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Founder His Holiness Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamigal
Patron-in-Chief His Holiness Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji

VOLUME XLVI No.9 DECEMBER 2023

तत्त्वं जिज्ञासमानानां लोकानां प्रीतिमावहन् । तत्त्वलोको विजयतां शारदादयया सदा ॥
May Tattvāloka always excel, by the grace of Sharada, delighting the seekers of Truth.

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Established in 1978, Tattvāloka is published monthly by Sri Abhinava Vidyatheertha Mahaswamigal Education Trust of Sri Jagadguru Sankaracharya Mahasamsthanam, Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham, Sringeri 577 139, Karnataka, India.

(Articles and photographs welcome. Those published in Tattvāloka do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor)

Annual Subscription: Rs.496. Single copy Rs.60 (including courier) Foreign (airmail) US\$49 annual. Make cheque payable Tattvāloka. Enquiries: Tattvāloka, 76, Eldams Road, Teynampet, Chennai 600 018. P. O. Box 1484, Teynampet, Chennai 600 018, India. Tel: 044 2432 8124. E-mail: info@tattvaloka.com Website: www.tattvaloka.com

Published by Sarala Panchapakesan on behalf of Sri Abhinava Vidyatheertha Mahaswamigal Education Trust, from Tattvāloka, New No.76, Old No.138, Eldams Road, Teynampet, Chennai 600 018, India. Printed by R. Karthik Narayan, at Multivista Global Pvt. Ltd., No.43, Vandalur-Kelambakkam Road, Pudupakkam 603 103, India. Editor: Sarala Panchapakesan.

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Jagadguru Speaks...



Develop *Bhakti*

The easiest *sadhana* to obtain the grace of God is *bhakti*. Through *bhakti* itself, one can attain God. By *bhakti* is meant an unconditional love for God.

Nine types of *bhakti* are mentioned in *Srimad Bhagavata Purana*-

श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनम् ।

अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम् ॥

Any of these nine types of *bhakti* can bestow God's grace upon a devotee.

Parikshit Maharaja attained the ultimate goal of life by *sravana* or listening to *Srimad Bhagavatam*. Sage Shuka, the

narrator of *Bhagavatam* to Parikshit, attained God by *keertana*, or recounting the glories of God.

Prahlada attained the realm of God by *smarana* or thinking of him at all times.

Goddess Lakshmi attained God by *padasevana*, or constant service at his lotus feet. Maharaja Prithu attained the highest good by *archana*, or constantly worshipping God.

Akrura attained God by *vandana*, or always bowing to him. Hanuman attained God by *dasya*, or becoming his eternal servant.

Arjuna attained God by *sakhya* or constantly entertaining a friend's love for him, and Emperor Bali attained God by *atmanivedana*, or offering himself to Him.

Though the forms of *bhakti* engaged in by these devotees are different, the grace of God was of the same degree.

विष्णोस्तु श्रवणे परीक्षिदभवद्वैयासकिः कीर्तने
 प्रह्लादः स्मरणे तदङ्घ्रिभजने लक्ष्मीः पृथुः पूजने ।
 अक्रूरस्त्वभिवादाने च हनुमान् दास्ये सखित्वेऽर्जुनः
 सर्वस्वात्मनिवेदने बलिरभूत्कैवल्यमेषां समम् ॥

Among the nine forms of *bhakti* as enumerated above, let everyone resort to *bhakti* in one form or the other, and attain the goal of life.



Dear Sir,

The article, '*Good Health and Spiritual Progress*' (November 2023 issue) is very informative and greatly applicable in our daily lives, especially where the intake of food is concerned.

Food does play a vital role in connecting the body and mind. A *sattvic* (vegetarian – nutritious) diet brings peace to the mind, whereas a *rajasic* or *tamasic* diet agitates the mind, making it restless and leading to negative and toxic thoughts.

Similarly, as clearly mentioned in the article, the correct amount of sleep and exercise also play a vital role in maintaining the balance of good health, helping us make progress in the spiritual journey of life.

Asmi Mehta
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Dear Sir,

The article “*Lord Subrahmanya and the Shanmata*” (November 2023 issue) is superbly presented by the author.

A note on the popular hymn on Subrahmanya, the *Skanda Sashti Kavacham*, could have been

included, bringing out its benefits for the general information of readers.

R. Subramanian
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Dear Sir,

The regular articles in *Tattvāloka* on '*Wisdom for Self-improvement*' comprising of pearls from *Bhagavad Gita* bear an intense and marked effect on the minds of the readers.

There is an excellent interpretation of the *Gita sloka* 18-53 in the October 2023 issue, on detachment of ego sense and the abnormal possessive sense.

This reminds us of how Sri Ramana Maharishi has compressed the entire Vedānda into four words, *deham*, *naham*, *hoham* and *soham*, by pointing out that the body is not 'I'.

Swami Vivekananda has expressed the same truth as 'You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual. There is no other teacher, but your own soul'.

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Note from the Editor: We welcome brief letters from readers by way of comments and suggestions on articles published in *Tattvāloka*. Please send to info@tattvaloka.com. The Editors have the discretion to publish the letters, with editing changes wherever required.





Whoever Takes the Son...

What you hold as most dear in your heart will have a profound effect on your consciousness.

There are many stories we read but then there are some that remain etched on our minds forever. Here is one such story.

An ultra-wealthy man shared his passion for art collecting with his devoted young son. Together they

travelled around the world, adding fine treasures to their collection.

But then the world went to war, and the young man left to serve his country. After only a few short weeks, his father received a telegram that pulled the earth beneath his feet. It read that

his son had been killed while carrying a fellow soldier to safety.

His days became longer and life unbearable as he grieved and mourned the death of his son.

One day on a snowy winter morning, someone knocked on his door. It was a soldier with a large package in his hand.

“I am the one your son died rescuing,” the visitor said and handed the gift to the old man. “I am not much of an artist but I wanted to give you this gift.”

The man unwrapped the package and broke into tears. Unlike the Picasso and Monet on the wall, this would be an unremarkable painting to everyone else in the world, but him. There it was, his son's portrait. Those kind eyes, that youthful appearance, as if he would walk out of the frame

any moment and give his father a hug. As days passed, this became his most prized possession.

The following spring, the old man passed away after a brief illness. As per his Will, his estate and everything in it was readied for auction. Various rich enthusiasts, loaded with pride and possessions, were eyeing different pieces of art from his vast collection.

“The Will explicitly states that the auction must begin with the deceased's most favourite painting,” the auctioneer announced. “The portrait of his son.”

A hush fell over the room. In the world of the art collectors, no one in their sane mind would want a painting by an unknown artist.

“Who will open the bidding with \$100?” the auctioneer said.

No one responded and a minute later the attendees shifted in their chairs impatiently. They told him to first auction the other famous pieces, but the auctioneer reminded them that the portrait of the son had to be sold first.

Finally, a friend of the old man stepped forward, “I knew the boy. He died serving the country. So, I’d like to bid \$100 for the portrait.”

“I have a bid for \$100,” called the auctioneer. “Will anyone go higher?”

“Going once,” he hollered after several moments of silence. “Going twice. Gone.” And the gavel fell.

Cheers filled the room as some in the relieved audience said that it was time to get on with the real auction.

“The auction is over,” the auctioneer announced to the stunned audience with the executor of the Will standing next to him.

“The Will unequivocally states,” he continued. “Whoever takes the son, gets it all.”

Discover Inner Peace

While this story is of value of faith, I felt it is the same with life, too. The one who discovers that reservoir of inner peace, finds everything else automatically.

While there are various things and people we hold dear in life, the truth is that our actions are primarily driven by the object of our chief attachment. It is fame for some and wealth for others. It may be family for someone and health for another.

Most of us want all of these, and you have the right to pursue a life of ambition. But it helps to know that the quest for fleeting pleasures in a transient world does not bring lasting peace.

Bhagavad Gita (6.22) brings this out beautifully as:

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते
नाधिकं ततः ।
यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन
गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ॥
*yam labdhvā chāparam
lābham manyate
nādhikam tataḥ ।
yasmin sthito na duḥkhena
guruṇāpi vichālyate ॥*

The one established in that transcendental state [where their mind is yoked to the supreme consciousness] does not consider anything else to be more worthy of attainment. As a result, such a person remains steadfast even in the face of great adversity.

So what would you consider your greatest accomplishment? Or in other words, what do you hold most dear in your heart?

Whatever it may be, just remember it is going to have

a profound effect on your consciousness. The kind of things and people you will attract in the universe are directly influenced by the object of your chief attachment. Petty thoughts do not lead to great outcomes.

Therefore, if you wish to abide in a state of super consciousness, a state where you become extremely effective and efficient at whatever you undertake without losing your sense of peace, just ensure that your attachment leans towards the highest good for humanity.

It may take a while for this altruism to settle in your heart, but once it does, your life will never be the same again. For, a deeply spiritual intention is your only true anchor in the worldly ocean.

Om Swami





Sri Chandrasekhara

There is indeed a medicine that I know
To cure all diseases and heal all wounds
In Your Divine name and Form My Lord
I have found a cure for everything I want.

Earlier in my very own tears I was drowned
What all I carried and kept moving around
How can I ever remove all the ills I have
What will be my fate now life after life.

Hopeless was my state and pain unending
Having fallen into the trap laid by my senses
Bearing an unstable mind with impressions
Nothing more pitiable than living like this.

Your name unknowingly entered my life
Nothing I felt in that moment most divine
Trapped I was by my senses and worldliness
Never knowing the magnitude of what I had.

With time Your kindness made me realise
What wealth I was blessed with by My Lord
Not a moment now I could leave Your Feet
Some memory from past tied me unseen.

Nothing is the same after holding Your Feet
No hurt or memory of any sin I have within
Everywhere I see it is only You My Master
Now I wonder how did I every feel separate.

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः
 सङ्गवर्जितः ।
 निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः
 स मामेति पाण्डव ॥५५॥

*mat-karma-kṛin mat-
 paramo mad-bhaktah
 saṅga-varjitah
 nirvairah sarva-
 bhūteṣhu yaḥ sa mām
 eti pāṇḍava*

Bhagavad Gita (11-55)

Wisdom for Self-Improvement-27



Whosoever does all his works for Me (*mat-karmakrit*), makes Me his supreme goal (*mat-paramah*), becomes My devotee (*mad-bhaktah*), is devoid of all attachments (*sanga-varjitah*) and, in respect of all beings, is free from enmity (*nirvairah*), will come to Me, assures the Lord at end of the 11th chapter of *Bhagavad Gita*, after He has shown His cosmic personality to Arjuna.

This *sloka*, as also 9.27, enjoys a unique status in the *Gita* because each of them incorporates a summary of *Gita* by encompassing all the five facets of its total messages.

