody. Who can ignore the body which is clearly seen by all, which is endowed with hands, legs and which perform various kinds of actions? How can we say that body does not exist?"

Kumbha Muni replied, "The body does not exist before its birth; there is no body after its dissolution. That which does not exist in the beginning and in the end, which appears only in the middle, is illusory and really non-existent. This body which is produced through karmas is not itself the cause. Consequently, the effect of intelligence is itself non-existent. Nothing can be said to exist which is not produced by some cause. The knowledge or consciousness that we have of it, is itself illusory. Therefore, Ahamkara and other effects which are produced through the delusion of knowledge are also non-existent. Whatever product appears to present itself to anyone without its true cause is also false as a mirage in the sand. All objects which are not of the nature of causes are false, like silver in the mother-of-pearl or man in the post. Believing in the true existence of the body and egoism is like decorating the body of barren woman's son."

Sikhidhwaja said, "Can we not take our fathers as the causes and generators of our bodies?"

Kumbha Muni replied, "The father cannot be the cause; he has another cause for himself."

Sikhidhwaja said, "We can certainly regard our parents as the causes of our production. Our parents had our grandfathers and grandmothers for the causes of their births. We should then regard Brahma, our first great-grandfather, as the prime progenitor of the human race. Am I right in my statement, O revered Kumbha Muni?"

Kumbha Muni replied, "The prime progenitor, the great-grandfather Brahma, cannot be the original cause as He also is in need of a cause for His birth. The non-dual, self-existent, self-luminous Para Brahman alone shines prior to creation. This universe is mere appearance. It appears just as water appears in a mirage. Therefore, to think that Brahma is the creator is a wrong conception indeed. The existence of a great-grandfather is false. There is nothing such as creation. The creation of all creatures is also false. (This is from the viewpoint of the Absolute.)"

Sikhidhwaja said, "Certainly Para Brahman is the cause of Brahma. Is this not true, O venerable Muni?"

Kumbha Muni replied, "Para Brahman is that which is birthless, deathless, causeless, changeless, timeless, actionless, beginningless, and endless. He cannot be the cause. He can neither be actor nor enjoyer. There is only one living Reality. That is Brahman. Destroy the Avidya by attaining knowledge of Brahman. The whole universe will vanish in toto. You will behold only the Self or the Atman everywhere."

Sikhidhwaja said, "O venerable teacher! I now perceive the truth. I feel now that I am the pure, all pervading, free, immortal Soul or Atman. I am calm. I am settled in all-blissful Self. The visible universe does not really exist. Maya cannot touch me. I am Brahman. I am the indivisible self-resplendent Self. I am absorbed in Brahman."

Kumbha Muni said, "The words of the preceptor will be lodged in the mind of the disciple only if he is endowed with the 'Four Means' of salvation, if he is calm and serene, if he is dispassionate and introspective and if he has sense-control. You are full of enlightenment. You have attained the goal. You are shining with knowledge of the Self."

OM OM OM!

.....to be continued

(- from *Stories from the Yoga Vasishtha*, DLS Publication)

## THE OBSTACLES ON THE SPIRITUAL PATH

-Swami Chidananda

*(continued from September 2014)*

It is very difficult to understand the ways of God. He knows what is best. We have to only witness His play.

Take shelter in God and Gurudev. No harm comes to him who obtains God's grace by constant praying. Therefore, pray to God and Gurudev ceaselessly. Let the sacred name of Lord ever be on our lips. Do not forget Him even for a single second of the day. God is just. The Divine law is just. He who believes in this, remains unperturbed in all trials and adversities.

The Name of the Lord alone is the sure remedy for all ills of life. Therefore, take the holy name of the lord always. Feel his presence wherever you go for God is everywhere. Take shelter in Him. He means always well.

Rise above the body idea. Feel and realise that you are the infinite, the supreme Self, and how can you be affected by passion or greed?

Ram Nam is the great strength of the seeker. It is full of Divine Power. Repeat Ram Nam and obtain the Grace of God. The Divine Name will give you immense inner strength to overcome all obstacles.

Turn away now resolutely from all sense experience. You are your own master. There is nothing that you cannot do. Make up your mind this minute and you will be a new man. There is no satan. Discard such thoughts. Imagination of the mind has to be given up. Occupy yourself with active interesting work. Keep the mind engaged. I send you my spiritual good thoughts. Stand up and march to wards God. Never give up right principles. God bless you!

Despair not. Be courageous. Be brave. Be bold. All this will pass away. Such sufferings and trials are part of our life. They will make you perfect. Do not worry. It is worry that weakens the mind and body. You cannot remove worries by worrying. Seek some

remedy. Observe the principles of nature. Do not violate the principles of nature.

Beloved Self, know that God is kind and merciful. At times, He puts His devotees in difficult situations, in order to strengthen them. Therefore, despair not. Be calm and serene. Know thy essential nature. Your essential nature is Shantimaya and Sat-Chit-Anandamaya. Understand this and immerse in this thought.

Blessed Self! have no worry of any kind. What makes you unhappy? All this unhappiness, depression and dejection will only touch your body and senses and not your spirit. Nothing can touch you. Nothing can disturb you. Your essential nature is Divine. Your true nature is full of bliss. You are Sat-Chit-Ananda. Understand this essential nature. Face life. Be courageous and brave.

Be ever cheerful and happy. Away with depression and gloom. Pray and worship the lord with faith and devotion.

Keep yourself in a positive state. Overcome negative thoughts by entertaining positive and divine thoughts. Do not be dejected. You have got immeasurable strength and power within. Face all difficulties with a smile on your face. Never be despondent. Ever laugh, jump and smile. Always remember God. Let the sacred Name of the Lord ever be upon your lips. Take shelter in Him. He means always well.

Kindly ascertain your inner nature. You are the undisturbed peace within. This is your real nature. Go deep in this realm. Be a mere witness to the play of outer world. Stand aside and see the Lord's play. Do not be perturbed. It will vanish as it came, leaving no trace of it.

God is merciful. Whatever happens in one's life is for the good of that individual. God's grace does come but one has to wait and watch. We cannot understand Him. It is beyond our comprehension.

Regular study of holy scriptures, the right enquiry of 'Who am I?' and constant prayer and meditation will undoubtedly lead you to God. May you always abide in the Lord.

Be brave. Be courageous. Do not lose heart. God will protect

you. Such trying circumstances do come to everyone of us in some stage or other. This is life. Life in this world is full of unhappiness. It is the nature of the world. Life is full of ups and downs. This will pass away soon. Take shelter in God. He knows what is best. Throw your burden upon Him. He will remove all your difficulties and bring you peace and happiness.

Kindly read Mahabharata and stories of Savitri, Damayanti and Draupadi. Even they had to face troubles and trying circumstances in life. Resort to the repetition of the Lord's Name. Feel His presence wherever you go. Do not forget Him even for a single moment of your life.

But ever remember that your essential nature is Satchidananda Svarupa. You are not this body, not this ever changing mind but that ever blissful Satchidananda Atman. May you ever be deeply immersed in your own Svarupa. You are verily THAT. May God bless you.

Try to adapt, adjust and accommodate. Look upon everything as lord's Will. Study the life of Rubia a Sufi saint, who was a maid servant sold to a Jamindar. Draw inspiration from the lives of saints. The inner life and the outer life should meet in one divine Life.

Know that God alone is real. The world is unreal. All the things of this earth will perish. God is the only Reality. Therefore, seek God alone. Pray daily. Worship Him. Always take the Name of the Lord.

Please despair not. Take courage. It is life. No man is free in this world. Everyone of us at some stage or the other has to suffer. Suffering is part and parcel of our life. No man can escape. Specially devotees of God suffer much. Our suffering is nothing when compared to the suffering of great saints. Face them boldly. Rise above them. Sufferings will strengthen you. They are blessings in disguise.

Your essential nature is Anandamaya. Dwell in this Svarupa. Nothing can touch you. All births, deaths and diseases are only for the body and not to the Spirit (Soul). This body comes and goes. Rise above the body idea through right discrimination. This body is Anitya. One day you will have to cast it aside. Then, why worry for this?

If we feel the power of the deathless and imperishable nature of the Self, we are sure to forget the body and its limitations. As we establish more and more within, we will enjoy more and more peace and bliss.

Suffering purifies and turns the mind towards God. Suffering strengthens the will, softens the heart and generates the power of endurance. Ever be rooted in thought of God. Let the constant Smaran of the Lord ever be upon thy lips. Cling to Him fast. Think of His mercy. He is kind and all love. He is Karuna Sindhu. There is no end to His mercy. He means always well with you. Those who surrender to Him will have no fear. Only happiness and joy await the spiritual aspirants in the end.

Know that God alone is real. The world is unreal. All the things of this earth will perish, god is the only Reality. Therefore, seek God alone. Pray daily. Worship Him. Always take the name of the Lord.

