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Tattvāloka

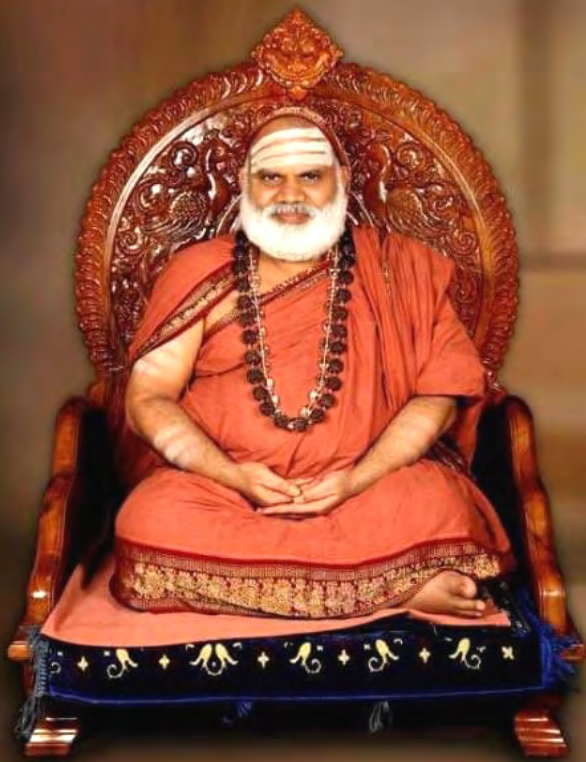
THE SPLENDOUR OF TRUTH

To Utter the Truth or Not

**Seven Holy Spots of
Kasi Kshetra in one Sloka**

**Atma Nivedanam is
Total Surrender**

Bliss of the Self



His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji
Humble Pranams to Jagadguru Sri Mahasannidhanam

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Tattvāloka

THE SPLENDOUR OF TRUTH



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

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

His Holiness Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji

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Jagadguru Speaks...

Guru alone shows the Way from Darkness to Light

The aim of one's life should be the realisation of the highest Truth.

The *Sastras* are numerous and profound. For those seekers who are equipped with good intellect, the *Sastras* point out the ephemeral nature of the world and term it a mere appearance. A number of aspects such as *Jiva* (the individual consciousness), *Isvara* (the divine consciousness responsible for creation), *Jagat* (the created universe) and *bandha* (bondage) are detailed for the seekers.

The *Sastras*, leading the seeker step by step in his spiritual journey, finally unfold the oneness of all in the non-dual absolute *brahman*.

Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada in his *Satasloki* expresses this lucidly.

स्वं बालं रोदमानं चिरतरसमयं शान्तिमानेतुमग्रे
द्राक्षं खार्जूरमास्रं सुकदलमथवा योजयत्यम्बिकाऽस्य ।
तद्वद्वेत्तोऽतिमूढं बहुजननभवान्मौढ्यसंस्कारयोगात्
बोधोपायैरनेकैरवशमुपनिषद्वोधयामास सम्यक् ॥

Just as a mother in order to pacify her child crying for a very long time, places before him grapes, dates, a mango or a

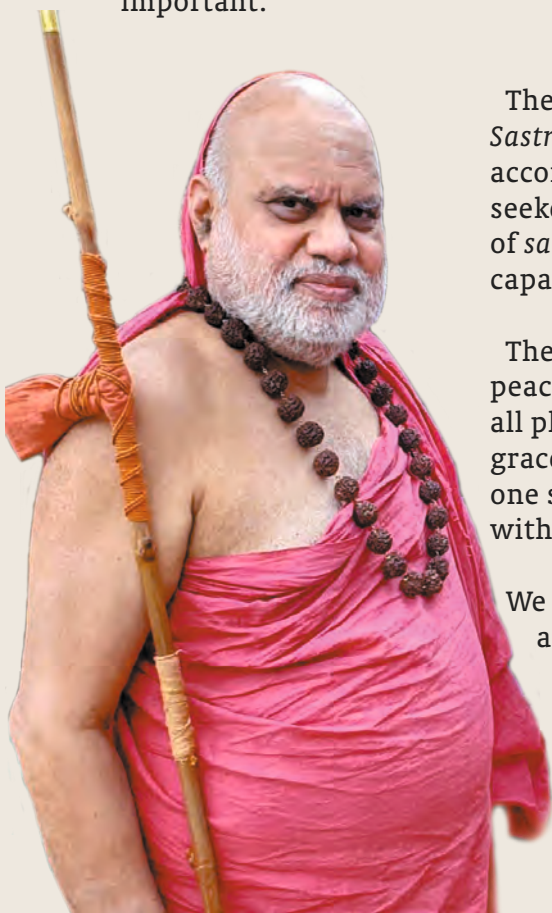
good plantain fruit, the *Upanishads* by various teaching expedients, enlighten the ignorant and restless mind caught in the throes of its deep-rooted tendencies acquired over numerous lives.

As the *Sastras* cannot be completely understood by oneself, a prescribed mode of instruction is necessary. Hence, *upadesa* (instruction) from a realised Guru is very important.

The Guru knows what the *Sastras* prescribe, and accordingly instructs the seeker, on the particular mode of *sadhana* suited to his capacity.

The key to securing lasting peace, joy and contentment in all places and conditions is the grace of the Guru alone. Hence one should worship the Guru with implicit faith in him.

We bless all to understand this and progress along the journey from darkness of ignorance to the divine light Supreme. 🕯️



Dear Sir,

The article on "*Cotton and its Medicinal Value*" (March 2023) is informative and insightful.

Many people visiting the Madurai region in the south would be familiar with a famous drink made with cotton seeds, jaggery, grated coconut, spices such as ginger and black pepper, and raw rice. Known locally as '*Paruthipaal*', it is a nourishing and wholesome drink, consumed piping hot.

The author has rightly pointed out that consumption of cotton in the correct proportion and method can yield numerous health benefits to the body.

Hema Ravi

hemaravi24@gmail.com

Dear Sir,

The article '*Harmony vs Discord at Meetings* ' (March 2023) focused succinctly on the salient qualities like diplomacy, straightforwardness, generosity, team-building, and patience on the part of the leader to set a positive standard and guide the team toward unity.

The Vedic prayer quoted by the author '*sahana vavathu, sahanau bhunaktu*' is quite germane in this context.

R.Pichumani

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Dear Sir,

The *Jagadguru Speaks* (April 2023) is profound, as the Acharya makes the *upadesa* simple with the chariot example.

A mind that is not disciplined drags one to worldly pursuits, and makes him devoid of discrimination.

Hence the Jagadguru's advice is first to bring mind under control. When the mind becomes calm and revolves around *sattvic* aspects, an urge comes to discover God. With help from Guru, the spiritual journey progresses with consistent study, and over a period, one discovers what he has been seeking is within himself. This knowledge is a treasure, as it makes us free from bondage.

NVK Murthy

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Errors and Corrections: The article "*Adi Sankara on the Nature of Mind*" in the May 2023 issue was authored by **Kalyani Gannamaraju** (gannamaraju.kalyani@gmail.com). The name was wrongly substituted by another in the print edition. We regret the error.





Arguments

An argument does not have to become a wildfire.
There is a better way

We all argue. The only thing that varies is how often or how much, perhaps.

We argue with ourselves (inner turmoil – *adhyatmic*),

with others (external conflicts – *adibhautic*), with nobody even (the Universe – *adidaivic*).

Arguments are inevitable and yet most of us avoid

them as if we really can. No one has taught us how to build your case or work your way out of a disagreement.

Important Rules

There are two most important rules of building a solid argument.

The first rule is what do you want out of this conversation? For, there is a world of difference between arguing and building an argument.

In the absence of such clarity, disagreeable conversations turn into ugly arguments. They start out right, but turn unhealthy within minutes.

The second rule is you must know why you wish to broach this topic or confront someone about something. For any argument to be meaningful and beneficial, you must also genuinely try to understand why the other persons are doing what they are.

It requires listening to them without judging them. You may agree or disagree, that is immaterial, but if you do not want your argument to turn into a quarrel, you must listen to the other person. It is best to understand the other person's argument as they see it. Without that, you will not be able to fathom, much less accept, their reasons or challenges.

The conversation you are about to have and the argument you want to put forward is based on certain assumptions. Are your assumptions true, or merely your perception? Could this be a misunderstanding and not a deliberate action?

Firmly establish the foundation of your assumption, conversation, and argument in truth, and facts before you approach the other person.

Because once you have said something, you cannot

unsay it. You cannot undo the damage with words. It helps to be diligent.

What is Important?

If intelligence is the ability to respond to any argument, wisdom lies in knowing which arguments to respond to, and which parts to respond to.

Arguments are like wildfires. A tiny spark can trigger one, but they can get out of control very quickly.

It helps to establish if something is really so important to you that you want to confront the other person about it.

Wisdom is in knowing what to ignore, to let go, for your own peace, and for preserving the beauty of your relationship.

Focus on only one point of disagreement in an argument. Do not bring in all the other disagreements you could be having.

No matter how tempted you are to resolve many points of disagreements in one conversation, do not do it. Focus on just one thing, the most important one.

If you bring up many disagreements, it will not be a meaningful dialogue. Instead, it will be an ugly argument where no one wins.

Somewhere a good argument is like good meditation. Just how you bring your mind back to the present moment in meditation, simply keep bringing the conversation back to the topic at hand when you are drawn into an argument.

In a good argument, you establish upfront that we both agree that we disagree about X. And X must be specific and important enough so you may know exactly the outcome you seek or the maximum

common ground you can share on the issue.

Real, important, specific and, aligned. Truly the foundation of a good argument.

And while it is rare, sometimes people only get into an argument because they want to hurt you. They do not want a conversation or a resolution, they simply want to make it difficult for you.

As they say, “It’s very hard to make a man understand something when their job (or joy) depends on not understanding it.”

In that case, well, you protect yourself and do what befits your spiritual stature.

Healing Conversation

As Buddha would say, “Admirable friendship, admirable companionship, admirable camaraderie is

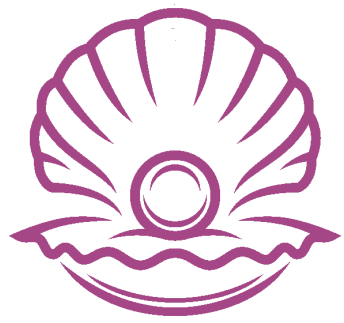
actually the whole of the holy life.”

None of which is possible without developing a general sense of empathy and mastering the art of holding a mutually healing conversation, the kind where both parties feel heard.

It may not lead to an immediate resolution, but you will be amazed what magic is possible when people feel heard.