Each *sloka* lists the five facets in its own style. *Gita*'s teachings are five, which are listed in this *sloka*. One can relate them to everyone's experiences, and Arjuna's dejection and collapse on the battlefield. These are:

1. Over-excitement, positively or negatively, and getting carried away by extreme attachment. This is exactly what happened to Arjuna on the battlefield.

2. Anger or turbulence in one's relationships. *Kripaya parayavishhtah* (1-28) says the *Gita* about Arjuna.

3. One's own plan for any occasion, without realising the instrument that fructifies the plan. '*Etan na hantum icchāmi*,' says Arjuna (1-35).

4. One's status of total dilemma as to what to do next. '*Dharma sammūḍhacetah*' (2-7), says the *Gita* about Arjuna.

5. Desperately in need of help. '*Yac-creyasya nishcitam*

brūhi,' says Arjuna in *sloka* 2-7.

Krishna's answers to the above are respectively:

1. Control your senses and curb your attachment. This is *yoga-sadhana*.

2. Be equanimous. Learn *brahma-bhava*.

3. Remember there is God above. You are not the doer. So have an undivided faith in Him.

4. Your work has to be done with a *yajna-bhavana*, with no expectations.

5. Surrender to God *in toto*.

These five are together stated in the *Gita sloka* 11-55 as follows:

1. *sanga-varjitah*
2. *nirvairah*
3. *madbhaktah*
4. *matkarmakrit*
5. *matparamah*

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Bliss of the Self-15

The genuine seeker is not swayed by names and forms, or by the affairs of the world. He is looking for the divine behind them.



In the 13th verse of his work '*Forty verses on Reality*' (*Ulladu Narpadu*) Sri Ramana Maharshi points out that the Self that is awareness, the 'I AM', alone is Real.

Kathopanishad says, 'one who focuses his attention relentlessly on one's beingness, will awaken into the truth of *Brahman*'.

The meaning of the *mahavakya* 'That art Thou' (*Tat Tvam Asi*) itself is the realised state of the supreme principle (*tattvabhāvam*). One's own existence, which is experienced as 'I am', is *Brahman*. To know this, one has to look within and investigate the individual-'I' (*asmitvam*). Then, it will reveal itself as the infinite.

Names and Forms

The *mantra* 'Who am I?' is the *mahavakya* that reveals the Truth. Enquiry here begins with 'I' and ends with 'I'.

Rather than simply abiding in 'what is', the Self, knowing this only with the mind is sheer ignorance. Even this ignorance is illumined by that beingness only. When the cloud is seen to cover the sun, the fact remains that the very existence of the cloud is known only by the light of the sun! In the same way, even to say that 'I am ignorant', the light of consciousness is required to do so.

Ornaments like bangles and chains are made of gold. A woman with likes and dislikes towards particular names, forms and patterns, may say 'I want a chain, not a bangle'; 'this chain is beautiful'; 'that one is not good'; and so on.

But a goldsmith or a thief who sees *only* the gold will give no specialty for any particular item. Their concern is only with the basic stuff - gold. This is

what is called *kanakaika mahabuddhi*: the knowledge of seeing only the gold. One whose intention is to steal gold has no desire for the patterns of the ornaments, since the substance, the gold alone, is significant for him.

In the same way, a seeker who aims at seeing only the reality is not interested either in names and forms, or in the affairs of the world. He is looking for the divine behind them.

Those for whom worldly affairs are of utmost importance will not have the courage to declare that the world is illusory, and that *Brahman* alone is real. Worldliness is the companion of ignorance. The seeker, who no more relies upon the dealings of the world, who depends only on reality, will find no difficulty in denying the names and forms and accepting only the truth behind them.

Such anchorage in truth is revealing intelligence, or what is known as the *vyavaharika buddhi*. This is indeed courage - *dhairya*. He can declare with conviction that ornaments with various names and forms are illusory; gold alone is real.

In worldly affairs, seeking solutions for problems is inevitable. Chaotic and confusing situations demand, or rather compel, actions. With such a compulsion, one will not have the courage to declare that problems are unreal, and the knowledge needed to solve them, is ignorance. For, we attempt to find solutions to our personal problems with the help of a variety of knowledge, thoughts.

But the seeker who aims at absolute release ascertains that all problems are merely of the mind, and so instead of attempting to solve them, he renounces them

internally by giving up the thoughts about them. Rather, instead of solving them, he dissolves them!

Maharishi's Parable

When the *jiva* that has been sleeping since time immemorial wakes up from its slumber, the reality that is un-born, un-sleeping, undreaming, and non-dual (*ajam anidram asvapnam advaitam*) shines forth, says the great Acharya Gowdapada. It is such an enlightenment that is the goal of a *mumukshu*, not an external solution to problems.

Sri Ramana Maharishi once narrated a story: "Two people are sleeping in a room. One of them dreams that all his property is being stolen by thieves and screams, 'Catch the thief!' Should the friend who hears this go and try to catch the thief? If he wakes up the sleeping man, there is neither the thief nor theft.

He will see that he alone exists in the room.

In the same way, when the ultimate truth dawns, one will clearly realise that all these worldly problems are unreal, and that he has never been trapped in the sorrowful world. This is the direct way."

It is sheer ignorance to have attachments and aversions to names and forms without knowing the one behind them, as it brings misery. The one non-dual awareness appears as the world when seen through the ludicrous glass of the senses. This error in perception lies behind our attachments and aversions.

According to Vedanta, neither knowing nor non-knowing is *jnana*. *Jnana* is to transcend knowledge and ignorance and to abide as the Self which is pure awareness. Such abidance

alone brings the peace that everyone cherishes.

When the desire for sense objects is merely controlled, it may subside, but the traces of desire will continue to linger in the mind.

However, in the presence of the supreme truth, this *vishayarasa* also will vanish completely. The fountain-head of all *rasas* is the *param*, the *Atman* that shines as 'I'. This is why *vishayarasa* gets sublimated only when it comes into contact with the source of all *rasas*.

Even if one gains an intellectual understanding that the world is an illusion, as long as there is any trace of *vishayarasa* left, one cannot help being swayed by the experiences of the world. In order to be free from the habit of extroversion, one has to develop relentless withdrawing from the sensory plane, and should make the mind habitually

rest in the essence behind all names and forms.

Sri Ramana Maharishi loved a story connected to this that comes in *Vasudeva mananam*.

One person took to Vedanta *vichara* under a Guru after a protracted span of family life. However much he heard the teaching, his mind refused to get established in the Self. When investigated, it was amusingly found that a she-buffalo to which he was attached in his former life was appearing in his thoughts again and again. This was the distraction.

The Master told him to meditate on the buffalo as *Brahman*. That is to ignore the name and form of the animal and meditate on the essence the *asti, bhati, priyam*.

By doing so, that seeker soon realised that the essence behind the vision of the buffalo is his own

awareness, the 'I AM'. He realised *Brahman*.

It may also be said that the various objects of perception are the externalised manifestations of the thoughts in the mind. Just as gold gets transformed into various ornaments, mind manifests in various names and forms - as man or woman, name or fame, relatives or nations. As the mind is nothing but the power of the *Atman*, all these are nothing but the *Atman*.

The stuff with which these various names and forms are made of is the Self. This *Chit*, the *Atman* is the truth. All emotions are like bubbles and waves that rise up in the ocean.

Pure awareness is the water. *Salila eko drashta advaito bhavati*, says the *Sruti*.

He who knows that water alone exists, sees water

alone even when he sees the waves and bubbles; such a one gets established in *advaita*. He will not stir from the essence by the storms of temptations or miseries. He is a *sahajatma sthita* - one who is established naturally in his own Self. His *samadhi* is not a result of a technique, but is his very awareness (*bodha*).

Observing everything, the yogi moves about deeply involved in the world. Yet he is ever aware of *Brahman*. It is like the dancing village girl who, while dancing in abandon to the music, not for a moment loses her attention on the pitcher on her head, says sage Vidyaranya.

Nochur Sri
Venkataraman



(Edited excerpts from the author's book 'Swatmasukhi')

Our Dharma to prevent Aatma Hatya, Suicide



Our *Sastras* have thrown light on how to understand and cope with death. The passing away of very old people is considered a normal death. Involuntary death in an accident or during natural disaster is tragic, but we eventually cope with it.

But, *atma hatya*, suicide, is an entirely different category. It is *dur-maranam*, unnatural and wrong. It is the *dharma* of everyone

connected with an individual with suicidal tendencies and risks, to do their best to prevent it.

We do keep getting news of suicides from newspapers, social media, and other sources. We prefer not to generally go deeper into it, and tend to avoid the subject. Many are even uncomfortable discussing it.

But, we must. Suicide is a waste of valuable, national

human capital. A life cut short, by own self, without actualising the inherent human potential.

Life is a divine gift, *bhagavad prasad*. The individual is not the 'owner' of his/her life. He/she is only it's trustee.

Most suicide is a *tamasic* act, out of a sense of failure, fear, helplessness, and, finally, hopelessness. Sometimes, it is a *rajasic* act, out of anger and rage.

The Government data shows that there were 160,000 deaths by suicide reported in 2021. This is probably an underestimate, as many cases are not reported to the authorities.

It is estimated that for every actual suicide, 20 may have attempted it. Fortunately, some survive. It is also estimated that about 60 people are affected by each suicide. If saved in

their first attempt of suicide, the overwhelming majority do not attempt it again.

There are many non-government organisations working on suicide preventive actions. In the recent meeting of global leaders under G-20 in India, the issue of mental health and suicide prevention strategies was recognized and discussed for the first time.

Action Plan

Let us now look at our own suitable Action Plan as caring citizens.

One, be alert to signals of prolonged dissatisfaction and unhappiness in any member of your nuclear family. Converse with that member and draw the person out. Talking to trusted family members can bring clarity and hope.

Two, if necessary, get expert help of a psycho-

logist. Prevent falling into depression.

Three, offer similar suggestion and help to families of persons at some risk of suicidal thoughts known to you.

Four, if your child is at school, attend the Parent-Teachers Meetings and suggest to the teachers to identify such students in their classes. Share your experiences and useful counselling contacts.

Fifth, check with your domestic help, driver and others, as well as at your workplace, whether their family members are in adequate mental health. If any issues, help them. Poor mental health in the family of a person closely associated or known to you is not life-threatening for you, but it can be for that person. Sixth, try to create awareness of this issue among your contacts.

There are reports of tragic suicides by some intelligent, aspiring students in competitive coaching centres. The parents and other elders must counsel students with such tendencies and advise them to explore the many career options.

We cannot bring life back to a person who has died by suicide, but it is our *dharma* to save lives at risk. Human life is precious. Let us conserve our population, keep it healthy, alive, and make it more productive.

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The Six Great Verses on Lord Vishnu

Soaked in devotion, the *Shatpadi Stotram* is a hymn showing surrender to the Supreme Power

It is Adi Sankara's genius that he segments the *jnana marga* at two levels: *para vidya*, or higher knowledge where the primary concern is the metaphysical comprehension of the Absolute, and *apara vidya*, where he gives prime importance to *bhakti*, prayer,

and surrender as part of preparatory steps to move from the lower to higher knowledge.