The aim of life is to avoid misery and attain eternal Bliss. Birth in this world is inseparably connected with misery. If you wish to avoid misery, pain and sorrow, you must avoid rebirth. Knowledge of Brahman is the only means of avoiding rebirth.

God is beyond the reach of the senses, but you can realise Him, know and feel Him, if you withdraw yourself from the senses and their objects.

You are in the Light of the Holy Master's spiritual blessings and benedictions. The Divine indwelling in the heart ever takes care of your spiritual welfare. Please be not be troubled. Act in prayerfulness. Let the presence of God enfold you in His joyous embrace.

You are Peace. Your inner nature, is Peace. Be still. You shall taste that perennial Peace. PEACE is your name. it is abiding. May that Peace which you are infill every thought of yours and permeate your entire body and fill each pore to it.

Unnecessary worry and annoyance do not reduce the intensity of what one is passing through. The reactions of one's past actions

have to be gone through. A certain amount of cheerfulness regarding all unpleasant happenings as so much 'account settled' makes the burden of life lighter.

See God's Purpose in things as they occur. May you surmount all the sorrows of worldly existence.

Plod on. There must be unshaken faith in God during trials, disappointments and difficulties. Hope and help come from within when one feels utterly helpless.

Guru and Ishta are not two but one. Guru points out the Ishta and merges himself into the Ishta. So there is nothing to worry about. There must be unshaken faith in God during trials, disappointments and difficulties. Hope and help come from within when one feels utterly helpless.

Life on this earth is always a mixture of pain and pleasure. Great trials and adversities will make you stronger and stronger. Stand adamant. Be resolute. Have fiery determination and an iron will.

Such is indeed the law of life. A coming into being and a going out of being; these two together constitute the thing called life upon earth plane. Death is not the contradiction of life but it is, the conclusion or completion of the life. The Jiva has to move on. The fate of all created bodies is eventual dissolution. That is why all created things are declared to be "unreal" and the "Eternal" alone is the REAL. It does not mean that they do not exist, it means that they do not endure. Being transitory they soon pass. To seek the Eternal is wisdom. This life is given for this quest of the Immortal Being we call variously as God, Paramatman, Para-Brahman, ATMAN, Purusha, Satchidananda, etc. your life attains fulfillment when this Nitya Tattva is experienced or realised in this life. Peace, Bliss and Immortality arise out of this Supreme Experience.

.....to be continued

- from Eternal Messages, DLS Publication

## **FUNDAMENTALS OF THE YOGA SYSTEM OF PATANJALI**

-Swami Krishnananda

It is difficult to believe that the implications of the teachings of Patanjali can be easily grasped even by the highest academic intellect, because it is nothing but intricate practice that is being taught in this system. It is not merely a theory, not a doctrine or a faith or a religion that is propounded in these famous aphorisms. It is a technique of practice on conduct in personal life which is supposed to go into the very roots and vitals of the system and bring about a thorough transformation of the various patterns of manifestation of the individual organism. The system of Patanjali is an utter realism in the sense that it does not go beyond the ken of the immediate experience or perception at any stage of practice. It avoids any kind of extreme idealism or theory or dogma and concerns itself only with those aspects and features of experience in human life which are part and parcel of one's practical existence.

In this practice, not one step is missed. Not one step is ever taken into consideration if it had not become a practical content of one's day-to-day experience. Thus it is that we can very safely call this a scientific method of approach to life. It is scientific because it is the most systematic approach to life and it is the most inclusive of all approaches. It includes all possible aspects of human nature. It starts from the lowest type of experience and aspires to reach the highest possible existence. It is a very graduated technique and it is a system of living that can be applied to every human being.

The yoga system is an impersonal approach of a psychological character and it may be said to be nothing but psychology applied to practical life, or one may say, it is applied psychology going deeper into the roots of human nature, not exhausting its re-searches on the conscious level merely as the Western psychologists are prone to do. The levels of human personality are the objects of research here and therefore Yoga is not only psychology and psycho-analysis

but also the theory of perception of things. It is also a philosophy, a metaphysics, and it is at the same time an ethical and moral goal - it is the highest spiritual philosophy. So you have in it everything that any system of thought can regard as the essential of a teaching on the Higher Life.

It is not possible to understand this system unless one has some acquaintance with psychology, because, it is a system of psychological analysis and synthesis. It analyses threadbare every fibre of human nature and personality and also synthesizes these analysed parts into an organic whole. What it does exactly is the isolating of the parts of human nature for the purpose of arranging them once again into a new pattern altogether, - a necessity that arises on account of the fact that the existing pattern is a chaotic one. The parts or aspects of human nature as they operate in normal or ordinary life are disorganized patterns, a kind of confusion and a muddle, which is the reason why people are unable to think dispassionately, impersonally and thoroughly. Patanjali's system adopts a diagnostic system of analysis. It pulls apart every aspect of human nature into its minutest components. For this purpose, it lets nature be reduced to the minimum essentials to be analysed, until you find it is not possible to analyse further, exactly as in medical science. And then the constructive aspect of the system begins.

What is the condition in which one is now at this given moment of time, what is the reason for the prevalence of this condition? The prevalence of any particular state is due to the character of a particular pattern of the arrangement of the parts of the personality as it appears on the surface. Is it a satisfactory pattern, is the question. Well, the answer is simple. It is not a satisfactory one; otherwise there would have been no sorrow, no aspiration to achieve something more than what we have already. That we are restless and hope to achieve something more than what we have at present is an indication that our present system of living is inadequate, incomplete and therefore not satisfactory. This is the stand which the yoga system, as a psychology, takes, and tries to reorganize this system into a proper form or shape which can reflect in its perfection the character of

Reality. The sufferings of human life, the sorrows through which we pass and the shortcomings that we see in our personal lives are an indication that the present pattern of our psychological set-up is incapable of reflecting the character of Reality.

The Real is a perfect whole; it is an invisible completeness; and what we seek in life is perfection, or completeness, because Reality is a well-ordered completeness. When this ordered system of completeness or perfection is reflected in the psychological condition of human nature at any given moment of time, then there is a feeling of satisfaction, joy, a sense of freedom and that we have achieved something worthwhile in life. But the absence of this feeling is an indication, again, that the nature of Reality has not been reflected in our system, which means that the medium of reflection is not properly constructed. So the Yoga system of Patanjali endeavours to prepare the individual for the reception of the nature of Reality into one's system, so that the life becomes an ordered whole not only personally or individually but also in all its manifestations such as social life, political life, etc.

The Yoga system, therefore, is a universal science; it is not an individual practice that one adopts privately in one's room for one's own salvation. There is always a misconception born of a short-sighted notion of the purpose of the practice of Yoga, due to which any people wrongly think that the practice of Yoga is a system of an individual salvation. It is not. Though the preparatory techniques are individual in the sense that it is 'you' or 'I' that have to make the preparation for the ideal on hand, yet, the aim is not present. The preparation may appear to be personal or individual, because every one is to be prepared in a specific manner, according to one's endowments, but the purpose is something more than the individual organism or thought-pattern. The aim of this practice is a growth, gradually, into universality, which is the mother even of the individual natures or personalities that are visible is practical life. We are persons, individuals, not apparently related to one another. That is the reason for the prevalence of selfishness in human life. But, that

we are really unrelated to one another is not a fact. There is interconnectedness among individuals, which is hidden behind their visible disparity, and which is the reflection of the universal in their personal and social lives.

The universal need not necessarily be the absolute universal always. When we speak of the universal from the point of view of the system of Yoga according to Patanjali, the universal is any comprehensive state which immediately supersedes any given condition of psychological life. When there is a vision of the presence of a more inclusive state psychologically, socially and spiritually, one is supposed to be aware of the presence of a universal transcending one's individual existence. And when the next higher state of universality is envisaged, that becomes a part of one's practical experience. These are actually the stage of practice known as Sampattis, sometimes known as Samadhis, - acquirements or achievements. We have very strange terms used in the Sutras of Patanjali such as the words, Vitarka, Vichara, Ananda, Asmita, etc., all which refer to their various gradations of the manifestation of the universal individual experience wherein and by which the individual becomes gradually universalized, stage by stage. So it is from this point of view that the Yoga system of Patanjali is a realistic system. It does not abrogate from its approach any ideal of life or any perceivable object of experience.

The psychological analysis preparatory for this this is something very important and that is the most difficult part of the practice. The parts of the human nature, which is essentially psychological, are known as Klesas, or afflictions. The term Klesa is used by Patanjali to designate a particular psychological function merely because of the fact that every psychological function is an affliction of the individual. It is an unnatural state of affairs; it is something not real. It is an apparent manifestation which is supposed to be overcome, transcended, as a sort of disease. The reason why every psychological function is regarded as a Klesa is because the function of the mind or the psychological organisms it is seen in normal life is motivated by factors which are incompatible with the

nature of Reality.