Om Swami





Wisdom for Self-Improvement – 21

Tattvāloka continues the series on key *slokas* in *Bhagavad Gita* on the journey towards self-improvement and attaining true knowledge.

ध्यानेनात्मनि
पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना ।
अन्ये साङ्ख्येन योगेन
कर्मयोगेण चापरे ॥

*Dhyānenātmani paśyanti
kecid-ātmānam-ātmanā
Anye sāṅkhyena yogena
karmayogena cāpare*

Bhagavad Gita 13-24

Having talked about Self-realisation as the goal of spiritual *sadhana*, now *Gita* lists the alternative paths for self realisation in one go.

'*Atmani Atmana Atmanam pashyan*' is the definition of

Self-Realisation. Literally it means seeing the Self (*Atmanam*) by the self (*Atmana*) in oneself (*Atmani*).

In other words, it means realising the Supreme Self by yourself through the internal organ in the cave of the spiritual heart.

Note the word '*pashyan*'. It does not mean 'seeing' here. The Self can never be 'seen'. It is not an object to be seen. Here seeing is only by identity. You become one with the Self – that is the meaning.

Meditation, *jnanayoga* and *karmayoga* are, therefore,

the three paths. The paths are graded by the use of the words *kecit*, *anye* and *apare* for the three practitioners. The best, the mediocre and the ordinary are the three classifications.

Meditation itself is a full-fledged *sadhana*. Here mind alone is at work. According to Adi Sankara, meditation is a one-pointed thought after withdrawing sense organs into the mind (ear from sounds, and so on), and fixing the mind on the inner self.

Meditation is incessant thought in an unbroken stream like a steady flow of oil. '*Yatha deepo nivatastho*' is another monumental analogy mentioned in *sloka* 6-19.

The mind has to be taken to that stage where it is like a burning lamp in a windless place. The winds here are our thoughts and/or the wavering of the mind.

Any name of God, any form of God, any statement about the Absolute, any Vedantic idea - stick to anyone (and that one and only) of them without flickering.

Anything that is happening inside the body or outside (such as a door bell or phone ring) should cause no flickering of the mind. Nor should the past, present or future have any effect on the mind at this time.

The words *yathā deepo nivā-tastho* have so much to say! Then it is *sukham-atyantikam*, declares *Gita* (6-20).

In the case of *karma yoga*, *karma* itself is the *yoga*, it being performed as an offering to God. In the case of *jnana yoga*, it is the thought of identity with Absolute Consciousness.

 **Prof V. Krishnamurthy**
profvk@yahoo.com

A photograph of a man in a meditative pose (Padmasana) on a beach at sunset. He is seen from the back, with his hands in a prayer position (Anjali Mudra) near his forehead. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright reflection on the water. The sky is a mix of orange and yellow.

Bliss of the Self – 9

When the intellect becomes absolutely quiet in the fullness of *atma vichara*, the celestial cool waters of the beyond will descend.

In the seventh verse in his treatise *Ulladu Narpadu*, or 'Forty Verses on Reality', Sri Ramana Maharishi clarifies the source of the world and the mind.

Though the world and the mind rise and set simultaneously, the world shines by the light of the mind alone, for it (the world), is not self-luminous.

That substratum whence the world and the perceiving mind rise and set, but which, by itself, without rising and setting, shines is the eternal, perfect truth.

In the previous *sloka*, it has been explained that the world arises only when the mind arises. In this verse, the attempt is to express the reality which is the source of the world and the mind.

Where does the 'I' that sees the world, and the 'world' that is seen by me, disappear during sleep? Where do they arise from, on waking?

On waking, the individual 'I' arises, and the world appears along with it as an object to be seen by me.

Therefore, Maharishi's reply to those who ask how the world was created has always been this counter question: "Who is the one who sees the world?" The

world is seen only after the 'I', who is the seer of the world, has arisen.

If one enquires: "Where does this 'I' come from?", then the 'I' - the individual ego - disappears entirely, without leaving even a trace.

When the ego 'I' subsides, the real-'I', the egoless substratum, the supreme *Brahman* shines forth. That alone exists.

In this reality, *ahanta* and *idanta* - the ego, 'I' and the visible 'world', arise and appear like two branches (*idanta* is *idam*, or the world that is seen).

The illusory nature of this apparent duality is clearly experienced by everyone in the deep sleep state.

Deep Sleep State

Reflection on the nature of our deep sleep state (*sushupti*) will clarify the

meaning and intention of this *sloka*.

During the *brahma muhurta* (early morning before dawn), immediately after waking up from deep sleep, when one is fresh and energetic, one has to contemplate, enquire and plumb within: "Where was I a while ago? What was the nature of my personality during the state of deep sleep?"

At first, the only response may be, "I did not know anything... The knowing 'I' was not there... It was blissful."

By repeated reflection on this experience, sparks of insights will flash forth.

Gradually that bliss, the experience of the deep fulfillment of the deep sleep state, will trickle down to the waking state through the crevices of the still-space in the intellect formed by contemplation.

This revelation of the 'whole' through the windows of the quiet mind is *samadhi*. When the intellect hitherto tortured by thoughts, feelings and sleep becomes absolutely quiet, in the fullness of *atma vichara*, the celestial cool waters of the beyond will descend, healing all the hurts caused by the ego.

Thus, reflection on the deep sleep state reveals the Self which is pure existence, and that is intelligence and fullness. This centre where the 'I' merges and remains in its pristine purity is the serene realm of *Brahman*.

In *Arunachala Ashtakam*, Sri Ramana Maharishi calls such a one who has grasped the truth as the sole emperor who abides in the throne of his own heart. That means he is the ruler of an empire that will never be lost!

Once, Swami Ramatirtha met the then President of

United States. "I am Emperor Rama", said the Swami to the President, while conversing.

Amused, the President asked him rather humorously, "Of which country is Your Highness the emperor?" The Swami replied: "Rama is the eternal emperor of the whole universe. The empire of Rama is one which will never be lost!"

Through *yoga*, one may experience certain kinds of states. All these states are within the realm of nature. Truth is not a state. It is the ever-attained reality. Realisation is the recognition of the Existence Consciousness, which never appears and disappears, but always 'is'.

The world by itself is not aware of its own existence. The self-luminous *Atman* or existence also is not aware of the world as world. That which is inert has no

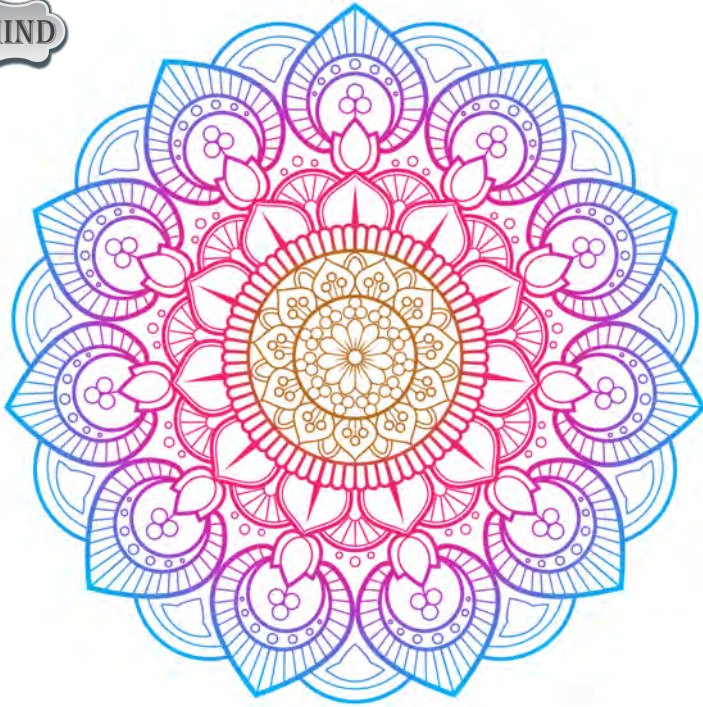
awareness, while pure awareness does not know anything other than itself.

The mind which arises in between this consciousness and inert matter, and which is termed as *granthi* (knot), is the cause for the appearance and disappearance of the world.

Beyond the hard, barren rocks of deep sleep, lies the solution, nay, dissolution of all our miseries! It is the only authentic state, where the inner being communes with you gently whispering, "Dear! You are body-less, mind-less, ego-less, world-less!!"

 *Nochur Sri Venkataraman*

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



Optimise the Potential in the Hindu New Year

You will be aware that we have entered a
Hindu New Year on 14th April.

What is the name
of this new year?
Shobhakrit. How
many such years are there in
our ancient almanac? Sixty.

They go round, in unending
circles.

A few decades ago, most
youth were aware of the

New Year only in their home state. Nowadays, due to travel and media, we are aware that the New Year is celebrated all over the country, but with a variety of local names --- *Baisakhi* in Punjab, *Chaitra Navaratri* in Gujarat, *Bihu* in Assam, *Naba Barsha* in Bengal, *Pana Sankranti* in Odisha, *Vishu* in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, and so on.

Why does our New Year begin in April and end in March?

It follows the journey of the sun. From the month of *Chaitra* to *Phalgun*, the 12-month cycle is also linked to the *ritus*, seasons. April falls in the *Vasanta ritu*, Spring season. Welcomed by all, after the colder winter. Of course, it will not last forever. It will be succeeded by the hot summer!

Our best approach is to enjoy it while it lasts. There are many captivating

descriptions of *Vasanta ritu* in our literatures. *Valmiki Ramayana* mentions, “*Chaitraha Shriman ayam masah, Punyah, pushpita kananah,*” meaning this month of *Chaitra* is like Vishnu, among the months. Auspicious. Blooming with flowers.

The month of *Chaitra* has other features too. Sri Rama was born in this month. His coronation, on his victorious return from Lanka, was also in *Chaitra*.

Therefore, *Chaitra*/April is an opportune time to plan to optimise the potential of the *Shobhakrit* new year.

Adopt the management model of – Plan → Implement → Review → Correct → Re-plan.

Recognising that we are already in June, plan for the remaining three quarters till March 2024, and thereafter plan for the next full year,

April 2024 to March 2025. Then, keep up the annual planning cycle.

Make it your Personal Plan. Set goals for yourself in relevant areas: work, family, your own physical fitness, learning and knowledge enhancement. Keep learning every second. Strive to raise your spiritual quotient.

Second, analyse your strengths, weaknesses. Opportunities and threats. Plan to better utilise your Opportunities and Strengths; and reduce your Threats and Weaknesses.

Third, implement the above plan for the quarter, July-September 2023, using your full, latent potential, in a *sattvic* manner, reducing your *rajas* and *tamas*.