Among the several evocative *stotras* that Bhagavatpada composed on various deities for climbing this spiritual ladder, *Bhaja Govindam* and *Shatpadi Stotram*, both on

Mahavishnu, figure as the foremost.

While being a great exponent of *advaita Vedanta*, Sri Sankara shows deep devotion to Vishnu, and he expresses this in exquisite literary beauty in six verses in the *Shatpadi Stotram*. It is a beautiful hymn with lilting notes that conveys the high principles of living in a simple, easily understandable language.

Shatpadi Stotram is a prayer to the omnipresent Vishnu, with whom the Acharya builds a devotional relation so as to pour our heart to Him without any reservation or hesitation.

Remove My Pride

The *Stotram* begins with the prayer, *avinayam apanaya Vishno*. O Lord Vishnu! Please remove my lack of humility, subdue my mind, and control the mind's ceaseless pursuit of worldly pleasures.

The opening prayer is thus to quell one's pride, or remove the *avinaya*.

Vinaya is humility and *avinaya* is the opposite, non-humility, *ahamkara*, arrogance, impertinence, rudeness, and lack of consideration for other's feelings. *Apanaya* means leading away for the purpose of destruction.

The prayer is to extinguish the pride, stemming from one's learning, material possessions, status or such transitory accomplishments.

This echoes what the philosopher-king Bhartruhari had said in one of his brilliant verses. When I knew very little, I became like an intoxicated elephant thinking that I am omniscient, I know everything. But when I mingled with great and noble persons, I understood what a fool I am!

He adds, *vidya vinayena sobhate*, knowledge gains beauty will of humility as its ornament.

Restraint on Material Pleasures

The next prayer is *vishaya mrugatrushnam*, Oh, Vishno, control my interests in worldly pleasures.

Sri Sankara compares the humans' incessant and unquenchable interest in acquiring material possessions as the means to happiness, to a desert mirage.

The allusion is to a herd of deer (*mruga*) that chases the imaginary water on desert sands created by the optical illusion to satiate their hunger (*trushna*). The deer keeps on chasing as the illusion beckons it further and further, before the deer drops dead due to exhaustion.

Sri Sankara provides the same view as an advice in *Bhaja Govindam*, “*mudha*

jahihi dhanagama trushnam....”, O fool! Leave off the desire for accumulation of wealth; instead create in the mind thoughts about Reality, devoid of passion.

The next prayer in *Shatpadi Stotram* is to increase our compassion quotient, or *karunya*, for all beings - *bhuthadayam vistaraya*.

Sri Krishna says in *Bhagavad Gita* (16.2) that *daya* or compassion is innate to the one who is born inheriting divine traits.

Maharishi Gautama lists in *Gautama Dharma Sutras* that compassion for all beings as the first of the eight *atma gunas* to be cultivated by every individual. The *Yoga Sutras* too enjoin compassion as a means to mental peace.

Bhutadaya, or universal compassion, is a noticeable quality of sages. Realised gurus are known to be tender-hearted, trans-

ending caste or creed, and remaining as *sarva bhuta daya parah*, compassionate towards all living beings.

Sri Sankara had practised this *bhuta daya* by dedicating his every action for universal welfare, or *loka kshema*.

There is a popular *sloka* that runs as '*Sruti smriti puranam alayam karunalayam, namami Bhagavatpada Sankaram loka sankaram*', meaning, while being the repository of the knowledge of Vedas, *sastras* and *puranas*, the Acharya was *karunalayam*, or compassion-incarnate.

Extolling Vishnu

In the following verse, the Acharya extols Sripati (Vishnu) as *Divyadhunee makarande parimala paribhoga Sacchidanande*.

I bow to the lotus like feet of the Lord of Lakshmi, of which the nectar is the divine celestial river Ganga, and whose fragrance leads

to the enjoyment of eternal bliss, *sacchidananda*, and by which the fears and pains of the worldly existence get cut off. I bow (*vande*) to the feet that uproots the fear of birth and re-birth, *bhava bhaya kheda chidhe*.

This is a delightful verse, with soft and rhyming words, such as *makarande, anande, aravinde* and *vande*. One is tempted to keep on repeating this wordplay in his mouth.

In the next verse, Sri Sankara makes a subtle departure from the strong emphasis of the *advaitic* principle of Oneness of *jiva* and *brahman*.

He says, O Lord! Even though there is no difference between us (as I am a part of You), I belong to You, but not *viceversa*. Just like the waves and the ocean, waves belong to the ocean, but the ocean does not belong to the waves, *Samudro hi tarangaha kvachana samudro na tarangaha*.

This is an interesting point usually associated with the Vaishnava philosophy of *jivas* being distinctly different from the supreme power, personified by Lord Narayana.

This is, however, a superficial contradiction to the *advaita* standpoint. While waves look to be on their own on the surface and thus different from the ocean, deep in the ocean, there are no waves, which merge with the ocean. The several waves on the surface are thus illusory, just like the supreme power manifesting as multiple *jivas* due to the power of the *maya*.

The verses that follow signify total surrender to the divine. “O Supreme Lord, Who protects this earth by various *avatars* (incarnations) such as *Matsya* (fish), I am overcome with the fear of the cycle of life, death and re-birth, and therefore I am worthy of being saved by You.

The sixth verse is again melodious with lilting

names of the Lord: *Damodara gunamandira sundara-vadanaravinda Govinda*. O, the one who is the very Mandara mountain that can help in churning the ocean of *samsara*, please remove all the great fears from me.

The final verse is soaked in the surrender *bhava*, *Narayana Karunamaya saranam karavani tavakau charanau*, with the fervent appeal that, may this six versed *stotram*, which is like the six-legged honey bee, forever reside in my mouth.

Countless devotees have vouchsafed that reciting and contemplating on the *Vishnu Shatpadi Stotram* brings deep benefit of understanding the aim of human birth.

The prayer is a great way to increase devotion towards Lord Narayana and gain the Lord's mercy.

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The Dharma of Working Women

The solution to many conflicts that working women face is to take recourse to the traits of modesty and 'ideal femininity'

In a recent social media post of a corporate event at a major firm in our country, there was the picture of a young woman executive lighting the traditional oil lamp clad in a short pant and with shoes on, with many onlookers,

men and women, cheering her.

As a response to the above, someone posted in a rather agonising tone, how our cultural values have declined so sharply to see a woman in such a disrespectful show of

attire lighting a lamp, which stands for tradition and auspiciousness.

This may just be an example of a marked change in the attitudes and lifestyle of working women witnessed in the current times.

Not long ago, the system of working in an office where men and women toil on an equal footing was unknown in our culture. The changing landscape is founded on the premise of providing equal opportunity to women to work and earn.

It is easy to recognise how western influences have brought to our society many pernicious practices on the part of working women. Apart from decline in family values, there are instances of many women managers displaying an attitude of aggression, and ego born out of newfound financial independence. Many married women are even

seen as reluctant to display symbols of their marital status, such as *mangalsutras*, as it is not 'cool' to do so in an office environment.

In a recent legal case in a High Court, the female HR head of a firm was accused of improper conduct of engaging in a live-in relationship with a male staffer recruited by her, and younger in age. Aghast at the conduct, the Court made some thought-provoking observations on how such lifestyle is incompatible with our ethos and culture.

Head and Heart

Business firms tend to employ more women in their effort to achieve diversity at the workplace.

Women in general are regarded as having a more cooperative, participatory style of leading.

While men tend to have a “command and control

style,” more task-oriented and directive, women are considered more democratic. Men provide direction for their employees, while women encourage employees to find their own direction.

Most male managers tend to let others know about their successes and strengths, while women are generally modest or silent about their own accomplishments. There is a saying that men change the world, while women improve it.

At the same time, women are generally considered emotional and soft-hearted, and this trait lands them in conflict in certain roles requiring toughness. Women tend to take calculated risks, while business firms may at times need to choose risky options. Many women are also emotional, and they tend to take things personally, making them victims of mental health issues.

The challenges that female managers face at workplace ranging from systemic biases and cultural expectations are often mentioned in research findings. Increasingly, many women managers tend to respond to such situations by working harder so as to 'prove' themselves as equal to male colleagues.

Valmiki Ramayana elaborates the ability of a woman to transform others by virtue of her conduct and inner powers gained as *pativrata* and righteous living. This occurs in the conversation between Sita and Anasuya, the wife of the famous sage Atri, soon after Rama and Sita start their *vanvas*.

Anasuya, literally meaning one free from envy and malice, was endowed with *tapas sakti*, and she asks Sita to describe her companionship with Rama.

Sita mentions that every individual, every being, and every creature had the feminine principle inherent in its composition. She says that though there are masculine and feminine roles acting on the world stage, all are basically feminine when their strength, emotions, and attitudes are considered.

Conflicts with Motherhood Role

It is well-known that a key dilemma for many working women is to choose between furthering their career and motherhood.

Swami Vivekananda had famously said that the ideal womanhood of our country is motherhood— “that marvellous, unselfish, all suffering, ever-forgiving mother.”

The *Manava Dharma-Sutra* states that motherhood is ten lakh times more

important than that of a teacher (*upadhyaya*), a lakh times more important than that of a preceptor (*acharya*), and a thousand times more important than that of a father.

The basic *dharma* of working women is to reinforce their role as mothers, leaving all other considerations of working life as secondary.

The woman is responsible for the maintenance of utmost discipline in the family. Her contacts with the child during the most formative period sets up the child's behaviour pattern. History shows that it is the women who have sustained the growth of societies and moulded the future of nations.

It is recognised that family-related career interruptions can undermine women's economic prospects. Women should regard such

interruptions as the catalyst to a more balanced life, outweighing any lost financial benefits.

On their part, business firms should be responsible corporate citizens, and be supportive of family life of their women workforce. With foresight, they should offer measures like flexible working hours aligned with individual needs, generous paid and unpaid maternity benefits, workload with due consideration of specific family demands of concerned women, and so on.

The firms should also put in place a facilitating mechanism for women to re-join the workforce after dropping out due to motherhood, with a culture of extending a supporting hand at all levels in the organisation to such returnees.

At the government level, it is desirable to offer

supporting fiscal incentives for business firms offering generous benefits to working women. This could be, for example, by way of additional tax deduction for amounts spent on the welfare of women staffers to further their motherhood responsibilities.

The society in general needs to start respecting educated women making a conscious choice to stay at home attending to their families' needs.

In sum, working women command respect and attention when they reinforce the fundamental traits of modesty and 'ideal femininity'.

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The Value of Wise Counsel

There is a case for seeking objective, level-headed advice in any crisis situation

We all know that war is not a solution to any problem. It will be in the best interest of humanity to avoid large scale death and destruction.