The very act of perception of an object cannot be regarded as a content with real objects, because these realities which are invested with the forms which one sees with one's eyes, due to which one regards them as realities, are only apparent formations or configurations which are presented before the eyes due to the operation of powers or forces invisible to the naked eyes. The human system cannot, therefore, grasp the real cause behind the appearance of these objects. You see many things in front of you and there is usually no reason to believe that there is something wrong with these perceptions, which are called normal perceptions. But, what you call 'normal' perception need not necessarily be a 'real' perception from the point of view of Yoga at least. It is not 'real' because it is 'subject to transcendence'. The definition of Reality is that it is that which is not subject to transcendence by any kind of experience. If any experience is subject to contradiction by another type of experience at any time in the future, we cannot call that experience real. Now, can we say that our experiences in the waking state are not subject to contradiction? No one can say that. We do not know what experience we passed through in our previous lives. When are our relatives and possessions that we held as dear in our past existences? What happened to them? No one thinks of these things, because to think of them would be a horror. Reality look like a horror to a person sunk in ignorance.

Ignorance (Avidya) is the breeding of all the sorrows of mankind, due to which there is attachment to immediate perception. There is Raga and Dvesha, attraction and repulsion. There is like for those experiences which are regarded as desirable, and a natural dislike for those experiences which are the opposite of or different from the types of experience which we regard as desirable to the present state of mind. That which we call desirable, pleasant, beautiful, etc. is that arrangement of things which is compatible with the arrangement of the mind in the present set-up of current affairs. The condition of the mind at any moment of time is the outcome or effect

of those forces, invisible of course which have become responsible for the manifestation of the personality in this physical existence, - one's bodily organism, way of thinking and social relationship, - Jati, Ayu and Bhoga. All these experiences which we take as the only reality today are a fraction or a kind of link in the long chain of development through which the individual has to pass, which development or process is usually called the evolution of the individual. We are completely oblivious of this long chain. We do not know the previous link and we do not know the future link also. We are stuck up in the present link only. This present link is the vast life which we are living today. All what you see, - this world, the sun, moon stars, the stellar system, etc. – is only one link in a long chain of development, which is the evolution of the universe towards realization that is totally outside the vision of the mind in the present moment.

So, the loves and hatreds, the likes and dislikes, the attachments and their opposites, which characterize the experiences in our present life are caused by ignorance, or Avidya. What is Avidya? It is the ignorance of the true nature of things. The fact is that the present life, the so-called wonderful, vast life, is a small fraction of a vaster existence, which presses itself forward every moment for manifesting itself in higher degrees of intensity, the pressure being called the 'nisus' or the urge of evolution. The reason why you are dissatisfied with anything and everything in life at all times, is the presence of this urge of the universe behind you. Can you find one satisfied person in the world? No. The satisfaction does not come because the things that are provided for this physical existence, this vast universe, this world, to the individual nature at this time cannot satisfy that invisible something, which has reference to the present shape of the individual which is mistaken for the total reality. We are making the gross error of imagining that our present physical or social existence is the only reality conceivable, though it is only one form that is taken by the infinite possibilities which are hidden in the bosom of Nature, and which are going to be manifested one day or the other, in the future, during the different levels of evolution yet to

be passed through, and the inability to grasp the relevance of these future possibilities to the present state of affairs is what is called Avidya or ignorance.

We are unable to connect ourselves with the true state of things. The inability to understand or grasp the relation between appearance and reality is called ignorance. This is the cause of our present experience, Klesa, etc. These difficulties which are wholly psychological have to be obviated root and branch; this is the purpose of Yoga. The very root of the disease has to be dug out and brought to the surface of consciousness and one has to be made perfectly healthy so that the total reality can be reflected in their personality. That condition in which Reality gets reflected in one's personality is called the Jivanmukti state; that is the liberated state. Towards the end the Yoga technique endeavours to bring forward the various sides of human nature in its vital connections with the different aspects of the reality manifest as the cosmos.

The Klesas or the psychological functions which we are expected to arrange in a new order altogether for the purpose of harmonizing them with the existing nature of things, - this endeavour is, in short, the preparation necessary for the practice of Yoga! The various stages mentioned in the system of Patanjali – Yama, Niyama, Asana, etc. – are the gradational processes of establishing communion or harmony with immediate atmosphere present around oneself. The social atmosphere, the physical body, the Pranas within, the senses that operate inside, the mind that thinks, the intellect that understands and the Spirit that is all-pervading- with all these layers of being we have to set ourselves in tune. Thus, the Yoga System of Patanjali is a graduated technique of setting oneself in tune with the various degrees of the manifestation of Reality. So, it is very satisfactory system, because it takes in to consideration every degree of the manifestation of reality, even the worst, the lowest and the grossest of shapes; and from that it rises upward, taking that as its stand, towards the great Absolute.

*(from November 2001 Issue of The Divine Life Magazine)*

## NARADA ENLIGHTENED

- Swami Ramdas

You must have heard of Sage Narada. He was a great votary of God's name. He repeated the Name all the twenty-four hours of the day and went about all over the world proclaiming the greatness of the Name. He became proud of his continuous chanting of the name. He saw people in the world taking the Name only for a time, whereas he was taking the Name all the day and night. Therefore, he considered himself to be the greatest devotee of God. In the course of his wonderings he went to Vaikuntha, the abode of Lord Vishnu. Looking at Narada, Vishnu came to know that Narada had become proud of his devotion. Narada, with an air of self-importance, asked Vishnu who was His greatest devotee in the world.

Lord Vishnu asked Narada to go to a certain village on the Earth where, He said, lived a farmer whom he considered as His greatest devotee. Narada was surprised, "How could a poor farmer rank first among the devotees of Vishnu?" However, he went to the house of the farmer-devotee and was received with great honour and hospitality. The devotee served the sage with all love and reverence and begged him to stay in his humble abode for a few days. Narada stayed on and watched what the farmer was doing.

The farmer's routine was to get up early in the morning, take aloud God's name once, and then go to attend to his work in the fields. In the evening, on returning home after his day's work, he would perform the usual household duties and before retiring to bed, utter once again God's name. Narada noticed this routine of the farmer for two or three days and was utterly disappointed. He was wondering how Lord Vishnu could take this farmer, who uttered the name of God only twice a day, to be His greatest devotee. He left the house and proceeded straight to Vishnu and recounted to Him all that he had seen when he was with the farmer devotee. Narada then asked Him how He could consider the farmer the foremost of His devotees.

"I will show you how he is My greatest devotee," said Vishnu, and, having got a cup filled with oil to the brim handed it over to Narada and told him to go round Vaikuntha and return to Him without spilling a drop of oil. Accordingly, Narada, taking the cup in his hands, walked slowly and carefully, concentrating all his mind upon the cup and after some time returned to Vishnu without spilling even a drop of oil.

Vishnu, on seeing him back, questioned him, "How many times did you remember me during the period of your circumambulation of Vaikuntha with the cup of oil in your hands?" Narada was surprised at this question and said "Lord, are you joking with me? How is it possible to remember anything else when carrying out a task of such a difficult nature? My whole mind was centred on the cup so that I might not spill any drop."

At this reply, Vishnu laughed and remarked, "Look at the case of the farmer. He engages himself in hundreds of activities, carrying heavy responsibilities of his worldly life. Nevertheless, he does not fail to remember Me at least twice a day, where as in a short period, when you were engaged in carrying the cup of oil you utterly forgot Me."

This reply from Vishnu humbled Narada. He realized that Vishnu was right, and that he had made a mistake in thinking that he was superior to all other devotees.

This illustration goes to show that the best way is to offer prayers to God, take His name, even though for a short time daily, and then be engaged in your work and perform it honestly and conscientiously, having God-remembrance stamped on your heart.

- from *stories as told by Swami Ramdas*

## **PERSEVERANCE IS NECESSARY**

- Swami Satchidananda

Blessed indeed are devotees who are chosen by God to reveal Himself in their hearts sooner or later. The very fact that a person has started walking on the path of devotion or any path leading to Realisation shows that God has showered His grace on him and that He has selected him to reveal Himself in his heart. This being the case, we can consider that all those who have assembled here are really blessed. Once a devotee takes to the path leading to God-realisation, naturally he comes into contact with a Mahatma, gets His blessings and guidance as in the case of you all who have been blessed with Satsang of many saints like Param Pujya Anandashram Swamiji, Param Pujya Parijnanashram Swamiji and some of you might have Darshan of Param Pujya Pandurangashram Swamiji apart from that of Beloved papa, Beloved Mataji and many other saints.

We very well know that all these saints struggled very hard to realise the supreme goal of human life and, even after attaining the goal, they continued to strive to awaken the slumbering souls to the Reality. They have done their part. Now, on our side, we have to work hard to attain the goal shown by them. Though we all know how they all had to struggle very hard, most of us are unfortunately, taking it very easy, thinking that we can also reach the goal soon without serious struggle. Of course we all will reach the goal some day but not unless we work very hard for it. They are not asking us to do something impossible. They tell us that it is enough if we have intense devotion and fiery aspiration to reach God. For that, through books and oral advice they ask us to take God's name constantly. 'Constantly' is a word we have to underline. Only by chanting God's name constantly, we will be able to remember Him ceaselessly.