Fourth, toward the end September, review your progress. Make necessary course corrections.

Fifth, plan for the second half year, October-March. Be ready to make the subsequent Hindu New Year, even better.

During all the above five steps, add *bhakti*, devotion, to your *karma*, actions.

Remember the grace of your *kula devatas* and *kula gurus*. Try to visit them once a year and seek their blessings.





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Atma Nivedanam is Total Surrender



True surrender to God happens when you realise that the body's actions are due to the divine power within.

There is a beautiful reference in *Srimad Bhagavatam* about living every moment in the glory of God.

King Hiranyakashipu asked his son-prodigy, Prahlada, what he had learnt from his Guru to whom the boy was entrusted for quite some time. Prahlada's spirited reply has turned out to be one of the grandest pronouncements in *sanatana dharma*.

Prahalada says that action is the greatest lesson one learns, which expresses itself in terms of nine manifestations of devotion to Lord Vishnu.

These are, listening to the recitals of the names and glories of God (*sravanam*); reciting the names of God (*kirtanam*); recalling God and His deeds (*smaranam*); waiting on Him (*pada-sevanam*); worshipping Him (*archanam*); saluting and

prostrating before Him (*vandanam*); serving Him (*dasyam*); befriending Him (*sakhyam*); and *Atma-nivedanam*, dedicating one's self to Him.

Mental Worship

Adi Sankara encapsulated the above in his immortal hymn, *Siva Manasa Puja*, glorifying mental worship and devotion. *Manasa puja* is nothing but *bhakti yoga*, and it is a powerful way to connect to the divine, without regard to where you are.

In the verse in *Siva Manasa Puja* that begins as “*Atma tvam Giriija matih sahachara pranah*”, the Acharya says, Oh Lord, you are my *atma* (soul), the divine mother, *Giriija*, is my *buddhi* (pure intellect), the *sivaganas*, your attendants, are my *prana*, and my body is your temple.

‘My interactions with the world are your worship, and my sleep is the state of

samadhi or complete absorption in you. My feet walking about is your *pradakshina* (circumambulation), and all my speech are your hymns of praise. And, whatever work I do, all that is your *aradhana* (worship), Oh Sambho!

Sri Sankara refers to this mental dedication as *atmarpaṇadṛśa* in *Soundarya Lahari*.

Our scriptures stress that mental worship is the only means to attain one's goal in life. In a true spiritual life, the transition has to happen from external worship to internal worship.

Sri Lalita Sahasranama, the thousand names of glory of the divine mother, says, '*antarmukha samaradhya bahirmukha sudurlabha*,' meaning one who looks inward and meditates will realise the Goddess, while one who searches for the divine externally, even

though he performs several prayers, finds it very difficult.

Manasa puja is thus the direct and quickest way to attain the goal.

Atmarpanam

In verse 27 of *Soundarya Lahari*, Sri Sankara refers to *atmarpaṇadṛśa*, which is the core word in this hymn as well as in all our scriptures.

'Let my speech be your *japa*, my movement of hands be your *mudras*, my locomotion be circumambulation for you, my eating and drinking be *ahuti* or fire oblations for you, my lying down be prostrations for you, all my enjoyments be my surrender to you, and let these actions of mine become the main part of your worship.'

This is *Atma-nivedanam*, the last of the nine-fold methodologies enunciated in *Srimad Bhagavatam*, and

complete surrender as described in *bhakti* literature.

Gita's Call

Such a dedication of everything at the feet of the Lord is prescribed also by *Bhagavad Gita*.

Verse 27 in chapter 9 in *Gita* is a cryptic description of *atma nivedanam*, as the verse says “*Yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat, yat tapasyasi Kaunteya tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam*”.

‘Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer as oblation to the sacred fire, whatever you bestow as a gift, and whatever austerities you perform, O son of Kunti, do them as an offering to Me.’

Devotion is thus not to be restricted to the periphery of a temple or *puja* room, but to be engaged in at every moment of life.

Sage Narada defined *bhakti* as offering your every activity to God, and feeling intense separation if ever you lose remembrance of Him, '*tad vismarane parama vyakulateti*' (*Narada Bhakti Sutra* 19).

It is wise to recall the words of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the modern day *atma jnani*: “O Mother, I am an instrument; You are its manipulator. I am the house, You are the resident; I am the chariot, and you are the charioteer; I move as You make me move; I speak as You direct; My doings are all Your doings”.

Swami Vivekananda had expressed this attitude as *karma yoga* when he declared: “No work is secular. Everything is devotion and service.”

'There is nothing that I do', 'Good or bad, Am I the doer?' – Such expressions of total surrender are everywhere in

the works of *Saiva Nayanmars, Vaishnava Alvars* and various saints. It is this kind of total surrender that gives the destination of one's birth, namely *jivanmukti*.

What is talked of as the cessation of mind in the path of *jnana* becomes total surrender in the path of *bhakti*. Both are *Atmarpanam* only.

To sum up, the body does what it does because it gets the power from the *jiva* within it; so also, what all this *jiva* does is because it

gets the power from a supreme *jiva-sakti* behind it, and that is the Mother Goddess.

For that *Sakti*, not only this *jiva* but all the other *jivas* constitute the body; nay, the entire universe is the body.

Once this idea settles deeply in our mental system, there will be no problem of laying our lives at Her feet.

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Sahaja Samadhi

You remain calm and composed even while you are active; you realise that you are moved by the deeper Real Self within, and you do or think unaffected by what you do, speak or think.

You have no worries, anxieties, no cares. For here you come to realise that there is nothing belonging to you, the ego.

And everything is done by Something with which you get into conscious union.

--Commentary on Sat Darshanam by Ramana Maharishi



Startups that remain on the ethical course
will become ultimate winners

Many young people are nowadays obsessed with the thought of becoming a Startup founder. Startups are viewed as young, innovative, collaborative, and focused on growth, while the established corporate enterprises are considered slow-moving, hierarchical, and lacking in dynamism.

Many factors have aided this perception, such as the growing pool of educated young people burning with a desire 'to change the world' with a new product or service, flow of funding support from venture capital

firms and banks, and a general mindset change that favours risk-taking. Business gurus are often seen advising people to unleash the 'animal spirits' in them to make a mark in business.

As a result, the number of registered startups in India has risen from 450 six years ago to over 84000 last year.

While this looks impressive, it is also wise to know that almost 90 per cent of start-ups fail, with 10 per cent failing within the first year. While startup dreams are made of amazing ideas, the general

experience has been that most firms fail to consistently deliver on their value proposition.

Greed as Driving Force

There are several reasons behind this gulf between promise and performance of startup founders, but the most important is the greed factor.

It is well known that startups are driven by the prospect of making quick money. As a business guru mentioned, the key motive of most startups is, “Start up today, scale up tomorrow and sell the day after”.

There is an unseemly hurry by most startups to achieve rapid growth. Rapid growth is always accompanied by dangers and potential liabilities that can capsize any firm as quickly.

Greed can wreak havoc as this base instinct starts to influence every action of the promoters by always looking

for money, not ways to improve. Those with greedy mindset squander the trust of clients, financiers and co-workers.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the great mystic and spiritual guru, used to narrate a story about how a man's greed led to misery.

A man was passing under a haunted tree, when the mysterious voice of a *yaksha* asked him if he wanted seven jars full of gold coins. The man told the *yaksha* that he would be glad to be the recipient of such an unexpected boon.

The voice told him to go home where seven pots of gold would be waiting for him. The man hurried home. There, as the *yaksha* had said, were seven pots of gold.

But there was just one small problem. Six of the jars were full, and the seventh jar was only half full.

The man could have been content with the six full jars and the half-full jar. But such is the nature of greed that the man wanted to fill up the half empty jar.

So, he converted all his ornaments into gold coins and put them into the jar; but the mysterious vessel was as before. He almost lost his mental balance as he lost all his possessions and could still not fill the seventh jar.

The local king heard about his predicament, and said to him, “The *yaksha* made the same offer to me. I asked the *yaksha*, 'When you talk about seven jars of gold, are you talking about what I will gain, or what I will lose. What seem like benefits come hidden with dangers'.

The king's words brought sense to the man who returned to the haunted tree and asked the *yaksha* to take back the gold, which the *yaksha* agreed.

When the man returned home, he found that the seven jars had vanished as mysteriously as they came in, and with it had also vanished his life-long savings.

This parable brings to mind the several cases of startup businesses losing whatever value built, due to the overarching ambition of promoters to become a 'unicorn' and be in the spotlight with a high business valuation. In the process, they resort to unethical practices such as overstating revenue, diverting funds, and engaging in fraudulent accounting transactions.

The key to winning in startups is patience. According to a recent report, 70 per cent of startups fail due to premature scaling. Knowing when to act and when to wait is the difference between success and failure, and this is a skill

that has to come from strong ethical foundations. Persistence in patience is essential.

Many startup founders are also seen flaunting and splurging their wealth, without realising that this can backfire in a big way, and damage their reputation and the firm's prospects. It also sends a wrong message to employees, investors, and customers.

Value of Mentors

The above underscores the importance of good mentors for startups.

As an inspiring person with strong knowledge and experience, a good mentor shares his values with others to help them improve. Mentorship is beyond just providing technical advice; it is hand-holding to act in a *dharma* way in every situation.

A good mentor strongly advocates humility, stressing

at every stage that any achievement is a collective team effort. He is also one who advises to spend wisely and invest wisely, fostering a culture of mindfulness in every action of the founders.

Startups and Svadharma

Young people aspiring to become founders of startups with all its attendant risks and rewards, would also do well to first examine their own inner propensities, or *svabhava*, as *Bhagavad Gita* cautions. There are instances of founders thinking at some stage whether they might have had a happier life as an employee.

Sri Krishna says in the *Gita* (18.47) in the verse that begins “*Shreyan svadharmo vigunaha para dharmat svanushtitat..*” that it is better to do one's own *dharma*, even though imperfectly, than to do another, *dharma* even though perfectly.

*Svadharm*a refers to an individual's duty or responsibility in life that one should follow based on his natural inclinations and abilities.

Lord Krishna explains that by performing one's duties with a sense of detachment, an individual can find joy and fulfillment in life. On the other hand, those who act against their nature, or try to pursue goals that are not in alignment with their *svabhava*, will suffer from inner turmoil and unhappiness.

It is injurious if one changes one's calling prompted by likes and dislikes, by opportunism and careerist mentality, or just to show off to another person. One's personality gets dissipated thereby.

On the other hand, where a man confines himself to his *svadharm*a, it is as natural to him as water to fish, and there is contentment and release of consciousness to be directed to spiritual aspects of life.