However, it is easier said than done. If the matter involves intricacies of *dharma* which seems to defy plain logic, it can be very difficult to arrive at the most desirable conclusion.

An instance from the *Mahabharata* highlights the importance of cool and calculated thinking, exploring every option before taking the extreme step.

When the Pandavas completed their period of exile and a year of remaining *inognito* as per the terms

agreed at the beginning, they discussed their future plans in the court of King Virata. The finest of men were on their side.

Though declaring war against the Kauravas was articulated by the majority, Sri Krishna brushed it aside. Instead, he suggested trying out peace talks with the Kauravas, despite knowing their vindictive nature which would trigger off the impending war.

Most of the warriors on the side of the Pandavas were deeply disappointed with Krishna's suggestion, but deep inside they knew that his decision must be justified, and they carried out his plan. The fact that the great war of Kurukshetra took place despite his counsel is another story.

Sane Counsel

This episode can serve as a guide when we are faced with testing times.

One can certainly do well, analyse any matter threadbare, weighing its pros and cons, before taking any extreme step.

Often, we notice in group discussions on any crisis situation, people bring up a lot of issues while voicing their opinions. While some participants voice their views every now and then, there are others who remain silent, biding their time. There are also others who prefer to take no stand, and remain the 'posters on the wall'.

At the end of heated discussions, the solution emerging based on the majority view may or may not be in the best interests of all concerned.

At such times, one privately wonders how it would be great to have some mature and appropriate counsel.

The finer points of the case involving human values, ethos, and circumstances, which often get overlooked, or not considered adequately in the heat of the moment before coming up with a decision that appeals to the masses, can be validated by a mature counsel well versed in *dharmic* aspects.

Analysing a given situation and arriving at a suitable decision can be a challenging task. It often takes a great mind and a kinder heart to chart out a course of action that will not swerve from the path of righteousness.

Such a level-headed approach can save heartaches, disappointments and losses to all the parties concerned, instead of everyone just hoping for the best and preparing for the worst!

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The Zen Tea Ritual

The ritual of drinking your tea mindfully begins with gratitude and prepares you to be in joy and serenity the whole day

The first thing most people do in the morning is no longer praying to God or looking at the sunrise or taking in some fresh air. Instead, they jump to their phones to see messages and social media updates.

Think about this, a beautiful night has ended, you have

got up well rested. Instead of beginning a calm morning with a sense of fulfillment and gratitude, you immediately rush, which would mean you are going to experience a rusted feeling and restlessness throughout the day.

Something as simple and normal as the act of drinking



tea as soon as you wake up in the morning could easily be one's sacred ritual.

This is in fact the quiet and mindful Zen tea ritual, *chado*. Many of us drink tea. When doing so, we may start responding to a message, or speaking over the phone, watching television, or maybe even reading a book.

The Zen tea ritual is practiced in almost all the Zen monasteries, worldwide. The idea is that you drink your tea mindfully, preparing it with joy and serenity, taking in the aroma, the taste and then savouring it, sip by sip. You drink so deliberately and so naturally, that you experience the tea touching your tongue and then your palate, then going down your esophagus and into your belly.

The Zen tea ritual begins with gratitude, to express how deeply thankful I am,

that I have the opportunity to sit in a peaceful place and have a cup of tea.

Tea with Meditation

When we start Zen meditation, *Zazen*, we normally bow. Not with full prostration. We just bow down on our own seats before we sit and then we turn around and bow to the people in front of us.

Everyone forms circles and has a cup.

As you mix the spices or prepare the tea ... when you pour, feel the pot lighten as the tea fills the cup.

When you are aware of each passing moment, you enjoy life more, and you are infused with it.

Observe and enjoy every aspect of the tea ritual. Serve each other. Take the cup close to your nose and inhale the aroma deeply, and take the first sip as if you are

drinking nectar. Make it a sacred ritual. Enjoy it, one sip at a time, and you can smile throughout.

The more you drink it mindfully, the more you can be in the present moment.

The lifestyle of many people is such that there is no time to do anything. Everything is done in a great rush, and we often come up with the excuse that we have no time. But if you take just five minutes and drink your tea mindfully, it would definitely lift your mood.

You should be this much in love with the little things you do in your life, to have that joy.

The Sham of Multi-tasking

Equally Zen-like is another action which I feel could benefit many people. Turn your phone off, or put it on flight mode or disconnect the data for half an hour. You

do not need to know most of the constant chatter you get on social media, anyway. It is not helping you grow, mentally, intellectually or spiritually, it is largely pointless, and is incessant.

Multi-tasking is one big sham. It is far better to do just one thing properly than have scattered energies trying to do multiple things.

My point is this. Have a ritual, something that you hold sacred to your heart, that you can do mindfully and from which you receive some energy. That's the tea ritual. But it could just be sitting down and playing a musical instrument too.

Do not rate, berate or calibrate your life, just celebrate it.

Om Swami



(Edited excerpts from the author's book 'Mind Full to Mindful')

Gomutra

the Benefits of Cow Urine



Our scriptures as well as Ayurveda have recognised the time-tested values of cow's urine

Cow is venerated as a sacred animal in our country, and *Go puja* is a part of daily rituals at many places.

Cow urine is used for many health problems in India since many centuries. Cow is seen as a sign of spirituality and hence cow urine is used in devotional practices as well.

Many readers may not be aware of the benefits of cow urine. It is notably rich in minerals like sodium, potassium, creatinine, phosphorus, and epithelial cells.

Cow urine is useful in the treatment of abdominal colic pain, bloating, constipation, indigestion. In the treatment of skin conditions such as

leukoderma, cow urine is added to an Ayurvedic powder to make a paste and applied over the skin patches. It is also useful in conditions like intestinal worms.

Therapeutic Value

Sushruta Samhita, *Ashtanga Sangraha* and other foundational Ayurvedic texts describe secretions of animal origin with innumerable therapeutic properties.

According to *Charaka Samhita*, cow urine is hot and pungent (*katu*) with salty taste, and it is anti-poisonous and anti-toxic. It has therapeutic value in treating several diseases, as it can penetrate up to the deep issues in the body.

Gomutra is not a toxic waste material. About 95 percent of it is water, 2.5 percent consists of urea, and the remaining is a mixture of minerals, salts, hormones and enzymes. It is noteworthy that many

research articles have been brought out in technical journals to support the therapeutic properties of *gomutra*.

Anti-microbial

Several studies have found good anti-microbial activity of cow's urine comparable with standard drugs, such as ofloxacin, cefpodoxime, and gentamycin. It is effective against a vast number of pathogenic bacteria. A study has conclusively shown the anti-fungal potential of cow's urine on clinical isolates.

The anti-microbial and germicidal properties of *gomutra* are due to the presence of urea, creatinine, aurum hydroxide, carbolic acid, calcium and manganese.

Its anti-cancer effect is established as due to uric acid's antioxidant property and allantoin. There are several case reports to support the same, as well as

practical feedback of cancer patients undergoing treatment.

Gomutra enhances immuno-competence in general, and efficiently repairs the damaged DNA in cancer therapy.

Key Medical Ingredient

Gomutra is used in several Ayurvedic treatments, such as purgation or *panchakarma* treatment, *svedana* or sweating treatment, and for external applications.

It is used to cure *arsha* (haemorrhoids), *gulma* (abdominal tumor), *kushta* (skin diseases), *kilasa* (a type of leprosy), *deepaneeya* (as a digestive stimulant), *vishaghna* (anti-toxic), and *krimighna* (wormicide).

In initial stages of liver disorders, bronchial asthma, and hypothyroidism, *gomutra* serves as an ingredient in Ayurvedic medicines.

Cow urine has a *kshara* quality. It helps to lower cholesterol deposition in tissues and inside of arteries, and in the early disintegration and excretion of lipid molecules.

Gomutra is also used extensively in *Rasasastra* for purification of ingredients, especially metals like iron, copper and mica that are added to herbs in the preparation of medicines.

Certain poisons can be refined and purified if soaked in *gomutra* for three days. For example, *dhatura* seeds with shell peeled off, are considered purified after soaking in *gomutra* for twelve hours. Cow urine can be used for purification of *guggul* which is used for treatment of abnormally high cholesterol levels.

It is also used for purification and detoxification of silver.

Precautions

There are several precautions followed in the preparation and usage of *gomutra*. There is a procedure for collection of *gomutra* for therapeutic use. The preferred time of collection is at dawn: The first and last part of the cow urine flow is discarded, and the middle part alone is collected for use.

Fresh cow urine is collected every day, and kept for use for a short period of 4 - 6 hours, after which it is discarded.

There are now commercial products in the form of distilled cow urine, and the distillate is bottled and sold as *Go Arka*. Such products can be stored for a period up to six months, subject to any stipulation by the manufacturer. Once opened, however, it is best to use *Go Arka* before four to six weeks, and discard thereafter.

Cow urine is used for treatment of diabetes under the guidance of Ayurvedic expert. The treatment is generally to start with three to four drops once or twice a day. After a week, the dosage is increased up to one spoon twice a day.

Contraindications

Gomutra treatment is not advised for those who are very lean or emaciated, or those suffering from fatigue or lack of sleep. It is avoided for children below 10 years.

There are many Ayurvedic medicines that contain *gomutra* as an ingredient, such as *Shiva gutika*, *Panchagavya ghrita*, *Maha Panchagavya ghrita*, *Gomutra-haritaki*, and *Mandoora vatakam*.

Yajna Material

Gomutra is considered a purifier and extensively used in the performance of *yajna*

and other purificatory rituals.

In fact, it is a mandatory ingredient in the *abhishekam* or ritual bath of deities, especially in ancient Siva temples.

Known as *Panchagavya* or *pancha-kavyam* (which literally means five cow-derivatives), it is a mixture prepared with five ingredients, viz. cow dung, cow urine, cow's milk, curd and ghee, in a prescribed ratio and then allowed to ferment.

There are inscriptions in many ancient temples recording that kings had gifted hordes of cows to temples especially to make *panchagavyam*.

Panchagavyam is known to have several health benefits for humans. For a healthy person, just half to one teaspoon is advised daily to be taken on empty stomach

as a *deha shuddikara* - cleaning and de-toxifying the body, and keeping the internal channels free from blockage and sluggishness.

For *kapha* body type persons, and those with high cholesterol, obesity, repeated respiratory allergies, and others, the dosage can be higher, based on doctor's advice.

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Sankara Giri, the New Landmark in Sringeri

A round up of key events at Sringeri

Many years ago, Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji had taken the sacred *sankalpa* to consecrate, on a hillock in Sringeri, a beautiful 32-foot granite statue of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada surrounded by figures of his four primary disciples, including Sri Suresvaracharya, the first Acharya of Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham.

This *sankalpa* was fulfilled on November 10, 2023 when a beautiful granite statue of Sri Bhagavatpada weighing 600 tonnes was readied with the *anugraha* of Mahaswamij in on a hillock about 2 kms

from the Sringeri Mutt precincts, which Sri Mahasannidhanam had named as Sankara Giri.