We are giving so much importance to the word 'constantly'. Once we are able to remember Him constantly we can be sure that

we have reached a higher stage. We must practice daily, say right from morning to bedtime, to remember Him in every incident. Whenever our eyes fall upon anything – a person, an animal, a creature or anything – we must identify it with God. We must also accept all events or happenings as willed by God. Thus we can be in communion with Him all the twenty – four hours of the day. This is what the saints have been teaching us. But, unfortunately, we have not been giving importance to this particular aspect of their teaching.

We feel we are taking God's Name and trying to see God in everything and all that but actually when it comes to practice, we miss it many times. It is natural because the worldly pull is so strong that it takes us away from god remembrance. We may be thinking of God. We may be trying to see god in others, but from the strong pull world makes us forget God for a long time. So the struggle goes on.

Perseverance is necessary on the spiritual path. When we are seriously trying to realise god, there should not be anything standing in the way. Our devotion must be one pointed. That does not mean we should give up our job, renounce our properties, our home and family. We can have all those things and live in the midst of them, but our attitude towards them should change. While maintaining God-remembrance always we must be able to identify all family members with God, and accept anything that happens as happening by God's will only. If this attitude is maintained, we can stay in the family, we can continue to do the professional work and other activities as before. Our main aim must be to realise God.

We may say that we are striving to realise God, and that we have no ambition or attachment in the world. But, when suddenly something amiss happens in the family, we are shocked so much that we even blame God for what has happened, instead of surrendering to God's will and remaining happy and peaceful. This practice of developing an attitude of surrender must go on

ceaselessly. It is a great struggle in the beginning but by practice it will become easy and we will be able to lead a very blissful life. The final attainment may be far away, it does not matter. But this practice itself will keep us in bliss and peace always. It will remove all the tension we have in life. It will solve all the problems in life. In other words, our Sadhana must be based on seeing God in every day, seeing God in everything and submitting to God's will in all matters.

No body can teach you how to do it. You have to adopt your own method. Suppose somebody comes, instead of seeing him as so and so, you should be able to take it that God who is nameless and formless has come in that form. This practice itself will give you immense joy from the very beginning. God-remembrance is the foundation and that should be continued throughout the twenty-four hours of the day.

Feel that you are dealing with God only, that you are a child or a servant of God, who is everything and everybody in the universe. There should be no other ambition for you in your life except to realise Him. Make this decision strong and work only for that. Don't be afraid that by doing this you will be losing other things. What ever you lose may be only of the world. Worldly things are perishable. This fact you know well. Even then you are not able to accept it. When some material loss takes place you are very much affected. You are not able to accept it or submit to God's will. This is because you have not given importance to God-realisation, though you may say that your aim is God-realisation.

You are giving importance to worldly things, worldly attainments, worldly losses, or worldly gains. In the case of a Sadhaka, many pleasant or unpleasant things may happen. But he will remain unruffled because he knows that worldly losses and gains do not matter at all, as his goal is God-realisation and God alone does everything in different forms. He may lose his position, he may

lose his property, he may lose friends, and he may lose so many other things. But he will not mind them at all because his mind is with God. He is fully confident that God is taking care of him and his duty is only to remember Him constantly. So try to remember god as much as possible. When you go to bed you can feel you are sleeping in the lap of god, the Supreme Mother and when you get up feel that you are a child waking up from the lap of the Mother. So God-remembrance will continue even during your sleep and waking hours. You thus identify everything with God, all incidents with god's will and thus remain happy and peaceful in all conditions and circumstances. Realisation will come automatically. You do not have to work specially for it. This practice itself is sufficient.

May our great Gurus bless you all with success in such experience and lead you to the supreme Goal!

(from *Points to Ponder*, Anandashram publication)

### **HINTS TO ASPIRANTS**

(Swami Ramdas)

Watchfulness should be the principal trait in the nature of a Sadhaka, who is striving to purify and direct his mind towards the indwelling Reality. To let the mind conceive whatever thoughts it likes, and wander about without any check, and get itself entangled in a net of desires, causes the defeat of the Sadhaka in his attempt to push forward on the divine path. He should be alert, awake and heedful. He should closely watch the movements of his mind and gradually wean it away from the path of ignorance and guide it on the path of knowledge. He should develop a witness-consciousness through meditation and self surrender. It is a state of awareness of the immortal and radiant Truth within him. In fact, this awareness itself is God-realisation.

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## PEACE AND PATIENCE

- Edited by Sista Subbarao

There is an infinite patience in nature which it is profitable to contemplate. A comet may take a thousand years to complete its orbit; the sea may occupy ten thousand years in wearing away the land; the complete evolution of the human race may occupy millions of years. This should make us ashamed of our hurry, fussiness, discontent, disappointments and ridiculous self-importance over trifling things of an hour or a day. Patience is conducive to the highest greatness, the most far reaching usefulness and the profoundest peace. Without it, life will lose much of its power and influence and its joy will be largely destroyed.

*“So with well-ordered strenuousness  
Raise thou thy structure of success”.*

Despondency, anxiety, worry and irritability can not cure the ills against which they are directed. They only add more misery to the troubles that prompt them. The cultivation of a steadfast and serene spirit cannot be overlooked if life is to yield any measure of usefulness and happiness. The trifles, and even greater troubles, which annoy would soon dissolve and disappear if confronted with a temper that refuses to be ruffled and disturbed. Personal aims, wishes, schemes and pleasures will meet with checks, rebuffs and obstacles; and it is in learning to meet these reverses in a wise and clam spirit that we discover the true and abiding happiness within our heart.

The storm may rage without, but it cannot affect us if there is peace within. As by the fireside there is security from the fiercest storm, so the heart that is steadfast in the knowledge Truth abides in peace, though all around be strife and perturbation. The bitter opposition of men and the unrest of the world cannot make us bitter and restless unless we enter into and co-operate with it. Rather, if

we have peace in our heart, will the outer turmoil cause our peace to deepen, to take firmer root and to show forth more abundantly in works of peace for the softening of human hearts and the enlightening of human minds. Blessed is he who has no wrongs to remember, no injuries to forget, in whose pure heart no hateful thought about another can take root and flourish.

When a storm has subsided and all is calm again, observe how all nature seems to pause in a restorative silence. A restful quiet pervades all things, so that even inanimate objects seem to participate in the recuperative repose. So when a too violent eagerness or a sudden burst of passion has spent itself, there comes a period of reflective thought, a time of calm, in which the mind is restored and things are seen in their true outlines and right proportions. It is wise to take advantage of this quiet time by gaining a truer knowledge of one's self and forming a more kindly judgement of others. The hour of calm is the hour of restoration.

Joy comes and fills the self emptied heart; it abides with the peaceful; its reign is with the pure.

‘The peace which passeth understanding’ is a peace which no event or circumstance can shake or mar, because it is not merely a passing calm between two storms, but is an abiding peace that is born of knowledge. Men have not this peace, because they do not understand and know, because they are blinded ignorant by their own errors and impurities; and whilst they are unwilling to give these up, they cannot but remain entirely ignorant of impersonal principles.

The wise man knows. For him anxiety, fear, disappointment and unrest have ceased and under whatever condition or circumstance he may be placed, his calmness will not be broken, and he will bend and adjust everything with capacity and wisdom. Nothing will cause him grief. When friends yield up the body of flesh, he knows, that they still are, and does not sorrow over the shell they have discarded. None can injure him, for he has identified himself with that which is unaffected by change.

The knowledge which brings peace, then, is the knowledge of unchangeable principles arrived at by the practice of pure goodness, righteousness, becoming one with which a man becomes immortal, unchangeable, indestructible.

As there are depths in the ocean, which the fiercest storm cannot reach, so there are silent, holy depths in the heart of man, which the storms of sin and sorrow can never disturb. To reach these silences and to live consciously in it, is peace.

Discord is strife in the outward world, but unbroken harmony holds sway at the heart of the universe. The human soul reaches blindly towards the harmony of the sinless state, and to reach this state and to live consciously in it is peace. Come away, for a while, from external things, from the presence of the senses, from the arguments of the intellect, from the noise and the excitements of the world, and withdraw yourself into the inmost chamber of your heart, and there free from the sacrilegious intrusion of all selfish desires, you will find a holy calm, a blissful repose; the faultless eye of truth will open within you and you will see things as they really are.

Men cry peace! Peace! Where there is no peace, but, the contrary, discord, disquietude and strife. Apart from that wisdom which is inseparable from self-renunciation, there can be no real and abiding peace.

The peace which results from social comfort passing gratification, or worldly victory, is transitory in its nature and is burnt up in the heat of fiery trial and only the self-less heart can know the Peace of Heaven. Holiness alone is undying peace. Self-control leads to it and the ever-increasing Light of Wisdom guides the pilgrim on his way. It is partaken of in a measure as soon as the path of virtue is entered upon, but it is only realised in its fullness when self disappears in the consummation of a stainless life.