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Nine Forms of Awareness

In the layer of silence and mindfulness, the final stage is the supreme awareness, or *para vairagya*

Before I dive into the various states of awareness, it is important to understand

that a fleeting or one-off experience in meditation should not be confused with attaining a certain level of

consciousness. For example, feeling a sensation in your spine or between your brows, or seeing flashes of light or glimpses into your future do not mean a meditator has reached an advanced level (unless you experience it every time you meditate).

These experiences have little meaning. They can even be distractions, in fact. Consistency in anything comes from correct practice. And, practice is the basis of championing the art of meditation.

Here are the nine states of awareness directly impacted by the quality of your silence and mindfulness.

1. Intellectual Awareness

This is called *vitarka prajna*. Other than intellect, *vitarka* also means reasoning and opinion.

Prajna means wisdom, knowledge or intelligence.

In this state of awareness, intelligence is limited to intellectual analysis at the external level. A mild meditator's wisdom is often devoid of experiential intelligence and is limited to intellectual understanding of all phenomena.

At this level, everything you know is second hand, someone gave it to you. Meditators at this level are happy to accept the knowledge passed on to them through their scriptures or teachers.

2. Investigative Awareness

Yogic texts call this *vichara prajna*. It means the intelligence you gain from deliberating on a thought with discerning wisdom.

The meditator now develops a degree of mental alertness. Such an individual is no longer keen to accept the scriptures on its face value, he starts to

internalise the teachings and reflect on them to arrive at their own truth.

The first two states are limited to mild meditators. The next two, however, are experienced by the average or medium meditator.

3. Blissful Awareness

It is called *ananda prajna*. It is most interesting to note that an average meditator starts to experience an awareness of bliss long before realising the final state (which means bliss is not the ultimate state in its own right).

Beginning to rise above the social and religious conditioning, this meditator starts to feel disconnected from scriptures and preaching. He or she gains the courage to question the scriptures and validate the truth on their own.

A certain stability starts to emerge in their sessions of

meditation and, while experiencing tranquility, they get glimpses into their real nature. When they persist, they invariably experience the following higher states of consciousness.

4. Self-Awareness

This is called *asmita prajna*. *Asmita* generally means ego. The meditator in this state experiences his individual self (a sense of ego) merging into the cosmic self.

You begin to experience that you are an exact replica of the macrocosm, and that you are just about as infinite and eternal as the universe.

You start to realise, not just intellectually but empirically, that you are not just the body, mind or senses, but something beyond. That you are more than the sum total of flesh and bones, more than just your desires, that

there's more than what meets the eye.

Intense meditators progressively experience the next four states of consciousness.

5. Yoked Awareness

Yoga sutras and Upanishads call it *vashikara prajna*. Its common meaning is subjugation of desire.

This is the first irreversible state for an intense meditator. A practitioner at this level does not experience restlessness due to his or her desires even when they are not meditating. Their consciousness is now yoked to their object of meditation, while carnal and other desires are curbed by superior awareness.

This is a state of awareness which a meditator cultivates consciously and is in control of his awareness, and not the other way around.

6. 'Cessative' Awareness

This state is called *virama pratyaya*. *Virama* means cessation and *pratyaya* means understanding, intelligence or consciousness in the current context.

When the seeker continues to walk the path of meditation, the chattering nature of the mind starts to subside. You are able to remain focused on whatever you so wish without being bothered by internal noise or wandering thoughts. Better than subjugating your desire (however effortless) is not to have them at the first place. Hence, 'cessative' awareness is better than yoked.

Remember that when we do not abandon a thought, it eventually becomes a desire or an emotion.

7. Natural Awareness

This is called *bhava pratyaya* and it also means mental quietness.

When you go beyond even concentration and focus, when you experience total cessation of all mental activity, something profound happens: You experience a complete stillness of the mind – no thoughts, no emotions, no analysis.

This leads your mind to its natural state of pure, unimpeded eternal bliss. In this state, your desires and emotions do not make you restless.

The primary difference between simple blissful awareness (third state) and this one is fluctuation of the consciousness. At the third state, even though you experience bliss, it is easily disturbed by other thoughts and emotions.

In the current state, however, you have already gone past subjugation of desire, you have already mastered cessation of mental activity. You remain undisturbed.

8. Skillful Awareness

This is called *upaya prajna*. In *Yajurveda* and various Upanishads, *upaya* means approaching, accompanying, craft, or that by which one reaches one's aim.

There is another definition of *upaya*, which is 'skillful'. It is insightful to note that skillful awareness has been placed even after blissful and natural awareness.

There is a pretty good reason for this. In the first seven states, while the meditators continues to progress, their contribution to the world at large is still quite limited.

They are still working towards their own bliss and peace. In the present state, however, it is not just about them.

Skillful awareness means they are able to retain their natural awareness of light and love, yet operate in the

world forever helping others. The lives of many great masters, across many cultures, demonstrate exactly that. There are meditators who do not stop here, they keep going. They are called 'supremely intense'.

The next state is witnessed by such practitioners.

9. Supreme Awareness

The supremely intense meditator experiences the final state of awareness called *para vairagya*. It means supreme detachment.

If not having desires is better than subjugation of desire, then maintaining equanimity in fulfilment or non-fulfilment of desire is the ultimate state.

Because, even though desires may well be the primary cause of most suffering, we cannot deny that they have also been at

the root of human progress. At a practical level, their value cannot be underestimated. Somewhere someone desired a solution to a certain problem. And they came up with fire, tools, wheel, electricity, phone, airplane, computer and so on.

An adept at this stage develops altruistic consciousness, remaining unaffected by his or her desires. Firmly established in *samadhi* or *samata* (calm abiding), they go on to dedicate their lives for the welfare of all sentient beings.

--Edited excerpts from 'A Million Thoughts' by Om Swami. Published by the author. Available at Amazon.com. Price Rs.399.





The Wonder Combination of Triphala and Trikatu

Three fruits and three herbs are at the heart of
curing several disorders

Good health rests on the ability of the body to break down all the nutrients in food, and process and store them within the body.

Modern lifestyle often involves long hours of work and a diet low on fibres, leading to chronic constipation. Any problem in the basic function of

breaking down of food, expulsion of waste and ingestion of nutrients, can lead to various health disorders.

Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, the ancient ayurvedic text of medicinal plants and drugs, highlights the importance of *Triphala* and *Trikatu* in correcting several disorders.

Triphala used in combination with *Trikatu*, corrects many disorders and restores balance in the metabolism by correcting the three *doshas* of *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* in the body.

Miraculous Triads

As the name suggests, *triphala* is a combination of three fruits or myrobalans - *amla* (gooseberry), *haritaki* (*bahera* in Hindi) and *vibhitaki* (Indian walnut) in equal proportions. It is a powerful source of anti-oxidants.

An effective laxative, *triphala* assures internal

cleansing and detoxification. This medicine is used in urinary tract disorders and to increase urinary output. It cleanses the channels, kindles digestive strength, cures skin diseases, and is useful in the treatment of recurrent fever.

Triphala churna (the powder form) is very useful in treating irritable bowel syndrome associated with constipation. *Haritaki* is effective in easing bowel movements, while *vibhiktaki* helps to improve digestion strength, and *amla* balances *pitta*.

Another chief merit of *triphala* is its effectiveness in improving eyesight. It is especially good for treating computer vision syndrome, the common ailment in current times, caused by eye strain due to looking at computer for protracted periods. Often this condition is caused by improper sitting position in front of

computer without observing proper distance from the equipment, high brightness of the screen and lack of relaxation.

Three Herbs

Trikatu, on the other hand, is a combination of three pungent (*katu*) herbs – *sunti* (ginger), *marica* (black pepper) and *pippali* (long pepper). It promotes *ushna* or heat, and helps improve digestive fire.

This property also helps in the reduction of *kapha* or phlegm. It cures upper respiratory problems like cough, throat disorders and rhinitis. It is also used in the treatment of anorexia, urinary tract disorders and abdominal tumours.

There are some common illnesses that can be cured by both these medicines. Both are extremely useful in the treatment of respiratory disorders like cough, cold, allergy and asthma.

Both are useful in the restoration of digestive functions and hence used extensively in the treatment of anorexia.

They are both highly recommended in the treatment of skin diseases – *trikatu* helps bring relief to itching and improves blood circulation. *Triphala* is helpful in drying up non-healing wounds which have secretions.

Both the medicines act against fat, and are therefore useful in controlling obesity and high cholesterol. While *trikatu* being hot and pungent opens up channels, *triphala*, also having a pungent characteristic, eases blockage and heals the damage caused to blood vessels.

Vascular problems, such as deep vein thrombosis, injuries caused by internal clots, peripheral artery diseases, ischaemic

syndrome affecting the intestines, can be treated with this unique combination of medicines.

Type 2 diabetes can be controlled with this combination as it helps in the stimulation of pancreas and general metabolism. An important complication of diabetes is blood vessel damage and delayed wound healing, and this can also be treated with these two medicines.

The treatment of urinary tract disorders is also enhanced with the use of these two as they clear out any infection.

The medicines need not be taken by a healthy person on regular basis. But it can be taken for a short period of a month or so during the rainy or spring season.

For those with a sensitive stomach, the medicines can be mixed with ghee and

taken before or after food. Alternatively, it can be mixed with honey in the case of those who have weak digestion, or when used to treat cough, cold or allergy.

This combination of medicine is not recommended for those who have high *pitta* or an extremely sensitive stomach.

Useful Medicines

Trikatu and *Triphala* are together present in many ayurvedic medicines that are available for public consumption.

Triphala Gritham is a herbal ghee with *triphala* and *trikatu* and many other ingredients, used mainly in eye disorders. While *triphala* is innately useful in treating eye disorders, *trikatu* being hot and penetrative, helps to improve the blood circulation to the eyes.

Another is *Chinchadi lehyam* which is used in the

treatment of diseases of the liver, anaemia and fever. It stimulates the liver, opens up the blocked channels in the digestive tract in obstructive jaundice.

The combination also helps on the ingestion of iron that is included in the preparation of the *lehyam*.

Some Precautions

It is better to seek a doctor's advice if you wish to take the above or any related ayurvedic product along with allopathic medicines.

Some ayurvedic herbs can interact with modern medicine. If both ayurvedic and allopathic medicines are advised together, then it is best to take the allopathic medicine first, give a 30-minute gap and then take the ayurvedic medicine.

Some patients taking *triphala* capsules have complained of increased dryness and lack of sleep.

Triphala contains *amla* fruit which has sour taste. Sour-tasting fruit along with milk is contra indicated, as per *Charaka Samhita*. It is also seen that *triphala*, when added to milk, curdles it. Hence, if taken along with milk, it can cause weakness in digestion and bloating.