As part of the grand inauguration event, a number of *havans* were performed in the Sankara Giri premises during November 3 - 9, 2023, such as *Rakshoghna (रक्षोघ्न) Homa*, *Vastu Puja Homa*, *Navagraha Homa*, *Bhairava Homa*, *Narasimha Homa*, *Sharabha Salva (शरभसाळ्व) Homa*, *Pratikriya Shulini Durga Homa*, *Panchakshari Homa*, *Medha Dakshinamurti Homa* and *Anjaneya Homa*. Jagadguru Sri Sannidhanam graced the *purnhutis* of these *Homas*.

Sri Mahasannidhanam lighting a lamp
to inaugurate the 32 feet statue of
Jagadguru Sri Adi Sankara

December 2023 | Tattvaviloka



Sri Sannidhanam performing
archana to the Sri Adi Sankara





Ubhaya Jagadgurus after inaugurating the Adi Sankara statue



Sri Mahasannidhanam lighting a lamp to inaugurate the murti of Sri Vidyananda

On November 9, the day preceding the inauguration, Jagadguru Sri Vishushekaru Bharti Sannidhanam performed the consecration of Sri Anjaneya Swami at the Sankara Giri premises and offered worship.

On November 10, sacred waters from the Tunga river and the silver *murti* of Bhagavatpada (usually kept inside the Sharadamba temple) were brought in a procession from the Rajagopuram to Sankara Giri.

Jagadguru Sri Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sannidhanam both arrived at Sankara Giri and inaugurated the beautiful statue of Bhagavatpada by lighting a lamp. Sri Sannidhanam then performed *abhisheka*, *archana* and *mahamangalarati* from atop the 32-foot statue.

Sri Mahasannidhanam performed *mahamangalarati* to the silver *murti* placed at the base of the statue.

Sri Sankaracharya Stava (composed by Sri Mahasannidhanam) was chanted by scholars and devotees. Thereafter, the Jagadgurus inaugurated the statues of the four principal disciples, Sri Suresvaracharya, Sri Padmapadacharya, Sri Hastamalacharya and Sri Totakacharya on the circumambulatory path around Sri Bhagavatpada's *murti* on top of the hillock.

This was followed by inauguration of the statue of the 12th Acharya, Sri Vidyaranya Mahaswamiji, well-known for having founded the Vijayanagara empire and authored many great works including the commentaries for the four Vedas.

The Jagadgurus also inaugurated a state-of-the-art auditorium in the complex.

In the evening, Sri Sannidhanam once again

Sri Sannidhanam at the
Atirudra Yagashala



Sacred waters from the Tunga
river and the silver *vighra* of
Sri Adi Sankara being taken in
procession to Sankaragiri



went to Sankara Giri and inaugurated an amphitheatre featuring dancing water fountains. The Sankara Giri complex will also feature a museum and a library amongst other attractions.

Guru Vandana Sabha

At the *Guru Vandana Sabha* organised on the occasion in the evening, Sri VR Gowrishankar, CEO of Sringeri Mutt, paid rich tribute to the illustrious *Guru Parampara* of the Peetham, and how the Mutt was dedicated to the sustenance and propagation of *sanatana dharma* for more than 1200 years.

Nine eminent scholars who have learnt in the traditional manner, excelled and have also trained various disciples in Vedanta, were specially honoured and blessed by Sri Sannidhanam on the occasion with a silk-laced shawl, memento and a cash award of Rs 1 lakh.

The scholars are: 1. Mahamahopadhyaya Vidwan R Mani Dravid Shastri (Chennai), 2. Asthana Vidwan of Sringeri Math, Sri M. A. Nagaraja Bhat (Sringeri), 3. Vidwan Dendukuri Narayana Shastri (Vijayawada), 4. Vidwan Sri K. S. Maheshwaran Namboodiri (Chennai), 5. Vidwan Kuppa Vishwanatha Shastri (Tirupati), 6. Vidwan Sri Shrihari Shivram Dhaygude (Tirupati), 7. Vidwan Sri Ganesha Ishwara Bhat, 8. Vidwan K Kartik Sharma and 9. Vidwan PR Vasudevan Namboodiri.

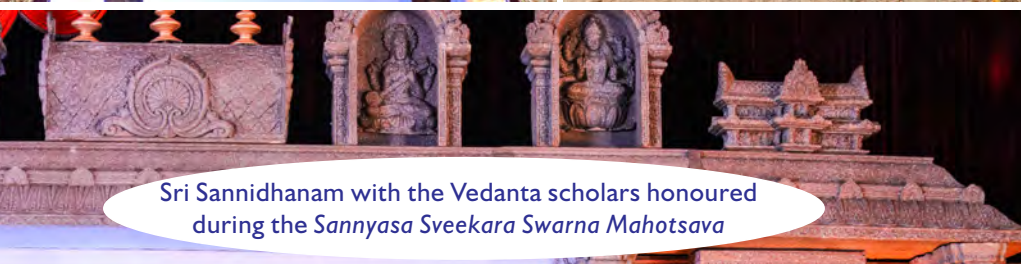
Asthana Sthapati Sri Sankara Sthapati briefly addressed the gathering and explained the nuances behind sculpting *murtis* as per the *Shilpa Sastras*. He gratefully recalled how he had been blessed by Sri Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sannidhanam who graced his *shilpa-shala* near Bengaluru during the 2015 *Vijaya Yatra*, and offered



Sri Sannidhanam releasing the Tattvāloka book 'The 108 Divine Names of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada'



Go Puja by Sri Sannidhanam on Bali Padya

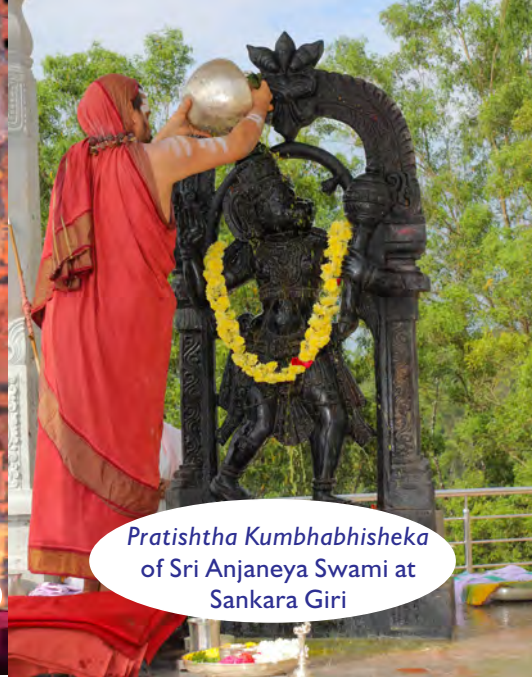


Sri Sannidhanam with the Vedanta scholars honoured during the Sannyasa Sveekara Swarna Mahotsava





Sri Sannidhanam releasing the Tattvāloka book 'Devi Sharada in Kashmir'



Pratishtha Kumbhabhisheka of Sri Anjaneya Swami at Sankara Giri



Sri Sannidhanam worshipping at Sri Adi Sankaracharya temple

worship to the stone block out of which Sri Adi Sankaracharya's statue had now been sculpted. The *Sthapati* declared that it was solely due to the consecration of the stone by the *sparsha* (touch) of the Jagadgurus that the statue had come out so well.

Sri Sundaram, the architect who had designed the Sankara Giri complex, spoke briefly with emotion.

They were honoured by Sri VR Gowrishankar along with various *Seva-kartas* including Ms. Anasuya of Bangalore who contributed to the construction at Sankara Giri.

Sri Sannidhanam then released a total of nine books on the occasion, including three books under '*Madhaviya Shankara Digvijaya Series*'. The Series 1 book is on the '*Divine Mother Aryamba*', Series 2 on '*Adi Sankaracharya, the Epitome of Excellence*', while Series 3 is '*Elevating Insights*'

containing *suktis*, or wise sayings included in the *Digvijaya* text.

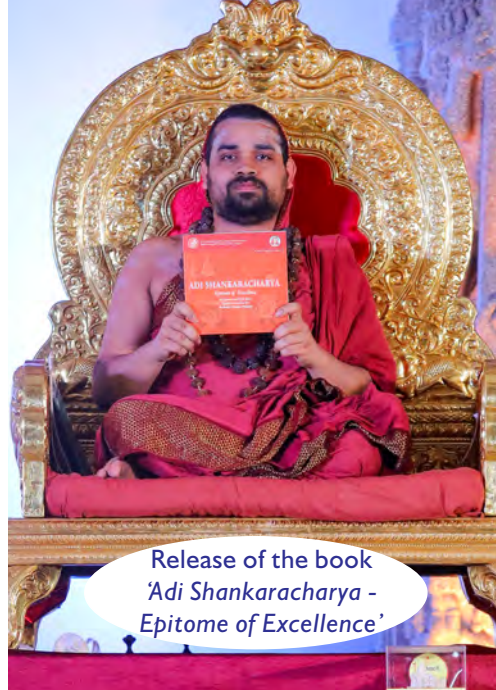
There was also the book, '*Bhaje Re Lokagurum - Volume 1*' containing the glory of Sri Mahasannidhanam as experienced by *sannyasis*, scholars and devotees, and another one '*Suvarna Bharati Series 1 - Vande Lokagurum*', an English translation of the Sanskrit video by Sri Sannidhanam as a tribute to his revered Guru.

Two books published by *Tattvaloka*, viz., '*The Divine Names of Sri Adi Sankara*' containing commentary on *Sri Sankaracharya Ashtottara Shatanamavali*, and '*Devi Sharada in Kashmir*' describing the historic consecration of Goddess Sri Sharada temple at Teetwal near Line of Control in Kashmir, were also released.

Sri Sannidhanam then blessed the audience with an *anugraha bhashanam*, with



Sri Sannidhanam releasing the Sankara Giri brochure



Release of the book 'Adi Shankaracharya - Epitome of Excellence'



Sri Sannidhanam releasing the first book in the Suvarna Bharati series, Vande Lokagurum



Sri Sannidhanam releasing the first book in the Bhajare Lokagurum series

the opening comment on how the day of inauguration of Sankara Giri was also the sacred day of the commencement of the 50th year of Sri Mahasannidhanam embracing *sanyasa ashrama* at the hands of the illustrious Jagadguru Sri Abhinava Vidya Tirtha Mahaswamikal.

The very name of Sri Mahasannidhanam fills everyone's heart with respect due to the Jagadguru's distinguished scholarship and *tapas*, and his various activities towards *dharma prachara*. The revered Guru has chosen to name the hillock where the *murti* has been consecrated as 'Sankara Giri'.

The essence of our *sanatana dharma* is contained in one of these two aspects: to live as a *satpurusha* engaged in *paropakara*, and to become a recipient of the grace of the Supreme Power.