Men pray for peace, yet cling to passion; they foster strife, yet pray for heavenly rest. This is ignorance, profound spiritual ignorance;

it is not to know the first letter in the alphabet of things divine.

Hatred and love, strife and peace cannot dwell together in the same heart. Where one is admitted as a welcome guest, the other be turned away as an unwelcome stranger. He who despises another, will be despised by others; he who opposes his fellow-men will himself be resisted. He should not be surprised and mourn, that men are divided. He should know that he is propagating strife. He should understand his lack of peace.

If, O reader! you would realise the Joy that never ends and the tranquility that cannot be disturbed, if you would leave behind for ever your sins, your sorrows, your anxieties and perplexities, if, I say, you would partake of this salvation, this supremely glorious life, then conquer yourself. Bring every thought, every impulse, every desire into perfect obedience to the divine power resident within you. There is no other way to peace but this; and if you refuse to walk it, your much praying and your strict adherence to ritual will be fruitless and unavailing and neither gods nor angels can help you. Only to him that over-cometh is given the white stone of the regenerate life, on which is written the New and Ineffable Name.

Calmness, as distinguished from the dead placidity of languor, is the acme of concentrated energy. There is a focussed mentality behind it. In agitation and excitement the mentality is dispersed. It is irresponsible and is without force or weight. The fussy, peevish, irritable man has no influence. He repels, not attracts. He wonders why his 'easy-going' neighbour succeeds and is sought after, while he, who is always hurrying, worrying and troubling (he miscalls it striving), fails and is avoided. His neighbour, being a calmer man, not more easy-going but more deliberate, gets through more work, does it more skillfully and is more self-possessed and manly. This is the reason of his success and influence. His energy is controlled and used, while the other man's energy is dispersed and abused.

Where calmness is, there is the greatest power. Calmness is the sure indication of a strong, well trained, patiently disciplined mind.

## SATYANARAYANA VRATAM

- Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati

The calm man knows his business, be sure of it. His words are few but they tell. His schemes are well planned and they work true, like a well balanced machine. He sees a long way ahead and makes straight for his object. The enemy, difficulty, he converts into a friend and makes profitable use of him, for he has studied well how to 'agree with his adversary while he is in the way with him'. Like a wise general, he has anticipated all emergencies. Indeed, he is the man who is prepared before hand. In his meditations, in the counsels of his judgment, he has conferred with causes and has caught the bent of all contingencies. He is never taken by surprise; is never in hurry; is safe in the keeping of his own steadfastness; and is sure of his ground.

The Divine within is the abode of peace, the temple of wisdom, the dwelling place of immortality. Apart from this inward resting-place, this Mount of Vision, there can be no true peace, no knowledge of the Divine and if you can remain there for one minute, one hour, or one day it is possible for you to remain there always.

All your sins and sorrows, your fears and anxieties, are your own, and you can cling to them or you can give them up. Of your own accord you cling to your unrest; Of your own accord you can come to abiding peace. No one else can give up sin for you; you must give it up yourself. The greatest Teacher can do no more than walk the way of Truth for himself and point it out to you; you yourself must walk it for yourself. You can obtain freedom and peace alone by your own efforts, by yielding up that which bends the soul and which is destructive of Peace.

- from *the Book of Meditation for everyday in Life* by James Allen, published by Geeta Pracharak Sangham, Secunderbad, Andhra Pradesh, India.

*Īśvara*, the infinite Lord, can be approached and worshipped through His infinite aspects and infinite names. For instance, we can relate to an individual in a number of ways, e.g., as a father, son, friend, colleague, spouse, etc. But an individual can only have a few aspects, whereas *Īśvara* is infinite. The beauty of the Hindu culture is that one Lord is worshipped in many names and forms. Among many such forms of worship, the *Satyanārayaṇa vratam* has its own very special significance. This puja is very popular among all Hindus. There is a very important temple of Lord as *Satyanārayaṇa* in Annavaram of coastal Andhra Pradesh, and almost every Hindu family in A.P. performs this *vratam* without fail every year. Now I know that this puja is popular among the Indians living abroad also.

Let us understand the word Satyanarayana. I have a feeling that this particular name of the Lord has its origin in the *Śrīmadbhāgavatam*, which begins with a prayer to the Lord *Satya*, *satyam param dhīmahi*, we contemplate upon the Lord who is in the form of the Supreme Reality. If *Īśvara* is *param satyam*, Supreme Reality, is there a lower order of *satyam*? The adjective *param* indicates that there is a lower order of reality. We say pure ghee, because impure ghee also occurs. What could the lower order of reality be?

*Jagat*, the world, is the lower order of reality. It is the source of all our life experiences. In fact, the individual exists only in relation to the *jagat*. In deep sleep, there is neither the *jagat* nor the individual. Only when I come out of the sleep, an ego rises and along with it, the *jagat* also rises. It causes us suffering and pleasure to the extent we relate to it. This *jagat* cannot be real, because it appears in time and ceases to exist again in time. For example, there is no *jagat* when we

go to sleep or are absorbed in meditation. At the macro level, it was not there in the past before creation and will not be there after annihilation; it appears only in the present tense. When we examine the *jagat*, we find that it is merely a collection of various names and forms.

That which exists in all the three periods of time is *param satyam*, the Supreme Reality. It is timeless, as It is not negated in all three periods of time. That which was absent, appears for some time, and then again will disappear, is time-bound and unreal, irrespective of whether the time scale is short or long, as it gets negated all the time. It falls into a lower order of reality. *Jagat* is of the lower order of reality. *Īśvara*, the Supreme Reality is its background reality. In this sense, *jagat* is described occasionally as *satyam*.

This entire universe of plurality and multiplicity can be reduced to five elements: *pr̥thvī* (earth), *āpah* (waters), *tejas* (fire), *vāyu* (air), and *ākāśa* (space). These can further be reduced to one non-dual Reality *sat*, the Existence Absolute, which is the Supreme. It is the *param satyam*, meaning *satyasya satyam*, the Real of the real.

In this prayer the sage *Vyāsa* does not say *Kṛṣṇam dhīmahi* or *Śivam dhīmahi* or any other names. If you say *Kūṣṇam dhīmahi*, those who do not worship Lord *Kūṣṇa* may feel left out. Similarly, if you say *Śivam dhīmahi*, those who do not worship Lord *Śiva* will feel left out. However, every name and form is included in the prayer *satyam dhīmahi*.

*Satyanārayaṇa*, He is *Nārayaṇa* who is *Satya*. There is a beautiful verse describing the Lord as *Satya* in the *Śrīmadbhāgavatam* (10-2-26):

सत्यव्रतं सत्यपरं त्रिसत्यं सत्यस्य योनिं निहितं च सत्ये ।  
सत्यस्य सत्यमृतसत्यनेत्रं सत्यात्मकं त्वां शरणं प्रपद्ये ॥

*satyavratam satyaparam trisatyam  
satyasya yonim nihitam ca satye,  
satyasya satyamūtasatyanetram satyātmakam  
tvām śaraṇam prapadye..*

True-willed, true-formed and true in all the three periods of time, You are the womb of truth and You are imbedded in Truth. The world that is perceived as real is established in Your truth. Truthfulness and goodness form Your two eyes. We take refuge in You, who is Existence Absolute.

This is how the gods such as Indra, Varuna, Agni, etc., praise the glory of the Lord at the time of the incarnation of the Lord as *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* in a jail cell and praise the glory of the Lord.

A devotee looks at this vast universe around him and understands clearly that the universe with all its plurality has its existence in *Īśvara*. Like the world of ornaments appears in the substratum of gold, the entire universe appears in *Īśvara*. *Satyam* is existence. *Īśvara*, who is the matrix of the universe, is called *satyam*, He is the one, non-dual, undivided Existence Absolute.

When we say *ghataḥ asti*, the pot is, that *asti*, is, has its origin in *sat* or *satyam*, the Existence Absolute. It is existence in the form of a pot. In Sanskrit, the verbal root of *asti* is *asa*, to be. The *asa* of Sanskrit becomes 'is' of English. Then, *parvataḥ asti*, mountain is. Similarly, river is, mosquito is, and so on. These are but existence in different forms. Each time the name and form changes, but it continues to be existence. It is like ornaments such as a necklace, ear rings, bangles, and so on. They are all gold. Though the name and shape changes, the common reality, gold, doesn't change. Similarly, when we look at the world, we see different names and forms, but they are all conditioned existence only.

The glory of Vedanta is that it proclaims the unity of existence. The existence appears limited and as many, just as the same gold

appears as many ornaments. It is one ocean of Existence. This universe has its origin in one non-dual Existence Absolute and that is *satyam*, the Lord. Therefore, the lord is called *satyātmaka*.

