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2023

# Tattvāloka

THE SPLENDOUR OF TRUTH

**KRISHNA AND SUDAMA**

**DECODING THE  
VIJAYA MANTRA**

**SUBHEKSHANA, THE MERCIFUL  
GLANCE OF ISVARA**

**EKATMA PANCHAKAM,  
THE FIVE VERSES ON SELF**

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Respectful Pranams to His Holiness Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji performing Chandramoulisvara Puja for Loka Kshema

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***With Best Compliments from***



# 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...*

## Seek Peace and Joy Within

H.H. Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji

The feeling of peace, contentment and joy is natural in every human being. But man mistakenly searches for peace and joy in the outside world full of objects. He strives to go after the objects that his mind hankers. Thereby, he hopes for permanent happiness in this ever-changing world.

When worldly objects are seen and desired, there is mental unrest in a man exerting to secure those objects. Once acquired, man derives pleasure that is temporary and superficial. This hankering after objects is akin to running after a mirage in a desert to quench one's thirst.

Our *Sastras* reiterate that true happiness follows only when mental unrest due to unchecked *vasanas* (tendencies) is quietened by discrimination (*viveka*) - the ability to differentiate between what is real or beneficial, and what is not. Continuous involvement in the objective world does not fetch happiness.

According to our ancient seers, *vasanas* are unchecked tendencies or impressions left in the mind after an action or

experience. These delude and drive a person incessantly towards the outside world of objects.

Knowing that a person cannot control the stream of *vasanas* at once, the *Sastras* advise the seeker to control the upsurge of *vasanas* and seek joy within.

By constant practice, the seeker can eliminate all *vasanas* and he will gradually be led to his inner self, which is the permanent abode of peace. As the mind is trained to remain in this inner self, the *vasanas* too will appropriately subside.

When the tendency to seek happiness outside is controlled, it will become natural for the man to remain in the blissful state of the Self (*Atman*) free from hindrances.

The supreme incarnation and the universal Jagadguru, Sri Adi Sankaracharya states:

यथा यथा प्रत्यगवस्थितं मनस्तथा तथा मुञ्चति बाह्यवासनाः ।  
निःशेषमोक्षे सति वासनानामात्मानुभूतिः प्रतिबन्धशून्या ॥

The stilling of mind is a pre-requisite for this *sadhana*. This is the aim of all spiritual practices.

The guidance of a realised guru acts as the boat to safely ferry across the aspirant through this ocean of transmigration.

We bless everyone to understand this and seek permanent bliss within.



Dear Sir,

*Tattvāloka* has been my mentor on spiritual matters for over three decades.

In the July 2023 issue featuring the Sankara Jayanthi *anugraha bhashanam*, Sringeri Jagadguru Sri Sannidanam nicely clarifies the misconception about Adi Sankara's statement '*jiva brahmaiva nāparaha*'. The Acharya elucidates that '*Jivatma* and *Brahman* are non-different, whereas *jivatma* and *Bhagavan* are not non-different'.

The issue also contains the quintessence of Meditation with the axiom 'Exert when relaxed and relax when exerted' in the article by Om Swami.

Finally, the article 'Our Incredible Genetic Code' illuminates the tenuous, latent link between the genetic code and the forty branches of Vedic studies that are encoded in our DNA. It is astounding to think how our ancient *rishis* have elucidated the link between the individual soul and the cosmic mind.

My humble *pranams* to the Jagadguru, the authors and the editorial group for such a spiritual treat.

P. Krishnamurthy  
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Dear Sir,

Thanks *Tattvāloka* for featuring Om Swamiji's 'The Most Fundamental Human Desire' in the August 2023 issue. He has truly stated that compassion and empathy make 'feeling loved', a priceless possession.

Being in the medical profession, it makes me feel the worth of this article, which is directed specially towards the medical community that is meant to serve. Our track in the field takes us in treating the disease alone. Looking deep into the complete desired outcome, we need to physically, mentally and socially give solace to the ailing. Making the patient feel loved will add much to the expected result. In fact, the medical curriculum should include a chapter on 'Passion about others' wellbeing'.

Dr. Sanjay Aggarwal

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Dear Sir,

The article '*The Most Fundamental Human Desire*' (August issue) is inspiring and informative, embedding a valuable message that 'To love and to be loved is the greatest joy of human existence'.

Mahatma Gandhi's favourite song '*Vaishnav janato tene kahiye*' means that a true devotee of the Lord alone understands the pain of the other person. He shows compassion, helps others, and does not let his ego come in the way. Learning to love oneself lifts the person spiritually, and helps to transform him to give love to others.

R. Pichumani

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Here is the recounting  
of the famous story in  
Srimad Bhagavatam  
that offers deep  
spiritual  
lessons



# KRISHNA AND SUDAMA

**A**s kids, both Krishna and Sudama were pupils of the great sage Sandipani and lived in his *ashram*.

One day they were asked to fetch some firewood from the forest. Knowing it was a tiring exercise, the sage's wife packed them puffed rice. One pouch each. As usual, Krishna asked Sudama to hold onto both and that he would take his when required.