It is best to avoid milk with *triphala*, or give a gap of an hour before taking milk.



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Jagadguru Sri Mahasannidhanam performing the Kedareshwara Vrata

**Respectful Pranams to
Jagadguru Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji**

**From Tattvāloka Staff and Family Members
Our Growth is due to Your Grace**

Sri Sannidhanam performs
Kanakabhisheka at Sri Sankaracharya
temple on Sankara Jayanti



Sri Sankara Jayanti at Sringeri

A round up of key events at Sringeri

The birth anniversary of Adi Sankara Bhagavatpada, the rejuvenator of *sanatana dharma*, was reverentially observed at Sringeri by Jagadgurus Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji and Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati Mahaswamiji during April 21 - 26, 2023. An assembly of Vedic scholars from across the country had gathered to participate in the celebrations.

Every morning, until the Sankara Jayanti day, *Mahanyasa purvaka Sata Rudra Abhisheka* was performed to the *vighraha* of Bhagavatpada. *Parayana* of the four Vedas, the *Prasthanatraya Bhashya* and

Madhaviya Sankara Vijaya (the biography of Sri Sankara's life) was performed daily.

The scholars also took part in a *Veda Sammelan* conducted on the occasion by Sringeri Mutt's Veda Poshaka Sabha. Under the auspices of the Sabha, examinations were conducted for advanced students of the Vedas a fortnight earlier.

Every day, Sri Sannidhanam engaged in *Bhashya Parayana* sitting in the Adi Sankaracharya temple, even as the *abhisheka* was being performed, with the scholars chanting various *Upanishads* including the *Chandogya* and



Sri Mahasannidhanam offering worship to Sri Adi Sankaracharya murti during Chandramoulisvara Puja on Sankara Jayanti



Sri Sannidhanam performing Puja at Sri Sankaracharya temple on Sankara Jayanti



Sri Sannidhanam engaged in Bhashya Parayanam at Sri Sankaracharya temple

Brihadaranyaka Upanishads. *Archana* to Sri Sankara, along with group chanting of *Sri Adi Sankara Ashtottara Namavali* concluded each day's morning programme at the temple. Sri Mahasannidhanam had *darsan* at the temple every morning.

In the evenings, Sri Sannidhanam presided over a Sabha at the Pravachana Mandiram. While Asthana Vidvan Sri T V Sivakumara Sharma performed the *parayana* of *Sri Madhaviya Shankara Digvijaya*, there were discourses in Hindi, Tamil and Kannada.

On the *Akshaya Triteeya* day, two days before Sankara Jayanti, Sri Sannidhanam released a book '*Sri Sankaracharya Puja Kalpa*' in Telugu and Tamil scripts.

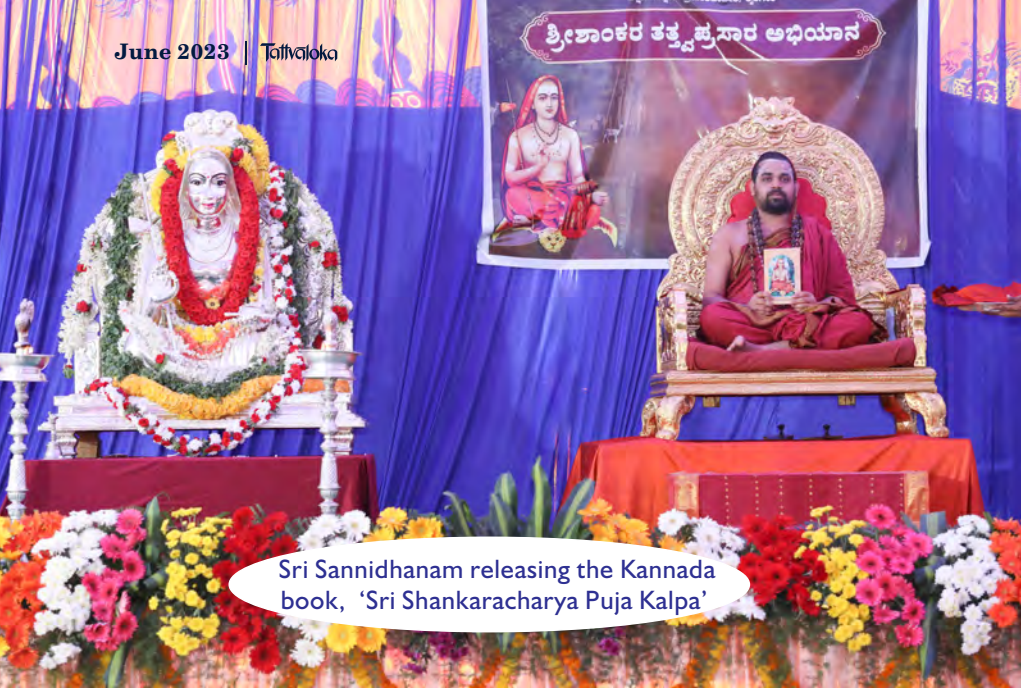
On *Sankara Jayanti* day (April 25, 2023), Sri Sannidhanam performed an elaborate *puja* at the shrine

of Sri Adi Sankara, along with *Kanaka Abhisheka* (showering of gold coins) to the *vighra* of Sri Sankara.

In the evening Sabha on the day, Sri Sannidhanam released many books, such as: *Prashnottara Ratnamalika* of Sri Adi Sankara, *Desikashtakam*, an octet of verses penned by Sri Sankara Dikshita and published by *Tattvāloka*, *Bhagavad Gita Bhashya* and *Dakshinamurti Stotram*.

A summary of *anugraha bhashanam* rendered by Sri Sannidhanam on the occasion would appear in the next issue of *Tattvāloka*.

On the day following Sankara Jayanti, there was a grand *Adi Sankara Maharathotsava*, when Sri Sankara's *Utsava Murti* was placed on a decorated chariot, which was pulled by hundreds of devotees along the main street of Sringeri, amidst the chanting of four



Sri Sannidhanam releasing the Kannada book, 'Sri Shankaracharya Puja Kalpa'



Participants of the Bhajan programme

Vedas and *bhajans* to the accompaniment of musical instruments. *Teppotsava* took place the following evening in the presence of Sri Mahasannidhanam.

In the evening of the *Rathotsava* day, there was a valedictory function of the *Veda Poshaka Sabha* in the presence of Sri Sannidhanam.

Sri Sannidhanam awarded gold rings for excellence in Vedic scholarship to Vedabrahmasri Sri Josyula Chandrashekhara Ghanapathi Tirupati (Secunderabad) in *Krishna Yajur Veda*, Vedabrahmasri Sri M. C. Sumukha Sharma (Bangalore) in *Rg Veda* and Vedabrahmasri Sri S. Srikanthan (Chennai) in *Sama Veda*.

Then followed the felicitation of 80 successful students out of the 123 who appeared for the advanced Vedic exams. 28 of them who

had cleared the *Ghanapatha* level examination were first felicitated – 6 in *Krishna Yajur Veda*, 6 in *Rg Veda* and 16 in *Shukla Yajur Veda Kanva Sakha*. The remaining candidates had successfully cleared the *Kramapatha* level examination. There was one candidate from Maharashtra who was successful in the examination of *Shadanga* (the six *angas* or limbs of the Vedas).

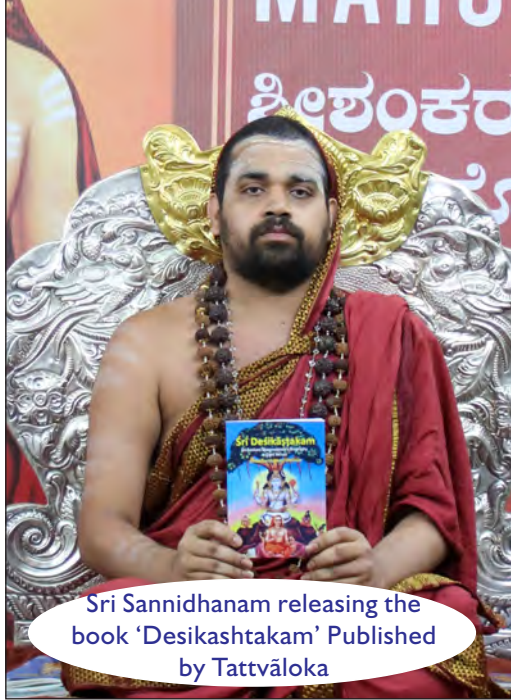
Bhajan Samarpan Programme

Earlier, on April 17, 2023, there was a *Bhajan* Festival organised under the Sri Sankara Tattva Prasara Abhiyana of Sringeri Mutt. More than 1700 people drawn from ten districts of Karnataka state including Chikkamagaluru, Hassan and Mysuru, and belonging to various *bhajan* groups participated in the event.

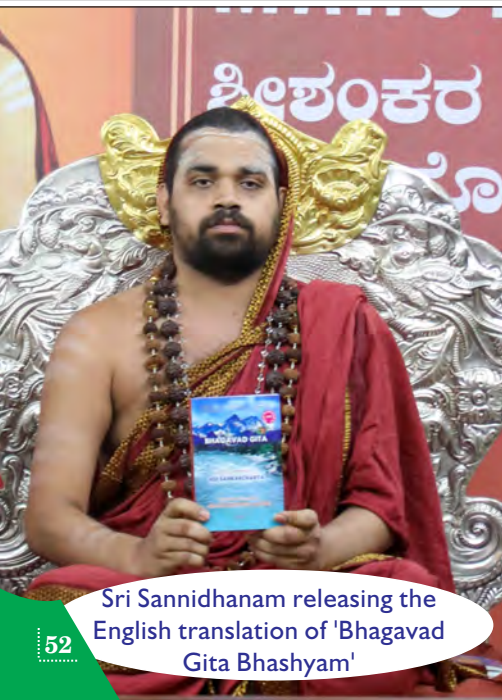
A grand procession of the *vigraha* of Sri Sankara took place along the main street



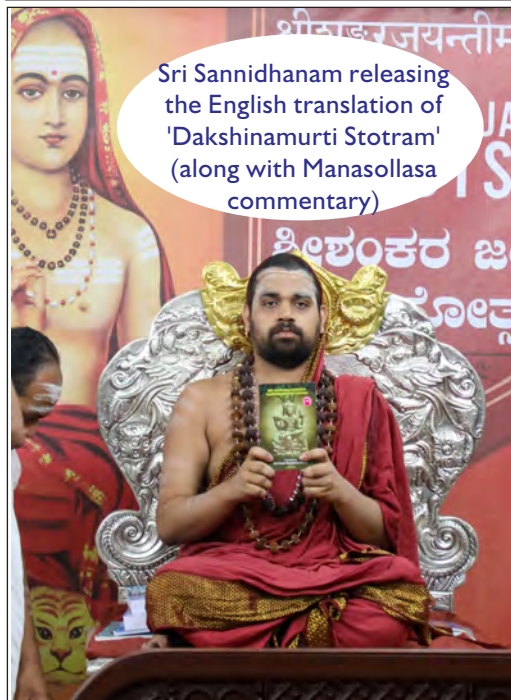
Sri Sannidhanam releasing the Telugu translation of the book 'Prashnottara Ratna Malika'



Sri Sannidhanam releasing the book 'Desikashtakam' Published by Tattvāloka



Sri Sannidhanam releasing the English translation of 'Bhagavad Gita Bhashyam'



Sri Sannidhanam releasing the English translation of 'Dakshinamurti Stotram' (along with Manasollasa commentary)

of Sringeri in front of the Rajagopuram. There was a sea of participants in the nearly mile-long procession, chanting *bhajans*, *stotras* and *Sri Sankaracharya Ashtottara Satanamavali*.