The Lord is *Satyavrata*, the One with the truthful resolve. Generally, we make resolves, but do not stand by them. For instance, I may resolve to wake up at 5 am, but I may violate my own resolve and wake up at 7 am instead. However, *Īśvara*'s will or resolve is always fulfilled. The *Chandogya Upaniṣad* (6-2-3,4) presents:

तदैक्षत बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति तत्तेजोऽसृजत ।  
 तत्तेज ऐक्षत बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति तदपोऽसृजत ।  
 ता आप ऐक्षन्त बह्व्यस्स्याम प्रजायेमहीति ता अन्नमसृजन्त ॥  
*tadaikṣata bahu syāṃ prajāyeyeti tattejo'srjata.*  
*tatteja aikṣata bahu syāṃ prajāyeyeti tadapo'srjata.*  
*tā āpa aikṣanta bahvyassyāma*  
*prajāyemahīti tā annamasrjanta.*

Sat, Existence Absolute, wished, 'may I become many'. Then It created (out of Itself) the energy. That Existence Absolute in the form of energy resolved, 'may I become many.' It created the waters (the liquid state of matter). It in the form of waters wished, 'may I become many.' It created the solid state.

Thus, the will of *Īśvara* is fulfilled at every stage.

*Satyaparam*. By truth alone we can reach *Īśvara*. Truthfulness is very pragmatic. To tell an untruth, I have to scheme carefully. The untruth creates stress in the mind while uttering. Having uttered an untruth, I have to support it with a few more untruths. Thus, stress accumulates in the mind which strays from the path of truth. On the other hand, the mind given to truthfulness is a serene mind; it is free from stress. Truthfulness takes us near to the Lord. Therefore, it is always better to speak the truth even at the cost of money or material

comforts. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (1-11) mandates, *satyam vada*, thou speaketh the truth, which really means 'do not speak untruth.'

*Trisatyam*, *Īśvara* alone is not negated in all the three periods of time.

*Sattiyasya yonim*, *Īśvara* is the origin of *sattya*. This *sattya* is a technical word. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (2-6) presents the creation as:

सोऽकामयत । बहुस्यां प्रजायेयेति । स तपोऽतप्यत । स तपस्तप्त्वा ।  
 इदमं सर्वमसृजत । यदिदं किञ्च । तत्सृष्ट्वा तदेवानुप्राविशत् ।

*so'kāmayata, bahu syāṃ prajāyeyeti, sa tapo'tapyata,*  
*satapastaptvā, idaṃ sarvamasūjata, yadidaṃ kiñca, tatsūṣṭvā,*  
*tadevānuprāviśat, tadanupraviśya, sacca tyaccābhavat.*

Brahman willed, 'may I become many; let me take birth (manifest).' It contemplated. Having contemplated, It created this what all is there. Having created, It alone entered. Having entered, It became the sat (earth, waters, and fire) and tyat (wind and space).

*Īśvara* created the universe out of Himself. He is the raw material and He is the efficient cause of the universe. *Īśvara* manifested as *sat* and *tyat*. *Sat* plus *tyat* is *sattya*. *Sat* consists of the three *mūrta* or visible elements. *Tyat* consists of the two *amūrta*, the elements that are not visible to the naked eye. *Īśvara* is the origin of both *sat* and *tyat*. The entire existence is reduced to three plus two which is further reduced to one non-dual reality.

*Nihitam ca sattye*, located in the five elements. Now, where is *Īśvara*? When a child is born, it exists separated independent of the mother. The three *mūrta* and the two *amūrta* elements have not originated from *Īśvara* like a child from its mother; *Īśvara* Himself manifested as these five elements. In the world of ornaments, the gold is located right there in the ornaments. Similarly, *Īśvara* obtains

in the *jagat* as all the five elements:

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा ।

*gāmāviśya ca bhūtāni dhārayāmyahamojasā* (Gita, 15-13).

I interpenetrate the earth and uphold the life forms with my power.

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय ।

*raso'hamapsu kaunteya* (Gita, 7-8).

O Arjuna, I am the taste in the waters.

अग्निमीडे पुरोहितम् ।

*agnimīde purohitam*.

I praise the Lord of fire who is the foremost benefactor.

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।

*ahaṁ vaiśvānaro bhūtvā prāṇināṃ dehamāśritaḥ* (Gita, 15-14).

I, having become the digestive fire called *Vaiśvānara*, abide in the body of the life forms.

नमस्ते वायो । त्वमेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मासि ॥

*namaste vāyo, tvameva pratyakṣaṃ brahmāsi* (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*).

O Vayu, my prostration unto you. You are indeed the Brahman experienced directly.

आकाशशरीरं ब्रह्म ।

*ākāśaśarīraṃ brahma* (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, 1-6-2).

Braman has the space as body.

Thus, all the five elements are a direct manifestation of *Īśvara*.

We have to understand that *Īśvara* pervades the *jagat*. We cannot have *jagat* before us and *Īśvara* in the heavens in as much as we cannot have necklace or wave in one place and the gold or ocean in

another. In fact, heaven is also part of *jagat* only. *Īśvara* is the *antaryāmin*, the inner ruler, of this universe, because the latter obtains existence and shining from *Īśvara* alone.

*Satyasya satyam*, the Truth of the truth. In this characteristic usage of the same word in two different cases, the first case represents the higher order of reality, while the sixth the lower order. Therefore, the lower order becomes *mithyā*, unreal, automatically. The *satyam* or reality of this *jagat* is the undivided Existence Absolute which is *Īśvara*. Like gold to the necklace and water to the wave, *Īśvara* is the truth of this universe.

*Ṛtasatyanetram*, *ūta* and *satya* are the two eyes of the Lord. *Ṛta* is the right knowledge of the scriptures, while *satya* is the same knowledge practiced through speech and action. Thus, having the correct vision and living it in life are like the two eyes of the Lord. It means that the pursuit of *ūta* and *satya* helps us realize the Lord as Atman. We surrender to the Lord, who is the undivided Existence Absolute.

*Nārāyaṇaḥ*, *narā eva nārāḥ*, *te ayaṇaṃ yasya*, the one who abides in all life forms (as Atman). The Lord, who is the existence of the universe, also obtains as the consciousness in all the living beings. He is the sat, existence, without, and He is the cit, awareness, within. He is all pervasive. He alone is real. Neither the universe nor the individual exist or shine independent of the Lord.

Om, tat sat.

\* \* \* \* \*

## The Bird's Share

-T L Vaswani

Near the place of Tukaram's meditations in the forest there was a crop of corn. The owner of the corn often saw Tukaram sitting quietly in the forest. The owner promised to give Tukaram half a maund of grain if Tukaram would protect the corn from the birds. Tukaram agreed. But when the birds came for a meal, Tukaram said to himself:

Are not the birds too, God's creatures,  
Children of Vittal, the Beloved?  
Are they not hungry?  
Last year a famine spread far and wide;  
This year God hath sent us a crop.  
Have the birds no share in the crop of the corn?  
Must I turn them away?  
Am I a true worshipper of Vishnu  
Or only a lip-worshipper?  
If, indeed, I am a true devotee of the Beloved  
Then must I chase away the birds?  
I must release them,  
Then greet them gladly  
And feed them to their full.

The birds, came day by day; and Tukaram fed them, day by day, as in another country and another period of history did St. Francis.

The proprietor of the corn, a peasant, came one day to see the field. He was taken aback when he found the whole field was empty. The peasant flew into rage. Alas, he dragged the Saint by the hair and brought him to the panchayat (the town council). They heard and they laughed, what else could they do?

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## CAN YOU SEE THE GOOD IN OTHERS?

- J P Vaswani

The great Prophet of the Bahai faith, Baha' ullah, said to his disciples again and again, "If you find that there are nine vices and only one virtue in your neighbour, forget the nine vices, and focus only on the one virtue." This is the secret of an understanding heart: see only the good in others. When we focus on others' faults, we only draw those negative forces unto ourselves. Fault-finding, constant criticism and magnifying the mistakes of others are poor, ineffective ways of changing the world. A sunny temperament and a healthy sense of humour can do wonders for you. Learn to laugh with others; try a smile or a kind word—you will find that wrongs are easy to set right, and 'wrong doers' are set back on the right track.

### **Judge not the others**

Tina was a 'special' child—severely challenged physically and intellectually. Her parents brought her to experts who observed her carefully, assessed her capabilities and suggested a child-centred approach, which her parents could adopt to teach her at home. The experts did not impose any set programmes on Tina; rather they learned her preferences and inclinations first, and allowed the child to guide them in helping her. During successive sessions, trained volunteers and special teachers observed the child, and shared their observations with each other and the parents.

At the end of the third day's session, Neela, one of the volunteers said enthusiastically, "Yesterday, Tina was not ready to move out of her place; but this morning, when I held out a toy to her, she actually took a few steps in my direction."

Shanti, another volunteer added, "This afternoon, when I showed her a teddy bear, she laughed happily and came to me to touch the teddy."