The foundation of this world is *dharma* and the life-force of our *sanatana dharma* is the *advaita siddhanta* of the *Upanishads*. As we stand in front of the 32-foot high *murti* of Sri Bhagavatpada inaugurated today, we feel a sense of humility, and gratitude to him for having taught us the path to welfare.

Also, as we stand in front of the statue, we see the vast sky and space - the *akasa* beyond the *murti*. *Akasa* is expansive and all-encompassing - how many planets, stars, etc. are contained in it!

Likewise, the *advaita siddhanta* includes all – the *tattva*, *marga* and *sampradayas* within *sanatana dharma*. Sri Bhagavatpada had reconciled and explained that all philosophical schools have their place, and they are correct in explaining certain



Sri Sannidhanam at the Sahasrachandi Yagshala



Ritviks at the Sahasrachandi Mahayaga

philosophical aspects. *Advaita siddhanta*, the all-encompassing philosophy of the *Upanishads*, is akin to the *akasa* that contains all the planets and stars.

Bhagavatpada had instructed that the *Paramatma chaitanya* that we worship in all the forms of *devatas* are one and the same. By instructing thus, he had showed all devotees the right path.

Many books have been released on this occasion. One of the books released is based on the '*Suktis*' in the *Madhaviya Shankara Digvijaya*. These *suktis* are priceless words of wisdom embedded by the poet in between the central story.

One such *sukti* is नो देवतासु जडिमा जडिमा मनुष्ये It means that inertness does not lie in the *murti* that is worshipped, but only in the minds of the worshipper.

If you let go of the inertness of your mind and see the *murti* with devotion, you will perceive the *murti* as the all-pervading Supreme. If you see it as a mere inert *murti*, you will not benefit in any way.

Another book released is about Sri Adi Sankara, the novelty of the book being a compilation of the personality, virtues and character of Sri Adi Sankara with *Madhaviya Shankara Digvijaya* as its basis. Around 50 relevant verses have been compiled in the book with an explanation of the context highlighting Bhagavatpada's virtues.

To quote one verse, when the king of Kerala came to meet young Sri Sankara at Kalady and offered him costly gifts, He told the king:

नो हिताय मम हाटकमेतद्देहि
नस्तु गृहवासिजनाय ।
ईहितं तव भविष्यति शीघ्रं
याहि पूर्णमनसेत्यवदत्तम् ॥

'I am a *brahmachari* and do not need any wealth. Distribute it to the people of the land who are in need.'

This highlights the wisdom of Sri Sankaracharya even at a very young age.

Pattabhisheka day of Sri Mahasannidhanam

The 34th anniversary of the day marking the ascendance to Sri Sharada Peetham at Sringeri of Sri Mahasannidhanam was celebrated on November 2, 2023 (*Ashwayuja Krishna Panchami*).

The Ubhaya Jagadgurus had *darshan* at the temple of Goddess Sharadamba. On this auspicious day, a *Sahasra Narikela Homa* was performed, and Sri Sannidhanam witnessed the *puṇahuti*.

Sannyasa Sveekara Swarna Mahotsava

As stated earlier, the day of November 10, 2023

(*Ashwayuja Krishna Dvadashi*) marks the commencement of the 50th year of *sannyasa* of Sri Mahasannidhanam.

Sri Sannidhanam has resolved that the entire year beginning the current month till next year (Nov. 2023 to Oct 2024) is to be observed with various Vedic rituals, *dharmic* activities for the welfare of mankind, cultural events and charitable activities.

As part of the *Mahotsava* and the inauguration, an *Ati Rudra Mahayaga* took place during October 30 to November 10, and *Sahasra Chandi Mahayaga* during November 6 -10. These two events comprising of *Siva Aradhana* and *Ambika Aradhana* took place as part of the *Panchayatana Devata Aradhana*. Sri Sannidhanam undertook the *sankalpa* and graced the *puṇahutis* of both these *Mahayagas* that involved 121 and 100 *ritwiks* respectively.

Earlier, *Sahasra Modaka Ganapati Homa* took place on October 28 as part of *Mahaganapati Aradhana*. *Mahavishnu Aradhana* and *Surya Aradhana* would take place during the forthcoming *Margashira* and *Magha* months respectively.

Sri Suresvaracharya Jayanti Utsava

The day following *Vijayadashami*, the concluding day of *Sharan Navaratri*, is the *Jayanti* (birth) day of Jagadguru Sri Suresvaracharya. The Acharya was the foremost disciple of Sri Adi Sankara, who anointed him as the first *Peethadhipati* of Sri Sringeri Peetham. The *Jayanti* day also coincides with the *Rathotsava* and *Addapallaki Utsava* during *Navaratri*.

The *Jayanti* this year was celebrated on October 25, 2023 in an elaborate manner with *Shatarudra Abhisheka* at the *adhishtanam* of Sri

Suresvaracharya, with Sri Sannidhanam attending the *Mahamangalarati*.

In the evening, at a Jayanti Sabha event, Sri Sannidhanam explained how, amongst the four primary disciples of Sri Adi Sankara, Sri Suresvaracharya held a unique place. He said while the other three disciples, Sri Hastamalakacharya, Sri Totakacharya and Sri Padmapadacharya had approached Sri Sankara in a spirit of surrender to tide past this *samsara* (ocean of transmigratory existence), in the case of Sri Suresvaracharya, it was the Guru who approached the *sishya*!

As the life history of Sri Adi Sankara shows, the Jagadguru wanted a *vartika* (critical gloss) written on His *Brahmasutra Bhashya* by the eminent *Purva Mimamsa* scholar, Sri Kumarila Bhatta. However, since the latter was not in a position to do so (having already entered a

slow fire to immolate himself as an expiatory act), he suggested that the Acharya approach his primary disciple, Sri Mandana Misra, engage and win him in debate, and have the *vartika* written by him.

Sri Sankara accordingly went to Mahishmati where Mandana Misra lived. When the Acharya enquired about the whereabouts of Misra's residence, he received a unique and fascinating response. Instead of any mention of a street name, door number, etc. the Acharya was asked to look out for the house where caged parrots in its doorway chirp and discuss lofty spiritual questions.

The fact that even the parrots chirp such philosophical matters is suggestive of the extent of philosophical study, discussion and debates that transpired at Sri Mandana Misra's house. Sri Sankara

and Sri Misra had entered into a debate on the terms that the one who loses must take up the *ashrama* (stage of life) of the victor. Mandana Misra lost the debate and therefore took up *sannyasa*.

From the life of Sri Mandana Misra we learn that we must transition from *dvaita* to *advaita*. It is indeed rare and a great blessing to secure a Guru who will teach the *advaita tattva*, and one must make use of the opportunity of such a guru's presence.

However, one cannot directly embark on the path of *jnana*. In order to transition to the *jnana marga*, one must first practise *karma marga* to earn the eligibility to do so. *Karma marga* is thus like a foundation for *jnana marga*.

Jayantis of Acharyas

The 131st Jayanti of the 34th Acharya of the Sri

Sri Sannidhanam at the Adhasthanam of Sri Suresvaracharya



Adda Pallaki Utsava of Jagadguru Sri Sannidhanam



Sringeri Peetham, Jagadguru Sri Chandrashekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal, and the 106th *Jayanti* of the 35th Acharya, Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamigal, were celebrated on November 9 and November 12, 2023 respectively.

On the *Jayanti* days, the Ubhaya Jagadgurus offered homage at the *adhishtanam* shrine in Narasimha Vanam at noon and were present for the *arati* of *Shatarudra Abhisheka puja*. Sri Sannidhanam also performed a special *puja* with *Rudra Krama Archana* at the shrines at night, with Sri Mahasannidhanam present at the *Mahamangalarati*.

During the mornings on the *Jayanti* days, the *pandits* and *vidyarthi*s of the Sri Sadvidya Sanjeevini Samskrita Mahapathashala assembled at the Adhishthana Mandapa and performed Veda Parayana, with a *vidyarthi*s

recounting the life of the Jagadgurus.

Vedabrahmasri Tangirala Dakshinamurti gave a keynote address on both occasions. Vidwan BL Ganapati Bhat and Vidwan B Krishnaraja Bhat presided over the respective events and spoke in Sanskrit on the lives of the respective Acharyas.

At the end of the night *puja* at the Adhishthanam, *Sri Chandrashekhara Bharati Navaratnamalika* and *Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Aksharamala Stotram* (both penned by Sri Mahasannidhanam) were chanted on the respective *Jayanti* days.

Sankara Vijayam Event

Sri Vidyatheertha Foundation of Chennai conducted the '*Sankara Vijayam*' festival at Sringeri during November 8 - 12, 2023 to mark the golden jubilee year of *Sanyasa Svekara* of Sri Mahasannidhanam.



Sri Sannidhanam inaugurating the photo exhibition on Sri Mahasannidhanam



Sahasra Narikela Homa purnahuti in the presence of Ubhaya Jagadgurus

Sri Sannidhanam at the purnahuti of
Atirudra Mahayaga



Sri Sannidhanam at the purnahuti of
Sahasrachandi Mahayaga

A photo exhibition describing the life and teachings of Sri Mahasannidhanam was put up near the Sharadamba temple.

The valedictory function was held on November 12, when Swami Sivayogananda of Chinmaya Mission, Madurai, delivered a talk on 'Sri Adi Sankara and Eternal Happiness'.

In his *anugraha bhashanam*, Sri Sannidhanam glorified His Guru, and the illustrious Guru Parampara.

Speaking at length on the qualities of a *sthita-prajna* - one who is established in the Self - and relating them to Sri Mahasannidhanam, Sri Sannidhanam mentioned that, while a *sannyasi* renounces everything, goes to an isolated place and engages in *japa*, *anushthanam*, *Vedanta chintanam* etc., Sri Mahasannidhanam as

Peethadhipati continues to live amidst the world and strives for the welfare of all, while remaining completely detached.

Go Puja and Balindra Puja

Bali Padya was celebrated on November 13, 2023, when *Go Puja* was performed by Sri Sannidhanam in the morning in Narasimha Vanam. The Acharya then went to Sharadamba temple and other temples for *darshan*.