In the afternoon, there was singing of *bhajans* in the huge *mandapa* put up in front of Sri Sharadamba temple, with Sri Sannidhanam gracing the event.

In his *anugraha bhashanam*, Sri Sannidhanam extolled the greatness of *bhakti* and spoke on the nature of Bhagavan to shower grace on anyone who approaches Him. Just as fire offers heat and warmth to anyone that approaches it without any discrimination, the Lord has declared that anyone who approaches and worships Him is dear to Him.

Girija Kalyanotsava

Siva Purana describes the fascinating story about the

wedding of Siva and Parvati (also known as Girija). The wedding, known as *Girija Kalyana Mahotsava*, is an annual event celebrated in a grand manner in the hillock temple of Sri Bhavani Malahanikaresvara at Sringeri.

This year the wedding was celebrated on May 2, 2023 with traditional gaiety. There was the *Kashi Yatra* ceremony with the *utsava vighraha* of Sri Malahanikaresvara Swami arriving in procession to the Sharadamba Temple precincts when Sri Mahasannidhanam performed a *puja*. This was followed by the exquisitely decorated *vighrahas* of Sri Bhavani and Sri Malahanikaresvara being placed in the Kalyana Mandapa.

The wedding rituals were then conducted, such as *Madhuparka Puja*, *Kanya Dana*, *Mangalya Dharana*,

Vedic scholars offering Guru Vandanam to Sri Sannidhanam



Sri Sannidhanam leading the Adi Sankaracharya Rathotsava



Saptapadi, and Laja Homa, with the scholars of Sringeri Mutt chanting *Veda mantras* and verses pertaining to the *Kalyanotsava*.

There was chanting of *Gauri Girisha Stava*, which was penned by the 33rd Acharya of Sringeri, Jagadguru Sri Sacchidananda Sivabhinava Nrisimha Bharati Mahaswamikal.

Narasimha Jayanti

On the occasion of *Narasimha Jayanti* (May 4, 2023) marking the *avatara* of Bhagavan Narasimha, a special two-hour long *puja* to Sri Lakshmi Narasimha was performed by Sri Mahasannidhanam. The *puja* included *phala-panchamruta abhisheka* to Lord Sri Lakshmi Narasimha as a part of the *Shodasopachara Puja*.

The Jagadguru performed the *parayana* of the chapter from *Srimad Bhagavata Puranam* depicting the *Narasimha avatara*.

Mahabhisheka to Goddess Sharadamba

On May 6, 2023, *abhisheka* to Goddess Sharadamba at the main temple was performed in the morning in the presence of Sri Mahasannidhanam.

Fortnight-long Yatra by Jagadguru

Sri Sannidhanam started from Sringeri on a *Vijay Yatra* on April 27, 2023.

First arriving at Gundyadka, the Acharya performed *arati* to Sri Vitobha Rukmini at Srinivasapura.

Enroute to Ashwathapura, acceding to the request of the authorities of the Durgaparamesvari temple at Kateel, the Jagadguru arrived at the temple to a respectful welcome. Sri Sannidhanam had *darsan* of Sri Durga Paramesvari (consecrated in *Sivalinga* form). In an *anugraha bhashanam*, the Acharya



Sri Sannidhanam with Vidyarthis who successfully passed and have become Ghanapathis



Sri Sannidhanam with Vedic Scholars blessed with Gold Ring

advised to continue doing the rituals in the temple in the very same manner that our ancestors had been doing since ages, and elaborated on the greatness of the worship of Durga Paramesvari.

The devotees of Ashwathapura received Jagadguru Sri Sannidhanam with great reverence and scheduled a stream of events on the following day to mark the 108th anniversary of Sri Sitaramachandra Devasthanana. In an *anugraha bhashanam*, Sri Sannidhanam explained the greatness of cow and the importance of *go samrakshanam*.

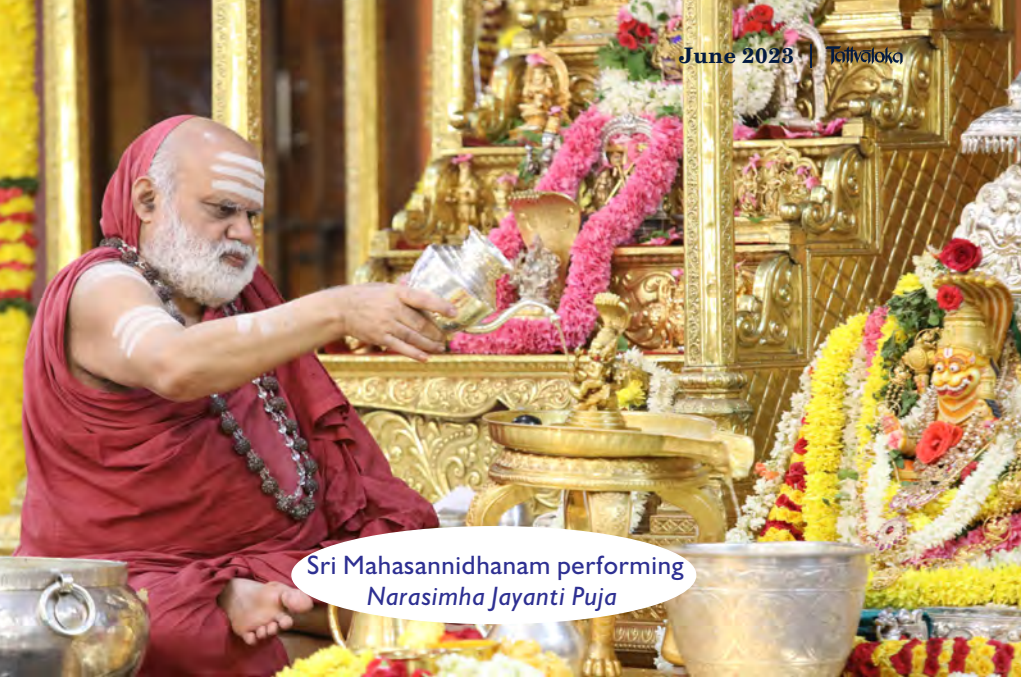
On the next day, Sri Sannidhanam inaugurated the centenary celebrations, performed *bhumi puja* for a *Shraddha Bhavana*, inaugurated Sri Sitarama Goshala, performed *shilanyasa* for a building named 'Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Nilaya', and

graced the *pujarahuti* of Sri *Satachandi Mahayaga*.

Arriving at Honnavara, the Jagadguru was taken in a procession to Sri Durgaparamesvari temple, and on the following day, had *darsan* at Sri Sanaishchara temple, Sri Aramadeva Isvara temple, Sri Veera Maruti temple, and at the 140-year old Sri Sharadamba Chandra-moulisvara temple that was being renovated. On April 30, the Jagadguru visited Kumta, and had *darsan* at Sri Mahalasa Siddhi Vinayaka temple.

Visit to Gokarna Kshetra

Sri Sannidhanam arrived at the famous *kshetra* of Gokarna on April 30 to a devout welcome by a huge gathering. After first having *darsan* at Sri Bhadrakali temple and Sri Venkatesvara Swami Temple, Sri Sannidhanam was taken in a grand procession for a Guruvandana Sabha.



Sri Mahasannidhanam performing Narasimha Jayanti Puja



Sri Mahasannidhanam at the Puja to Sri Malahanikaresvara conducted (after Kashi Yatra) as part of Sri Girija Kalyanotsava

In an *anugraha bhashanam* on the occasion, the Acharya recounted the arrival of Sri Adi Sankara along with his disciples to Gokarna, as narrated in *Madhaviya Shankara Digvijaya* (the biography of Sri Adi Sankara) by Sri Vidyananya, the 12th Acharya of Sringeri Sharada Peetham:

अथै कादाडसौ यतिसार्वभौमः
तीर्थानि सर्वाणि चरन् सतीर्थैः ।
घोरात् कलेर्गोपितधर्ममागात्
गोकर्णमभ्यर्णचलार्णवौघम् ॥

Gokarna is described with two adjectives here. The first one - घोरात् कलेर्गोपितधर्मम् indicates that even in *Kali Yuga* where adherence to *dharma* dwindles, *dharma* is protected (adhered to) in Gokarna. The second one - अभ्यर्णचलार्णवौघम् - indicates that Gokarna is situated by the seashore.

There is description of Sri Sankara offering *puja* to Sri Mahabalesvara, and then

proceeding towards Kollur and further to Sringeri.

The very name 'Mahabalesvara' indicates the unsurpassable strength of Isvara.

Siva is called - आशुतोष - the one who is pleased easily. He is also described in the *puranas* as one who can get angry easily, as in the instance of Siva burning Manmatha (cupid) to ashes as the latter tried to bring Siva under his spell.

Sometimes people feel that the expected results do not arise in spite of propitiating Bhagavan. We must understand that the negative effects of one's past *karmas* are very strong in such cases. We must exert greater efforts in our *upasana* to overcome such negative effects, and keep persevering by remembering that results would come at the appropriate time.



Sri Sannidhanam worshipping Sri Mahabalesvara at Gokarna



Sri Sannidhanam at Durga Paramesvari temple, Kateel



Sri Sannidhanam performing Saikata Linga Puja at Gokarna

Sri Sannidhanam also recounted how the 32nd Jagadguru of Sringeri Peetham, Sri Vriddha Nrisimha Bharati, during his last days wished to come to Gokarna and offer *puja*. However, arrangements could not be made for the same at that time.