Tina's mother, who was listening open-mouthed, interjected at this point, "But ... but she cannot walk!"

"Oh?" said the volunteers politely, "We really didn't know that!"

I have narrated this real-life story that I read recently to tell you how the teachers and trainers of 'special' children do not pre-judge the capabilities of their young wards. This is an attitude we will all do well to adopt.

We have ingrained notions of what is right and wrong, what is proper and improper, what is acceptable and unacceptable. When we impose our narrow and harsh judgements on others, we condemn ourselves to a critical attitude and lose out on a lot of good cheer and joy that comes from being open-minded.

### **No one is perfect**

None of us is perfect. No man or woman can ever be perfect. Even Jesus said to us, "Call me not perfect. Alone the Father in heaven is perfect!"

Marriage, friendship, any relationship or business partnership involves two imperfect human beings trying to live together, work together or establish a link. Unless we learn to accept people as they are, we will lose all possibility of finding happiness in our relationships.

A stranger arrived at the gates of a city, which he was visiting for the first time. An old woman sitting on the roadside greeted him, "Welcome to our city."

"What kind of people live here?" the stranger asked.

"What kind of people live in your home town?" the old woman asked him with a smile.

"Oh, they were terrible," swore the stranger. "They were mean,

nasty, malicious and selfish. They were impossible to live with."

"You will find people here are pretty much the same," the old woman said to him.

A little later, another stranger arrived at the city gates, and was welcomed by the old woman.

"What kind of people live in this city?"

"How did you find them in your home town?" the woman asked him.

"Oh, they were a wonderful lot—hard working, friendly, and easy to get along with."

"You will find the people here likewise," the old woman assured him.

### **See the good in others**

Approach people with love and understanding - and you will find the same reflected in their approach to you. Focus on people's merits and strengths; not on their weaknesses and defects - this is the secret of a harmonious and peaceful life. See the good in others! Utter kind words and loving thoughts about them. You will find that this has a healing effect on them, and you. Harsh words and criticism cause people to shrink and wither. The happy, positive individual does not criticise, he does not find fault with others. If we too begin to see the good in others, we will keep on growing better and better and our minds will always be at peace, and the world around us will smile.

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## **OUR BELOVED SWAMI OMKAR**

- Edna Eckert,

Many years ago in the city of Philadelphia, I met the Reverend Lillian Daniel who had an Indian Spiritual Center there. For many years countless devoted people came to her beautiful services. It was she who brought Swami Omkar to this country (1938) and I shall always be grateful to her for having met through her our beloved Swami.

During his visit to America with our dear and lovely sister Sushila Devi I had the privilege of presenting Swamiji for an inspiring lecture in my home. It was attended by many appreciative people.

At this time Mr. Graham Phelps Stokes, the out standing Buddhist scholar in ths country, also a dear friend of mine, was giving his lectures in his large home in New York City. I invited him and his dear wife to my home. Mr. Stokes and Swamiji were immediately impressed with each other. The evening was a rare experience. Some time later we met again in Mr. Stokes' home. As one can easily imagine the conversation was profoundly inspiring. It was a privilege indeed to listen to the words of these two great men. As we are standing near the door to say goodbye I shall never forget some thing that happened. Mr. Stokes in a few final sentences spoke again about the brotherhood of all men. Then he and Swamiji looked at each other with profound understanding and love that this concept embodies. For a few moments there was absolute silence, the two men looking deeply into each other's eyes and hearts. Suddenly they stepped forward, threw their arms around each other as tears flowed down their cheeks. Here indeed was the brotherhood of all Men in action and in reality, the tremendous concept of oneness. We are all too moved for words.

Another time I had the privilege of having Swami Omkar and

Sushila Devi over to my home for a quiet afternoon on our lawn. The conversation ran high always towards matters of the spirit. As twilight came I took them up to the top floor of my home where I had a Fourteenth Century Italian studio, bedroom and chapel. Swamiji was greatly pleased with the Peace that prevailed. Silently we moved into the chapel. And out of the silence came thoughts and feelings and understanding too deep to be put into words. It was an unforgettable experience.

Finally came the day when he and Sushila had to return to India. It was a sad and happy moment. Sad because Swamiji was leaving us, yet happy in the full realisation that in reality he would never leave us, for had he not taught us that in spirit there is no separation! On shipboard, I believe it was Sister Sushila who took the photo of the group that had come to see them off. I have not seen this picture for a very long time but I believe it was spirit that directed me to the place where it was so that I might send it on to you.

Swami Omkar, a God-dedicated man, had touched the minds and hearts of countless people in many parts of this world. He himself is a blessed one and through his great compassion and love he has blessed in rare ways the world in which he lives and loves. He has been sent to do a great work. During more than fifty years he has been accomplishing this wondrous work. Through this message of PEACE the world has been made a better place and the beauty of his soul reaches out to all people everywhere and pervades the universe.

OM OM OM!

(from New York City, January 1972 Peace Journal)

## SECURITY

-Siluveru Sudershan

Whenever the world's vibratory balance of good and evil is disturbed by an accumulation of harmful vibrations, the result of man's wrong thinking and wrong doing, we will see devastation. Banish selfishness of the individual, industrial, political, and national and we will have no more wars.

Individuals and nations can be protected from utter destruction if we live by heavenly deals of brotherhood, industrial co-operation and international exchange of earthly goods and experiences.

If we call the earth our country, then we shall by a process of justice and international assembly, distribute unselfishly the goods of the world according to the need of the people. We shall try to be like the divine ones who have come on earth again and again to show us the way.

Atheistic ideals are battling to drive religion out. The one thing that will help to eliminate world suffering more than money, houses or any other material aid is to meditate and transmit to others the divine consciousness of God that we feel. Every day we have to radiate His consciousness to others.

God is love. His plan for creation can be rooted only through love. Every saint who has penetrated to the core of reality has testified that a divine universal plan exists and that it is beautiful and full of joy.

Those who have found God through their own self realisation, those who have actually experienced God, they alone can love mankind, not impersonally, but as their blood brothers, children of the same one father.

How may anyone dare to hate any other human being of whatever race when God lives and breathes in all? The soul cannot

be confined within man made boundaries.

If you contact God within yourself, you will know that he is in every one, that he has become the children of all races. If the whole world could love with that universal love, there would be no need for men to arm themselves against one another.

The broad sympathies and discerning insight needed for the healing of earthly woes cannot flow from a mere intellectual consideration of human diversities, but from knowledge of men's deepest unity kinship with God.

The grim march of world political events points inexorably to the truth that without spiritual vision, people perish. Where indeed may man go now if not to his source and origin the spirit within him?

The human mind can and must liberate within itself energies created than those with in stones and metals, lest the material atomic giant, newly unleashed, turn on the world in mindless destruction.

This world will always have turmoil and trouble. We have to go to the shelter of God, where the masters have gone, and whence they are watching and helping the world.

True happiness, lasting happiness lies only in God "having whom no other gain is greater." We have no other security in the world, no other freedom. So we have to strive deeply to contact Him in meditation every morning and night as well as throughout the day in all works and duties we perform. The successful yogi can stand unshaken amidst the crash of breaking worlds; He is secure in the realisation. "Lord, where I am, there thou must come."

Live for God and God alone. Outside of God there is no security, no matter where we go, delusion can attack us. We must become sons of God now realise we are His children so that we may be rid of this dream of delusion forever. We are all pure spirit.

We have to awake in God's immortal light! We need not keep

our minds so absorbed in the sad and frightening dramas of this life. Why worry about the unpleasant surprises in the plot of this world movie? We are here for just a little while. We have to learn the lesson of the drama of life and find our freedom.

Just beneath the shadows of this life is God's wondrous light. The universe is a vast temple of His presence. When we meditate, we will find doors opening to Him everywhere, when we have communion with Him, not all the ravages of the world can take away that joy and Peace.

In life and death, in disease, famine, pestilence or poverty may we ever cling to thee? We have to pray to God for help to realise that we are immortal spirit untouched by the changes of childhood, youth, age and world upheavals.

#### **NISSABDO BRAHMA – SILENCE IS GOD**

Brahman and Shakti are two beautiful and inspiring words that have helped me in my onward march of Spiritual Life, both in the hours of deep silence and in the hours of intense activity. When I am silent, it is Brahman. Nissabdo Brahma – Silence is God. When I am active, it is Sabda Brahma. As I am writing now, it is Shakti. As I think also, it is the Shakti alone. When I do not move, think or even breathe, then it is the Complete Avyakta Brahman.

Hence one should worship both the manifested- the Shakti and the unmanifested – the Brahman, the seen and the Unseen and the visible and invisible.

May all Homage be unto the Brahman and Shakti.

(from hours of Silence - Swami Omkar)

OM! OM! OM!