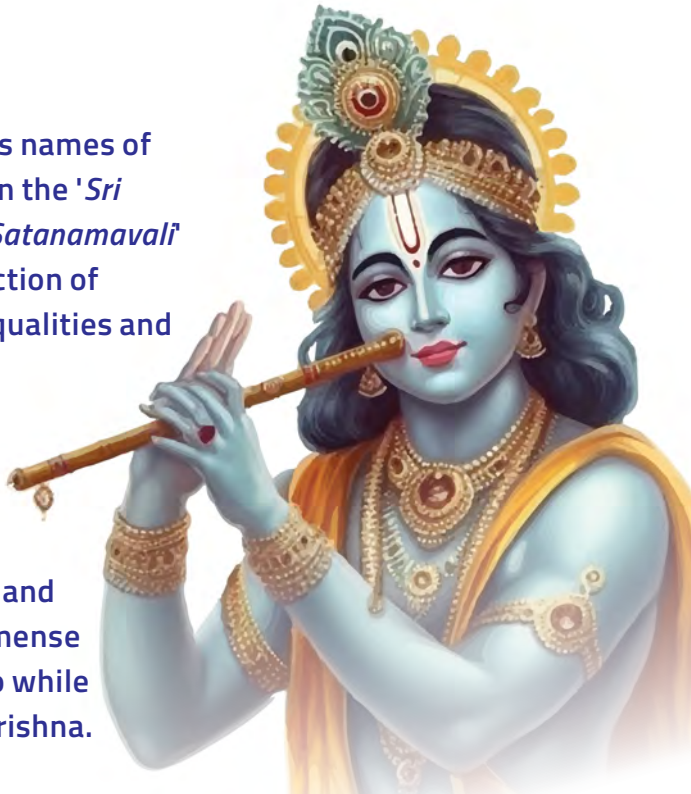
Sri Mahasannidhanam also had *darshan* at the Sharadamba temple.

Balindra Puja was performed in the evening at Goddess Sharada temple in the divine presence of Sri Sannidhanam.



The 108 auspicious names of Krishna contained in the '*Sri Krishna Ashtottara Satanamavali*' represent the collection of Bhagavan's divine qualities and the accounts of his incarnation.

Millions of devout people chant the *Satanamavali* daily, and they testify the immense benefits of doing so while meditating on Sri Krishna.



THE DIVINE NAMES OF SRI KRISHNA – 13

49) अजाय नमः ।

Ajāya namaḥ |

I pay obeisance to Sri Krishna who is without birth.

The significance of this *nama* is highlighted in the *Bhagavad Gita* (10.3) in Krishna's own words:

यो मामजमनादिं च वेत्ति
लोकमहेश्वरम् ।
असंमूढः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः
प्रमुच्यते ॥

*Yo māmajamanādiṃ ca
vetti lokamaheśvaram |
Asaṃmūḍhaḥ sa martyeṣu
sarvapāpaiḥ pramucyate ||*

The *nama* occurs thrice in the *Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram* (95, 204 and 521), and Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada has explained it in three different ways.

The Acharya quotes *Rg Veda* (1.8.5) and *Mahabharata* (*Santi Parva* 349) in his

bhashya on *Vishnu Sahasranama* to convey that Bhagavan is without birth. 'I was not born, nor am I to be born, nor have I the possibility of future birth; I am the *kshetrajna* of all beings, hence I am called unborn.'

In his second explanation of *ajaya*, the Acharya says,

अजति क्षिपति इति
(*ajati kṣipati iti*),

'He who moves' is the explanation for the *nama*, *aja*. Bhagavatpada adds that Bhagavan moves towards the heart of the devotees, and He creates pitfalls for the wicked.

The third explanation given by the Acharya for the *nama* is,

आत् विष्णोरजायत
(*āt viṣṇorajāyata*)

—He was born of Vishnu. In other words, *aja* refers to *Kama*, the lord of desire.

50) निरञ्जनाय नमः ।

Nirañjanāya namaḥ

I pay obeisance to the blemishless Sri Krishna.

Bhagavan Krishna, the *Paramatma* is pure and devoid of attributes.

51) कामजनकाय नमः ।

Kāmajanakāya namaḥ |

I pay obeisance to Sri Krishna who is the father of Pradyumna; I pay obeisance to Sri Krishna who is sought by all those desiring attainment of *purusarthas*.

Pradyumna was the eldest son born to Krishna and Rukmini. He resembled his father in every way.

Earlier, the *devas* had requested Kama, cupid, to initiate Siva's marriage with Parvati so that Subrahmanya would be born to them to eliminate the wicked Tarakasura. But Kama's (also

known as Manmatha) attempt to disturb Siva's penance brought disastrous consequences, as the enraged Siva had burnt him down to ashes.

Kama's wife Rati was inconsolable and, based on her entreaties, Siva promised that Kama would be born again as Krishna's son, and she would then marry him.

When he was hardly ten days old, Pradyumana was thrown into the sea by an *asura* known as Sambara, as he had been told that Krishna's son would kill him. The child was swallowed by a huge fish. The fishermen who netted the fish decided that the prize catch should be dedicated to their king Sambara.

The humungous fish was sent to the pantry, and when cut, revealed the infant. The pantry staff entrusted the child to Mayawati, who was

their chief, and she benevolently raised the child.

Eventually, sage Narada arrived to remind Mayawati of her previous birth as Rati, and Mahadeva's promise that Kama would be born to Krishna. The boy grew up and killed Sambara.

Mayavati who had exceptional magical powers then ensured Pradyumna's aerial transport to Dwaraka, where they got married in the presence of his parents, Krishna and Rukmini.

Sri Bhagavatpada, refers to the above episode of Pradyumna while elucidating the *nama*, *Kama*, in *Vishnu Sahasranama*.

Dharma, *artha* (wealth), *kama* (righteous desire) and *moksha* (liberation) are the four *purusharthas*, or goals of mankind. Every person should adhere to the goals by staying on the path of

dharma. Wealth can be earned in a *dharmic* way, and only *dharmic* desires should be pursued to attain liberation. Bhagavan is *kama*, as he is sought by those who want to attain the *purusharthas*.

He also the originator of *sattvic* desires, *Kamakrit* and *Kamajanaka*.

52) कञ्जलोचनाय नमः ।
*Kañjalocanāya
namah* |

I pay obeisance to Sri Krishna who is lotus-eyed.

The petals of the lotus are wide and long and pleasing to behold. It is for this reason that poets often compare a pair of beautiful eyes to the lotus petals.

The *Vishnu Sahasranama* expresses the same idea twice – in the *namas*, *Aravindakshah* and *Padmanibhekshanah*.

53) मधुघ्ने नमः ।
Madhughne namah |

I pay obeisance to Sri Krishna, the slayer of Madhu.

While Vishnu was immersed in *Yoganidra*, creation began with Brahma appearing from his navel.

Two demons, Madhu and Kaitabha, came out from Vishnu's ear, and they obtained a boon from Brahma that they would meet their death only when they wished for the same.

Aware of their invincibility, the two began to torment

the *devas*, and they even snatched the Vedas from Brahma.

Mahavishnu was woken up from his *yoganidra* and, taking the form of Hayagriva (with the face of a horse), Vishnu confronted Madhu and Kaitabha.

Vishnu asked the demons for a boon and the arrogant *asuras* were only too willing to oblige. Vishnu sought their death as the boon. He thus ended their tyranny and retrieved the Vedas, thereby getting acclaimed as *Madhusudana*.



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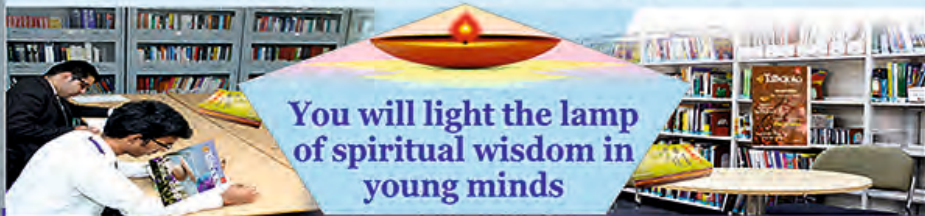
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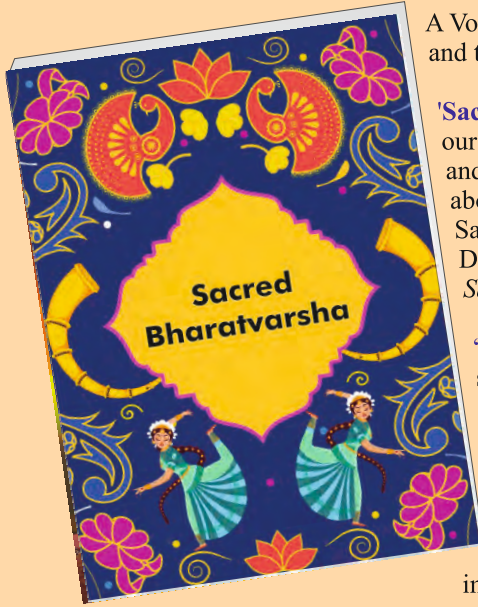
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True Advaitins and Pseudo-Advaitins

The following is an exposition by Jagadguru Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahasvamigal, the 35th pontiff of the Sri Sringeri Sharada Peetham. The Swamiji's lucid messages bear the stamp of his direct experience of the Truth, mastery of yoga, and his deep knowledge of the *Sastras*.



It is well known that *advaita* philosophy recognises *brahman* alone as the ultimate reality and holds that the world is illusory, with no existence apart from *brahman*. *Avidya* or ignorance is responsible for the mistaken notion that one is the body or mind, and that duality is a fact.

The individual soul is actually not different from the Supreme. Strictly speaking, a true *advaitin* is one who has realized as a matter of experience that one is the supreme *brahman*. Others who hold the *advaita* philosophy as right are also called *advaitins* but the usage is somewhat figurative.

Those who have directly realised the Truth are called *jnanins*; they are liberated even while alive. Such persons are most uncommon. Bhagavan Krishna points out in the *Gita*, “He who knows that Vasudeva is all is very rare to

find.” Devoid of ego, such sages do not flaunt their wisdom.

On the other hand, there are many who have not acquired such realisation but who talk and behave as if they have attained liberation. We even find that they are not very regulated in their conduct. When questioned, they say, “After all, I am not the body or the mind. I neither act nor am I affected by action. Further, the world is only unreal. So, why should I bother much about what the body and mind are engaged in doing?”

Story of a Psuedo *Advaitin*

There is a story in this regard. It seems one person was expounding *advaita* philosophy to a group of students, and in the course of his discourse pointed out that the world is unreal.

Suddenly, a wild elephant chanced to come running

that way. The disciples ran helter skelter, and the teacher was no exception. Unfortunately, the teacher slipped and fell into a pit.

After the elephant went away, the students discovered their teacher in the pit, shouting for help. They approached him and asked, “Sir, you were just telling us that the world is unreal. Why then did you run, gripped by fear, when the elephant charged? Further, why are you now shouting for help?”

The helpless teacher thought for a moment, and said, “Please help me to come out and I shall explain.” Accordingly, he was pulled out.

He resumed his seat at the place where he was teaching and, without batting an eyelid, declared, “I stand by what I said. The world is unreal. The elephant that charged was unreal. You saw

me flee in terror, but my flight was unreal. You noticed that I had fallen into a pit and was screaming for help. All that was unreal. Finally, your helping me out too was unreal!”

Maybe the explanation shows that the so-called teacher was shrewd, but it does not alter the fact that he was being hypocritical. One should be true to one's conscience. One may deceive others by high-sounding talk on *advaita*, but it will not be of any use if one does not mend one's ways.