While the Acharya engaged in *dhyana* of Sri Mahabalesvara, the *archakas* in Gokarna Kshetra remarkably witnessed the Acharya performing *puja* to Bhagavan Mahabalesvara. The Acharya too had stated to the Mutt authorities in Sringeri that he had found joy in having worshipped Bhagavan Mahabalesvara at Gokarna.

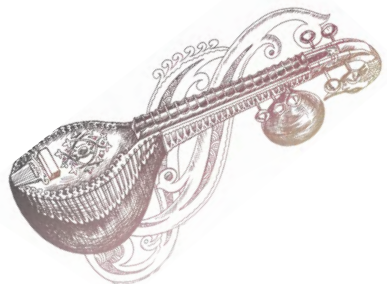
It was as if the Acharya had used his *tapas sakti* to travel to Gokarna Kshetram. The Acharya had composed a hymn titled '*Mahabalesa Ashtakam*'.

On May 1, 2023, the Jagadguru worshipped a

Saikatalinga on the seashore and took a holy dip in the sea as per tradition. He then proceeded to Sri Mahaganapati temple and offered elaborate *puja* to chants of *Veda mantras*.

From there the Jagadguru was taken in a procession to the famous Sri Mahabalesvara temple, and he performed an elaborate *puja* for the welfare of the humanity amidst chanting of *Veda mantras*.

On behalf of the Sringeri Mutt, Sri Sannidhanam also offered a silver bowl and jewels to the temple.





The Divine Names of Sri Krishna-7

The 108 auspicious names of Krishna contained in Sri Krishna Ashtottara Satanamavali represent the collection of Krishna'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 Krishna.

22) अनघाय नमः ।

Anaghāya namaḥ |

Salutations to the one who is sinless.

This *nama* occurs in the *Vishnu Sahasranama*, and Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada explains it as

अघं न विद्यते अस्य इति अनघः ।

(Agham na vidyate asya iti anaghaḥ),

meaning the one who is without any sin. The Acharya quotes the *Chandogya Upanishad* (VIII.7.1) to explain that Bhagavan is one who is uncontaminated.

Even during the *Isvara avatara* as Rama and Krishna, unlike mortals who are tainted by *punya* and *papa*, he remained blemishless.

23) नवनीतनवाहारिणे नमः ।

Navanītanavāhāriṇe namaḥ |

Srimad Bhagavatam mentions that Krishna was not satisfied with the pots of home-made butter that Yasoda prepared, and he delightfully went in search of fresh butter through the Vraja community so that he could bring joy to all the *gopis* - the butter had to be *nava*, and from *nava* or new places.

Śvetāśvataropaniṣad (I.16) says, just as butter is obtained by churning curd, one can realise the Self by churning one's intellect.

This symbolism can be connected every time one visualises Krishna holding the butter in his hand.

24) मुचुकुन्दप्रसादकाय नमः ।

Mucukunda prasādakāya namaḥ |

Jarasandha, who could not reconcile to Kamsa's death, had invaded Mathura no less than seventeen times, and as

he prepared to invade one more time, he found a strong ally in Kalayavana. The two armies besieged Mathura, and as Krishna sensed danger in this mother of sieges, he transported the citizens of Mathura to the newly created Dwaraka that stood amidst the sea.

After ensuring the safety of citizens, Krishna walked to the gate of Mathura and appeared to be furtively looking for escape.

Kalayavana was duly informed and he arrived to face Krishna. But Krishna briskly walked away from the city, and after sometime started running down the path. Kalayavana followed and almost caught hold of Krishna, but as they neared the end of the path, the divine *avatara* disappeared into a cave in the mountain ahead.

Kalayavana taunted Krishna for his cowardice

and followed him into the cave. As it was pitch dark inside, he could not spot Krishna, and slowly as his eyes got used to the darkness, he noticed a human form sleeping on the ground.

Assuming that it was Krishna, he kicked him, and the person woke up to burn him down in no time. The person was none other than Muchukunda whose ancestry was traced to the Ikshvaku dynasty.

Muchukunda was the son of the legendary king Mandhata, and his power and righteousness were so great that even the *devas* had sought his help to defeat Tarakasura during the *Krita yuga*. He led their army and defended their cities till Kartikeya arrived to take charge.

It was time for Muchukunda to return to the earth, his motive being liberation,

but he had nowhere to go. He had come to assist the *devas* in the *Krita yuga*, and it was now *Dvapara yuga*!

An extremely tired Muchukunda simply asked Indra, the celestial chief who had come to thank him for his help, that he be allowed to sleep for a long long time, and that any person who dared to wake him up should be burnt to ashes. This is where Kalayana had unwittingly become Muchukunda's target.

The compassionate Krishna wanted to grant Muchkunda his well deserved *moksha*, as he had helped to rid the world of Kalayavana's tyranny through the cave episode.

Now fully awake, Muchukunda saw Krishna standing before him as Mahavishnu in his effulgent form.

He burst out in ecstasy, with words laden in wisdom,

and his verses became popular as *Muchukunda Stuti*. Essentially, the enlightened king referred to the transience of the world, and how humans driven by their senses, were repeatedly ensnared by *samsara* and the wheel of birth and death.

Striking a personal note, Muchukunda wailed how he himself was caught in the web of *maya*, showing extreme attachment towards his wife, children and kingdom. He had spent all his life making countless plans, but never reckoned that *Isvara* was *Kala* or Time, who swallowed everything.

Krishna granted that Muchukunda would be liberated after taking one more birth, during which he would remain unattached to the happenings in the world.

25) षोडशस्त्रीसहस्रेशाय नमः ।

*Ṣoḍaśāstrī sahasreśāya
namah |*

I pay obeisance to Sri Krishna who is the lord of 16,000 women.

Srimad Bhagavatham mentions that there were eight principal spouses of Krishna, including Rukmini and Satyabhama.

The story of 16,000 young women joining his household is traced to Krishna slaying the demon Narakasura. Narakasura had captured this large number of unmarried women and kept them as slaves.

Once the *asura* was killed, the released women begged with Krishna to marry them as the society would never accept them. If their request was not acceded, they said they would commit suicide. Thus trapped in a *dharma sankat*, Krishna accepted them all in his household so that they lived an honourable life.

There are *puranic* accounts that Krishna constructed for

them each a palace with huge gardens full of colourful flowers. It was impossible to live with each of them so he created 16000 forms of himself so that he could treat them all in the same manner as his eight wives. Scriptures say that each of them had ten sons and one daughter.

This symbolism should be properly understood as part of Lord's *avatara leelas*. There are accounts to describe that each of these women were *rishis* from the past who wanted to be part of Lord's incarnation on earth. They had prayed to Lord Vishnu to live closer to him and witness his life, and were granted the boon to be his wives in his next incarnation.

Bhagavan is *nissangah*, devoid of attachments, and in this *avatar*, he was but a mute spectator to the charms of worldly interactions.





Eight Great Qualities – II

*The following is the continuation of an exposition
from the last issue by Jagadguru
Sri Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmīgal, the
35th pontiff of the Sri Sringeri Sharada Peetham.*

*The Swamiji's explanations consistently bore the
stamp of His direct experience of the Truth, his
complete mastery of yoga, and his unparalleled
erudition in the Sāstrās.*

The fifth essential quality is Freedom from Laziness. Many persons give reasons for not being in a position to carry out their tasks. No employer would be pleased with an indolent worker. A student who keeps putting off reading fares badly in his studies.

When a person sincerely engages himself in the prompt performance of his duties, his mind gets far less opportunity to engage itself in idle or harmful thoughts. Thus, it is in everyone's interest to eschew laziness and cultivate zeal.

The sixth noble quality is Auspiciousness. When we meet some people, we note that their words as also facial expressions are not pleasing. This is undesirable. We should speak and conduct ourselves in a manner which is pleasant.

Proper speech is not just pleasing to hear but is also

factual. Manu has said, "Speak the truth. Utter that which is pleasant. Do not verbalize a distressing truth. Do not say anything that is gratifying but false. This is the eternal *dharma*."

Lord Krishna taught Arjuna, "Speech that causes no pain and is true, agreeable and beneficial, and the practice of studying the scriptures constitute austerity of speech." Such austerity of speech purifies a person.

Not Hoarding

The seventh ordained quality is Absence of Niggardliness. The tendency to hoard and not part with anything in charity is the result of greed. Krishna has spoken of desire, anger and greed as the triple gates of hell. Hoarding will never benefit us. When we die, we cannot take our wealth with us.

Nilakantha Dikshitar has humorously advised, "If you

are keen that even after death you should not be parted with your wealth and that you should carry it with you in a bundle on your head, then give it to the deserving.”

Currency notes cannot be taken to the next world. On the other hand, if a miser converts them into virtue by offering charity, he need not fear that he will lose them after death. After all, virtue will accompany him to the next world.

The scriptures prescribe giving of gifts to the deserving as an antidote for greed. So, charity, apart from bringing about happiness in others, greatly conduces to the spiritual well-being of the donor. A person who loses some money feels unhappy. But he feels happy, not sad, when he voluntarily gives the same amount to a poor student who is not in a position to pay the examination fees.

Charity can thus make not only the donee, but also the donor, happy.

A person was advised by a holy man to gift a vegetable a day and told that he would attain great merit by doing so. The poor man strictly followed the advice. After death, he was reborn in a royal family and grew up to become a king. He was able to recall what he had done in his past birth. So, he continued to gift a vegetable a day.

Surprisingly, after death, he was reborn as a beggar. The man was unable to comprehend the reason and so sought the advice of the holy man who had earlier blessed him.

From the sage, he learnt that prior to becoming a king, he had been very poor and so a gift of a vegetable a day was sufficient to give him a lot of virtue. On the

other hand, as a king, he was endowed with affluence. So, thereafter, the gift of just a vegetable a day was quite insufficient to earn him merit of any consequence. The person realized that the extent of charity needed to earn a certain degree of merit depends upon one's financial status.

Joy of Non-attachment

The last of the eight qualities is Absence of Attachment. Most of our problems are due to our worldly desires.

It is said in the *Pancadasi*, “He who is attached gets tied down in the world. The unattached one experiences joy. Therefore, attachment should always be given up by one who desires to be happy.”

It is perfectly possible to work efficiently and to fulfil all one's duties without attachment.

In fact, attachment impairs efficient functioning. Commonly, surgeons do not perform surgeries on their close relatives. If there were to be no risk of attachment clouding or impairing performance, such would not have been the case.

(Edited excerpts from the book 'Multifaceted Jivanmukta').



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SEVEN HOLY SPOTS OF KASI KSHETRA IN ONE SLOKA

One pilgrimage centre that every person longs to visit during his lifetime is the holy city of Varanasi. Every lane and bye-lane in Varanasi is

dotted with temples, each one with its own story.