## **TRUE HAPPINESS**

- Sri Swami Sivananda

True happiness lies in virtue and inner soul and not in earthly possessions. Man has to rise up above the world consciousness through daily meditation. He should ever attempt to enter the divine consciousness. He should manifest the divine through Sadhana or concentration. He should transform the human nature into divine nature by developing Daivi Sampat. He should cut asunder the network of desires which brings distress and misery in the end through Japa, prayer, meditation and Satsang.

Blessed householders! Remember that ignorance is always the root-cause of fear. Wherever there is duality, there is fear. In Advaita alone, there is no fear. Who is to be afraid of whom, when one beholds oneness everywhere? The spiritual journey is long and weary. There is much to be done by way of spiritual Sadhana. Life is very short. Time is fleeting. There are many obstacles on the spiritual path. One should apply oneself diligently in spiritual practices and discipline the Indriyas, in the control of mind and lead the most regulated life. Concentration and meditation are the two essential wings of the spiritual Sadhak. With these, he can simply fly round the entire world. Realise this and rest in your Satchidananda Swarupa. Know thy real Self and be ever free.

Beloved children of the Lord! Scrutinise your motives. Look before you leap. Don't repent later on. Think very seriously. Remember Him always and attain immortality and eternal and lasting peace right now. Work unselfishly with redoubled force and energy. Universal love is the gateway to Moksha. Do not brood over the past. Live in the living present. Have intense faith. Aspire fervently. Surrender yourself at the Lotus Feet of the Lord. The Divine Grace is bound to descend upon you.

Feel the same Atman that is in you or in the temple, resides in

the innermost recesses of the heart of those poverty-stricken ignorant masses also. Love them as you love your own Ishta Devata. Serve them with Atma Bhav. You may meet with apathy and even hostility in the beginning. But if you always entertain thoughts of love, you will surely win. Rest assured in this simple truth. Love is life and hatred is death. Expansion of heart is life, contraction is death. Man should die, but once. A miser dies a thousand times; a weak selfish man dies a million times; one filled with hatred dies every second of his lifetime. Ever have a broad heart. Feel the Atmic strength within yourself. Be ever perfectly selfless. Love all. Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma. All indeed is Brahman.

Blessed aspirants! You should always try to find out the defects in sensual object or sensual life. The cause of birth, death, or old age, disease, pain, etc., is only sensual desires. By entertaining Mithya Drishti (the unreal nature of worldly objects) and Dosha Drishti, the mind will not run towards worldly objects. Pratyahara will come by itself. Then only, the double withdrawal will be more effective and producing lasting results. Withdrawal of senses from objects can be done through the practice of devotion to the Lord also. When the subtle undercurrents of Vasanas die, when all Rajas is squeezed out, when the lurking appetites in the corners of your Antahkarana are destroyed, when the subtle pride or egoism is eradicated, then only, you will enjoy eternal lasting bliss. Therefore direct your efforts in purifying the mind first.

Do not worry about repeated failures in your Sadhana. Despair not. Do not give up the struggle or the Sadhana. Stand up and again fight the turbulent senses and the mind. Each failure is a stepping-stone to success. You are nearer to success every time. You should succeed in the long run. Make courage your rosary, desirelessness your holy thread, discrimination your deer-skin, dispassion your silk cloth and meditation your sacred Bhasma or the holy sacred ash. Burn the fire of lust and anger through purity and forgiveness. The

body idea, the sex idea, lust and egoism are very deep-rooted in men. Hence, O Man! Struggle hard to eradicate these simple enemies of your body and mind. Continue the fight unceasingly. You will succeed eventually in their annihilation.

Never run away from your jobs. A man can afford to lead a well-regulated moral life in any plane he lives. Where there is a will, there is a way. One should do all actions in a spirit of detachment. One should leave the world and the objects of the world, as everything is perishable. Love the Lord seated in all. It is the only Reality. Do not apply reasoning to what is unthinkable. For knowing what is beyond mind, one must not rely on logic, but on the sacred scriptures or Srutis or revelations. Do you know what are hatches, matches and despatches. Hatches are births, matches are marriages, and despatches are deaths. Find out that one Supreme undying Being who is above all these matches and despatches and live in the blissful for ever. Give the foremost place to religion and Sadhana and a very secondary place to domestic and social life.

Craving is an intense desire. Through repeated action, every habit has been deeply rooted in man's nature. Do not give any kind of leniency to your weaker mind, which is deluding you every moment. Every evil habit can be easily eradicated, provided the eradication is taken up immediately as a solemn ideal. All evil habits can be eradicated by constant Abhyas and absolute Vairagya. Ever feel they are the impediments in the spiritual path. Develop a strong desire for God-realisation only. May the Divine light lighten your spiritual path! May you enter into the Kingdom of God where alone you can have true happiness. May the blessings of your Guru be upon you!

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## FRIENDSHIP

- Paramhansa Yogananda

Is friendship the weaving of the red strings of two hearts?  
Is it the blending of two minds into a spacious one-mind?  
Is it the spouting of love founts together'  
To strengthen the rush of love on droughty souls?  
Is it the one rose grown 'twixt twin mind-branchlets  
Of one compassionate stem?  
Is it the one thinking in two bodies?  
Or, is it like two strong stallions,  
Disparate in color and mien,  
Pulling the chariot of life together  
To the single goal with one mind sight?  
Is friendship founded on equalities or inequalities?  
Is it built on diverse stones of differences?  
Is friendship the unthinkingly agreeing,  
The hand in hand, blind walking of two souls,  
Foolishly rejoicing in their united folly,  
Falling at last into a pit of disillusionment?  
Friendship is noble, fruitful, holy,  
When two separate souls march in difference  
Yet in harmony, agreeing and disagreeing,  
Glowingly improving diversely,  
With one common longing to find solace in true pleasure.  
When ne'er the lover seeks  
Self-comfort at cost of the one beloved,  
Then, in that garden of selflessness  
Fragrant friendship perfectly flowers.  
For friendship is a hybrid, born of two souls,

The blended fragrance of two unlike flowers  
Blown together in love's caressing breeze.  
Friendship is born from the very core  
Of secret, inexplicable likings.  
Friendship is the fountain of true feelings.  
Friendship grows in both likeness and difference.  
Friendship sleeps or dies in familiarity,  
And decays in lusts of narrow-eyed selves.  
Friendship grows tall and sturdy  
In the soil of oneness in body, mind, and soul.  
Demands, deceptions, sordid sense of possession,  
Courtesy's lack, narrow self-love, suspicion,  
These are cankers which eat at the heart of friendship.  
Ah, friendship! Flowering, heaven-born plant!  
Nurtured art thou in the soil of measureless love,  
In the seeking of soul-progress together  
By two who would smooth the way each for the other.  
And thou art watered by attentions of affection  
And the tender dews of inner and outer sweetness  
Of the inmost, selfless heart's devotion.  
Ah, friendship! Where thy soul-born flowers fall,  
There, on that sacred shrine of fragrance,  
The Friend of all friends craves to come and remain!

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## **PASSING CLOUDS OF DEPRESSION**

**(from the hours of silence)**

Strange that there should be passing clouds of depression even in the Hours of Silence! Does not the brilliant Sun have its passing clouds, in spite of its self-effulgence? The cause of the depression is only the momentary inadvertence, the forgetfulness of the Light within. So the remedy lies only in the awareness of the ineffable LIGHT eternally.

Body consciousness is to be replaced by God consciousness. One should be ceaselessly shining with Brahma Consciousness. It is the Cosmic Glory that dispel all clouds. May all Homage be unto the cosmic Light which is Infinite and eternal.

OM! OM! OM!

## **HINTS TO ASPIRANTS**

**(Swami Ramdas)**

It does not behove as a Sadhaka to detach yourself completely from the world. Unselfish service rendered to humanity helps you in developing an universal consciousness. Love and sympathy, self-sacrifice and service, softens the heart and purifies it. Tune your mind to the divine within you, and beholding all beings and creatures as His expression, love and serve them. In this way you will be able to realise God within and without. To serve your fellow-beings is verily to serve God. In the last synthesis of an all-round spiritual experience, you realise that the whole universe is your body. Your love and service of any one in it will surely constitute love and service of yourself. You will do this not only with joy but also without consciousness that you have done anything for another, just as your attending to your physical needs does not make you think that you have done a great favour to your body.

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## **ASHRAM NEWS**

The 121<sup>st</sup> birth day celebrations of Pujya Swami Omkarji Maharaj will be celebrated at Thotapalli, main Ashram. The programme will be carried on for three days from 20-01-2015 to 22-01-2015. Distinguished guests like Swami Padmanabhananda, General Secretary, Divine Life Society, Rishikesh will grace the occasion and speak on the dedicated services of Swami Omkarji Maharaj for the upliftment of his followers throughout the world in their spiritual pursuits.

At the main Ashram and its branches at Visakhapatnam, Kakinada and Kotagiri essential commodities were distributed to the aged and needy people. Clothes also were distributed, a monthly feature from September to November, 2014. Spiritual sadhana camps were conducted at the main Ashram,

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