It is said, “He who is attached to worldly comforts but still says that everything is *brahman* is actually one who has fallen from *karma* and also from *brahman*. Such a person must be discarded like a lowly one.”

Because such a man fails to realise the Truth and procure liberation, it is said that he has fallen from *brahman*.

Because of his putting up a show that he is realised, such a man does not perform the ordained duties sincerely. Hence, there is the declaration of his having fallen from *karma*.

Why then does one act as if one is aware that the world is unreal even though one does not possess such realisation?

One reason is self-delusion. Another is that one wants to get a good name. Nilakantha Dikshita has humorously written, “Always keeping the rosary in the hand, occasionally opening one’s eyes and declaring that everything is *brahman*, are sure ways of creating a good impression!”

Such pseudo-*advaitins* are not a rarity these days. They will do well to bear in mind the declaration of the *Kāthā-upaniṣad*, “One who has not desisted from bad conduct, whose senses are not under

control, whose mind is not concentrated and whose mind is not free from hankering for the result of concentration, cannot attain the *atman* through knowledge.”

It is clear that true knowledge can dawn only after the mind has been rendered very pure by the practice of spiritual discipline.

Source: 'Multifaceted Jivanmukta'



Protection At All Times

The month of December has two important events for worship of Lord Vishnu: *Vaikunta Ekadashi*, and *Gita Jayanti*. Both occur on the same day, on the 23rd December this year.

The *Ekadasi* occurring in *Sukla Paksha* of the *Margasirsha* month is also known as *Mokshada Ekadasi*, an auspicious day dedicated to the worship of Lord Vishnu for liberation from sins, and to achieve *moksha* or liberation after death.

It is also celebrated as the day when Bhagavan Krishna gave the holy sermon of *Bhagavad Gita* to Arjuna to resolve the moral challenges

that he faced on the Kurukshetra battlefield.

The dilemma, fears, self-doubt that Arjuna had faced surface even today in our daily lives and the practical guidance that *Gita* offers continues to have relevance.

Gita shows the path of inner knowledge through the performance of one's duty in the best possible manner with detachment, exercise of control over emotions through awareness and mindfulness.

The *dhyana sloka* of *Bhagavad Gita* below is a befitting prayer to Bhagavan's messages as a merciful mother to unburden our sins and move

towards the path of
knowledge.

पार्थाय प्रतोबोधितां
भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं
व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना
मध्ये महाभारतम् ।

अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीम्
अष्टादशाध्यायिनीम्
अम्ब त्वां अनुसन्दधामि
भगवद्गीते भवद्वेषिणीम् ॥

*Pārthāya pratobodhitām
bhagavatā nārāyaṇena
svayam
Vyāseṇa grathitām
purāṇamuninā madhye
mahābhāratam |*

*Advaitāmṛtavarṣiṇīm
bhagavatīm
aṣṭādaśādhyāyiniīm
Amba tvām
anusandadhāmi
bhagavadgīte
bhavadveṣiṇīm ||*

I meditate on you Mother!

Bhagavad Gita, the
destroyer of *bhava* (cycles of
birth and death), taught to
Arjuna by Bhagavan
Narayana himself, written
by the epic sage Vyasa in 18
chapters in the middle of
Mahabharata, and showering
the nectar of *Advaita*.

The *Gita* indeed shows the
path to enlightenment
through *karma*, *jnana* and
bhakti yoga. It reveals the
temporal nature of all beings
in the world, and the
immortal nature of the
Jivatma (one's self) and its
relationship with
Paramatma.

Gita is indeed a *Jnana
Kavacham* that protects us at
all times.

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The Golden Leaves

In a village, there lived a farmer, his wife and their seven children.

The farmer owned a small patch of land and he worked very hard on it. Yet, he found it difficult to feed all the mouths in his family, and make ends meet.

Every morning, he used to go to the village temple, and pray loudly to God. He used to say aloud in the temple how hard he worked and the

problems he faced in life, before going to the farm.

One morning, as the farmer was praying loudly at the temple, a saint sitting near the entrance of the temple happened to hear his prayers. As the farmer was leaving the temple, the saint asked him as to why he had been complaining to God.

The farmer told him that he lived a hard life, working all

day, and yet found it difficult to feed his large family.

Taking pity on him, the saint asked the farmer where he lived, and told him that he would visit him the next day in his farm. The next afternoon, the saint came to the farmer's patch of land, and the farmer, hard at work, welcomed him with some water to drink.

The saint sprinkled some water in a corner of the farm, and muttered some *mantras*. Soon a plant appeared on the place, and it quickly grew into a large tree.

The saint told the farmer that this was a magical tree, and whenever it shed any leaf, the farmer should carefully pick up the leaf from the ground and store it. After some time, the leaf would change to gold. The saint then blessed the farmer, and left.

The farmer was amazed and was not sure whether he had heard right. Yet, he kept a careful watch over the tree, and nursed it. A few days later, the tree shed a leaf to the ground.

Immediately, the farmer picked it up and placed it carefully in a small basket. After some time, he was surprised to see that the leaf had indeed turned into gold.

He shared the happy news with his wife, and they thanked the Lord happily, feeding the children.

The farmer continued to watch the tree diligently, and every time that it shed a leaf, he would store it safely. All the fallen leaves kept turning to gold, and soon the farmer became quite rich. He bought a larger piece of land, and employed workers to look after his farm. Yet, he never allowed anyone near the magic tree,

and always watched over it carefully.

The farmer, becoming used to living luxuriously, now found that it was becoming a little difficult to keep a watch over the tree. Yet, he was so greedy that he did not want any leaf to be taken by anyone else. So, he thought that he would pluck out all the leaves all at once, and enjoy all the gold he would get by himself.

He climbed up the tree one evening, and carefully plucked out all the leaves from the tree. He stored them in a huge urn, and watched over it. None of the leaves turned to gold. They merely dried, and withered away.

The farmer was extremely saddened by this. The tree did not sprout any more leaves after this.

The disheartened farmer rushed to the temple to look

for the saint, but he had long gone away.

He realised that it was his greed that led him to do all this instead of being happy and contented with his blessings and good fortune.

पिपीलिकार्जितं धान्यं
माक्षिकासञ्चितं मधु ।
लुब्धेन सञ्चितं द्रव्यं समूलं
हि विनश्यति ॥

*Pipīlikārjitam dhānyam
māksīkāśancitam madhu.*

*Lubdhena sancitam
dravyam samūlam
hi vinaśyati.*

Grain collected by ants, honey collected by bees, and wealth accumulated by a greedy person, will all be destroyed along with their source.

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Always Remember Your Teacher

An episode
narrated in the
Bhagavatha Purana

After killing the demon Kamsa, Sri Krishna was reunited with his parents, Devaki and Vasudeva. Vasudeva, with great love and care, performed his *upanayanam* and sent him along with his brother Balarama to study at the *gurukulam* of sage Sandipani.

The brothers dutifully paid their respects to the Guru, and sincerely followed all the duties of *gurukulam* life. They were very diligent in

their studies, and were able to master the 64 arts and sciences in 64 days. The Guru was delighted to teach the exemplary students.

While leaving for home after completing the studies, Sri Krishna respectfully asked the Guru as to what *Guru dakshina* he would desire. Having observed the



divine nature of Sri Krishna, the Guru and his wife decided to ask him to restore their lost son to them.

Upon finding out that the Guru's son had been lost at the ocean near Prabhasa (in modern day Gujarat), Sri Krishna set out to meet the Ocean God, who appeared in a human form and performed worship to him. When asked to return the Guru's son who had been lost at that place, the Ocean God informed that it was actually the work of a demon called Panchajana whose body was in the shape of a conch-shell.

Sri Krishna then dived into the ocean and found the demon. He fought with him, and killed him, but he could not find the Guru's son there.

So he decided to go to *Yama Loka* to find the boy. Lord Yama famous for being just and wise, welcomed him

with respect. Sri Krishna told him that he wanted His Guru's son restored to life to honour the promise that he had made to his Guru. Yama immediately obliged, and restored the boy to life once again.

Sri Krishna took the boy with Him to the Guru's *ashram*, and returned him to his parents. It was a very joyful reunion at the Guru's home, and the sage heartfully blessed Krishna and Balarama.

This story illustrates the deep respect that one must have towards one's teacher. Sri Krishna demonstrated that one should take great pains to fulfill the Guru's wishes, and always conduct oneself with humility and obedience in front of one's teacher.

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Say it in Sanskrit



There are many Samskrit words scattered on the tree. Pick out the words to form as many sentences as you can.

1. तक्षकः _____ काष्ठं खण्डयति ।

Takṣakaḥ _____ kāṣṭhaṁ khaṇḍayati |

The carpenter cuts the wood with the axe.

2. प्रवासेषु _____ विद्या ।
Pravāseṣu _____ vidyā |
 Knowledge is one's relative when abroad.
3. सेनापतिः युद्धे _____ जयति ।
Senāpatiḥ yuddhe _____ jayati |
 The commander conquers the enemies in battle.
4. _____ जटाजूटात् निस्सरति गङ्गा ।
 _____ *jaṭājūṭāt nissarati Gaṅgā |*
 The Ganga flows from Siva's matted locks.
5. _____ माता लालयति ।
 _____ *Mātā lālayati |*
 The mother fondles the baby.

**Answer: 1. Paraśunā; 2. bandhuḥ; 3. śatrūn;
 4. Śambhoḥ; 5. śiśuṃ**

Possessive	गुरोः <i>Guroḥ</i>	गुरवोः <i>gurvoḥ</i>	गुरूणाम् <i>gurūṇām</i>
Locative	गुरौ <i>Gurau</i>	गुरवोः <i>gurvoḥ</i>	गुरुषु <i>guruṣu</i>
Vocative	हे गुरो <i>He guro</i>	हे गुरू <i>he gurū</i>	हे गुरवः <i>he guravaḥ</i>

1. इक्षोः रसः अतिमधुरः ।

Ikṣoḥ rasaḥ atimadhuraḥ |

The juice of sugar cane is very sweet.

2. तरोः पुष्पाणि फलानि च पतन्ति ।

Taroḥ puṣpāṇi phalāni ca patanti |

O The fruits and flowers ball from the tree.

3. हे गुरो मां पाहि ।

He guro mām pāhi |

O Guru! Protect me.

4. अरण्ये पशूनां राजा सिंहः ।

Araṇye paśūnām rājā simhaḥ |

The lion is the king of animals in the forest.

5. मधौ कोकिलाः कूजन्ति ।

Madhau kokilāḥ kūjanti |

Cuckoos call out in spring.





Sringeri Jagadgurus with the 108 feet long *Rudraksha Mala* that was offered to the 108 feet tall Sri Adi Shankaracharya *murti* at Omkareshwar in Madhya Pradesh

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Jagadguru Sri Mahasannidhanam performing the 34th Aradhana Puja of His Guru, Jagadguru Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamikal



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