The scriptures say that even if a person is unable to visit all the temples in the

city, he should never miss at least seven most important of them.

The foremost is of course is the Kasi Visvanatha Temple, the main deity who rules Varanasi attracting thousands of devotees every day. Many elders opt to spend their last days in Varanasi based on the belief that Siva is believed to chant the *taraka* (Rama) *mantra* during the last moments of a person and give liberation from the cycle of life.

The temple of Mata Visalakshi is considered one of the *Ashtadasa Sakti Peethas*, where the ear rings of *Sati* are said to have fallen on this holy spot. The temple is also situated by the famous cremation ground of Manikarnika Ghat in Ganges.

The Bindu Madhava temple with an exquisite *murti* of Vishnu and the *saligrama* that sage Agni Bindu brought from the Gandaki

river in Nepal is another important landmark. The temple is on the Panchaganga Ghat of Ganges, which is said to be confluence of five rivers: Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Kirana and Dhutapapa.

The Dhundiraja Ganapati temple, located near the entrance of Kasi Visvanath Temple, is mentioned in the *Skanda Puranam*. According to legends, Ganesa 'handed back' the city of Kasi to Lord Siva from the reign of king Divodasa, hailed as the most virtuous ruler. Like in all temples, prayer to Dhundi Ganapati is the first before pilgrims seek to have *darsan* of Visvanatha.

Close to the Visvanatha Temple is also the temple of Kartikeya, worshipped as Dandapani and as the protector of the *Kashi Dham*.

The temple of Kala Bhairava, an *amsa* of Siva, is worshipped to overcome the

fear of death. Kala Bhairava, is the *kotval*, or the chief security officer, of Kasi *kshetra*.

The Manikarnika Ghat is held to be very sacred among the 84 ghats of Ganga in Kasi. Legends mention that Mahavishnu, after digging out a *kunda* or tank with his disc (which is famous as *Chakra Pushkarani Tirtha*) performed penance here for thousands of years. A pleased Siva nodded his head in approval and as his ear-ring fell into the *tirtha*, it came to be known as Manikarnika.

Here is a *sloka* in *Sri Kasi Visvanatha Suprabhatam* that reminds one of all the above holy temples of Kasi.

विश्वेशं माधवं धुण्डिं दण्डपाणिं
च भैरवम् ।
वन्दे कार्शीं गुहां गङ्गां
भवानीं मणिकर्णिकाम् ॥

*Viśveśam mādhamam
dhunḍim daṇḍapāṇim ca
bhairavam |*

*Vande kāśīm guhām
gaṅgām bhavānīm
maṇikarnikām ||*

Even if one is unable to visit Kasi, a mere remembrance and chanting of this *sloka* is said to bring great spiritual benefits to the faithful devotees.





Teppotsava of Sri Gopalakrishna Swamy at Sringeri



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DEVOTION VS DISPLAY OF SKILLS

Sages Narada and Tumburu are the famous *bhaktas* of Lord Vishnu. They are renowned for singing the praises of the Lord while playing on their divine *veena* instrument.

The *veena* of Sage Narada is known as Mahathi, and that of sage Tumburu as Kalavathi.

Sage Tumburu was the chieftain of all Gandharvas, who are a class of celestial beings well-versed in music.

He would often be found in the courts of Indra, the chief of *devas*, and Kubera, the God of wealth, singing the glories of Mahavishnu, while the sage Narada was known to be always on the move, singing the praises of Lord Mahavishnu and predicting the future to devotees.

Once sage Narada became a little jealous of the appreciation that sage Tumburu was getting. Vishnu immediately sensed this, and asked Narada to

approach an owl named Ganabandhu and take music lessons from the owl. Narada did this, and also approached Rukmini, Sri Krishna's consort, and enhanced his musical skills.

He then challenged sage Tumburu to a contest. Both of them went to Lord Vishnu and rendered their songs while playing on their *veenas*.

Lord Vishnu was happy with their music, but told them that he was unable to judge as to who was superior. So he suggested that they approach Hanuman, who is an adept *veena* player himself and the foremost of the Lord's *bhaktas*.

Hence the sages approached Hanuman and requested Him to be a judge for the contest between them. A day was fixed for the contest and all the *devas* were invited. Hanuman took the judge's seat.

Hanuman asked sage Tumburu to perform first. The sage started singing and everyone felt mesmerised. The universe was spellbound and all of the Lord's creation froze and came to a standstill.

Now it was the turn of Narada. Sage Narada too strummed his *veena* with great devotional fervour, and slowly all creations came back to life and gaiety.

The audience was spellbound and everyone was anxious to hear the verdict of Hanuman as the competitors seemed on par with each other.

Hanuman requested the sages to give him their *veenas*. He patiently plucked out the frets (the strings across the width), and asked the sages to play their *veenas* once again. Both replied that it was impossible to do so.

At this stage, Hanuman picked up a piece of bamboo and gently moved it over the *veena* and started playing it himself. The music was absolutely divine and unmatched, and the audience did not even notice that Lord Vishnu was in their midst, listening to the music.

Hanuman had dedicated his every breath and action to the Lord, and this made his music unsurpassed. The sages bowed their heads and

praised the *bhakti* of Hanuman.

The incident was a lesson to them that it was not important to score over another by displaying skills, but imbibe the spirit of complete surrender to Lord. When this is done, the Lord takes over the rest.

Anuradha Sundara Raman
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Say it in Sanskrit

Try to fill in the blanks in the following sentences:

1) _____ कार्यं करोति ।
_____ *kāryam karoti* |

He works.

2) सः _____ कार्यं करोति ।
Saḥ _____ *kāryam karoti* |

He works here.

3) सः चिकिसालये कार्यं _____ करोति ।
Saḥ chikisālaye kāryam _____ *karoti* |

He does not work in a hospital.

4) सः कार्यालये _____ करोति ।

Saḥ kāryālaye _____ karoti |

He works in an office.

5) सः _____ कार्यं करोति ।

Saḥ kāryam karoti |

He works fast.

6) स _____ सपाद- नववादनात् _____ सार्ध-पञ्चवादनपर्यन्तं
कार्यं करोति ।

Saḥ _____ sapāda-navavādanāt _____

sārdha-pañcavādanaparyantaṁ kāryam karoti |

He works from 9.15 in the morning to 5.30

in the evening.

7) सः _____ सह कार्यं करोति ।

Saḥ _____ saḥ akāryam karoti |

He works with me.

8) सः यत्र कार्यं करोति तत्र _____ कार्यं करोमि ।

Saḥ yatra kāryam karoti tatra _____ kāryam karomi |

I also work (there), where he works.

9) _____ एकस्मिन् कार्यालये कार्यं कुर्वः ।

_____ kāryālaye kāryam kurvaḥ |

We two work in the same office.

10) _____ सर्वे प्रसन्नतया तत्रैव कार्यं कुर्मः ।

_____ sarve prasannatayā tatraiva kāryam kurmaḥ |

We all work there happily.

Answer: 1. *Saḥ*; 2. *atra*; 3. *na*; 4. *kāryam*;
5. *śīghram śīghram*; 6. *prātaḥ*; *sāyam*; 7. *mayā*;
8. *ahamapi*; 9. *Āvām*; 10. *vayam*.

In the above sentences, some forms of the commonly used verb कृ (to do) have been highlighted in red. The various forms of the verb in present tense (लट् लकारः) across different persons (*puruṣa*) and numbers are given below:

	Singular	Dual	Plural
Third Person (<i>Prathama puruṣa</i>)	करोति <i>Karoti</i>	कुरुतः <i>kurutaḥ</i>	कुर्वन्ति <i>kurvanti</i>
Second Person (<i>Madhyama puruṣa</i>)	करोषि <i>Karoṣi</i>	कुरुथः <i>kuruthaḥ</i>	कुरुथ <i>kurutha</i>
First Person (<i>Uttama puruṣa</i>)	करोमि <i>Karomi</i>	कुर्वः <i>kurvaḥ</i>	कुर्मः <i>kurmaḥ</i>

As this form is used often, it has to be learned thoroughly.

Try to solve this simple *prahelikā* (riddle):

मेघश्यामोऽस्मि नो कृष्णो महाकायो न पर्वतः ।

बलिष्ठोऽस्मि न भीमोऽस्मि कोऽस्म्यहं नासिकाकरः ॥

Meghaśyāmo'smi no kṛṣṇo mahākāyo na parvataḥ |

Baliṣṭho'smi na bhīmo'smi ko'smyaham nāsikākaraḥ ||

I am grey like the rain clouds, but not Krishna; I am huge, but not a mountain; I am strong, but I am not Bhima; who am I whose nose is the hand?

Answer: गजः (*gajāḥ*)

To Utter the Truth or Not

There once lived a rich landlord who was known for his quick temper. He was also deeply fascinated by astrology, and he used to invite astrologers to his house to hear their predictions for his future.

On one such occasion, an astrologer told the landlord the unvarnished grim truth that he would witness the death of all his relatives.

Feeling deeply flustered upon hearing this, the infuriated landlord kicked the astrologer out of his house.

Later on, the landlord invited another soothsayer

to hear his predictions. This astrologer niftily tweaked the truth a bit, and told the landlord that he would enjoy the glory of longer lifespan than all his relatives!

Feeling exulted, the landlord richly rewarded him.

The normal of the story is that the stark truth at times could be more bitter than the bitter pill. So, while conveying unpalatable things, a whit of tweaking of truth is essential, such that it cushions or mitigates the negative impact.

The above story is illustrative of the following *dharmaic* code contained in *Manusmriti*:

सत्यम् ब्रूयात् प्रियम् ब्रूयात्
न ब्रूयात् सत्यम् अप्रियम्
प्रियम् च नानृतम् ब्रूयादेष
धर्मः सनातनः

*Satyam brūyāt
priyam brūyāt
Na brūyāt satyam apriyam
Priyam cha nānṛtam
bruyādesha dharmaha
sanātanaha*

Speak the truth, speak
pleasantly,
Do not speak the truth in an
unpleasant manner.
Even if pleasant, do not
speak untruth.
This is the path of eternal
righteousness.

The message is that speak
the truth in such a way that it
is pleasing to others. Always
speak in a beautiful manner,
but never lie. As we should
not speak the unpleasant
truth, we should also not
speak lies, however pleasant
they may be. This is the
eternal philosophy of
righteousness.

This also reminds us of a
saying, “What all we think,
we need not have to utter.
But, what all we utter, we
need to think!”

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Funtastick

Say It in Sanskrit: 1-87; 2-103; 3-87; 4-85; 5-88; 6-87; 7-89; 8-87;
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