They left in the morning and as they went further in the woods, it started pouring. Sudama was keen to run back to the *ashram* and revisit the task at another time, but Krishna was not having any of it, no matter how unrelenting the rain.

They took shelter under a giant banyan tree with Sudama climbing up the tree and Krishna resting on one of the lower boughs.

A couple of hours passed and there was no sign of the rain abating. Sudama devoured his tiffin. Another hour passed and he felt pangs of hunger again. Taking a bit of rice from Krishna's share would not hurt anyone, he thought. And so he ate some from the pouch that belonged to Krishna. A mere five minutes later, before he knew it, he had already polished it off.

When the rain stopped in the afternoon, Krishna mentioned he was famished and wanted his rice, to which Sudama replied that in all the running around

from rain in the morning, both the tiny bundles of rice had come loose and they were all but gone. Knowing what Sudama had actually done, Krishna let him have his dignity and chose not to confront him.

### Life after Graduation

Upon graduation, they went back to their hometowns and lost touch. Sudama became a priest who, it seemed, not only married his wife but poverty too. Krishna, on the other hand, became a mighty ruler revered by everyone.

Several years later, when Krishna was the emperor of Dwaraka and Sudama a poor but scholarly *brahmin*, an extraordinary incident unfolded.

Prodded by his wife, Sudama reluctantly agreed to visit his royal friend Krishna and ask for help. Not wanting her husband to go empty-handed, she borrowed

three fistfuls of puffed rice from her neighbour, and made a little parcel to be offered as a gift to Krishna.

Sudama was not sure if Krishna would meet him, or if he would even remember him at all. Forget the doors of the palace, he was stopped right at the city gates, but somehow got in after pleading.

Finally when he reached the royal entrance and managed to have a message sent to Krishna, he was surprised to see that Krishna himself came out to receive him.

After washing his feet and feeding him, Krishna took Sudama to his private chambers and asked playfully if he brought him any gift. Sudama was tongue-tied to even utter a word, let alone offer the little bundle of tattered cloth with patches in many places. He knew his friend was a

king, but it had never occurred to Sudama how mighty a ruler Krishna was and how opulently he lived.

### Rukmini's Insights

Krishna's chief consort and queen, Rukmini was watching all this with joy and fear in equal parts. Joyous because Krishna seemed happy, and afraid because she knew that Krishna was an *avatara* of Vishnu, and as such, capable of granting anything. She suspected that his playfulness was a bit unusual in the present circumstances.

Krishna saw that his friend was hiding something and so he grabbed Sudama's hand and seized the pouch.

“Ah, so this is my gift,” Krishna said, and undid the knot. Sudama looked down and Rukmini askance.

He took a handful of those puffed rice and put it in his

mouth. As he was eating those and smiling, Sudama could not hold back his tears. Rukmini, however, knew that with Krishna accepting the offering like this only meant one thing—he would give back a millionfold.

This was the same Krishna who had had one mere grain of rice from Draupadi's pot, and the entire entourage of the feared sage Durvasa was satisfied including the sage himself. She, an *avatara* herself of Mother Divine, knew that by eating one handful of rice, Krishna had already granted Sudama all the material riches imaginable.

When Krishna took another fistful of rice, her heart sank. She pleaded with him to stop by subtly folding her hands. She knew that eating it again meant a rare and direct intervention by Krishna in the *modus operandi* of the Universe. Krishna being who he was,



did not stop and put the second serving in his mouth relieving Sudama of his entire *karmic* burden forever.

On Krishna's left hand was resting the creased and sullied cloth with another handful of rice. Sudama had no clue what was going on and meanwhile, unbeknownst to him, his family back home had already been provided with a lavish dwelling, servants, food and plenty of gold to last lifetimes.

As Krishna dug into the remaining rice and raised his hand to put them in his mouth, Rukmini leapt forward and held his wrist.

“Please, O Soul of the universe,” she said and looked at him with her eyes filled with tears, “You have secured him an abundance of all kinds of wealth in this world and the next.

After all, one's prosperity depends on your

satisfaction. If you take this, you will give away all riches from all the planes of existence and that would include me, *Sri*. What will the world live off, what will happen to the law of *karma* and the laws of nature? Please stop.”

Krishna knew that Rukmini was right, and he refrained from eating the third palmful lest he should give away everything to one person.

Krishna ate the first two for he knew that even after being an erudite scholar, Sudama had been living a life of abject poverty because he had once taken what was not his. He had taken what rightfully belonged to Krishna, that one small bag of rice when they were kids, and had lied subsequently.

As it is, to covet what's not yours comes at the huge expense of your spiritual

growth, and then to actually take what does not belong to you is a depraved act, completely immoral.

Krishna knew that only He could pardon his friend because one, he was Vishnu, and two, it was his portion of rice that Sudama had taken as a young adult. A victim holds the first right to forgiveness.

And yet, Rukmini was successful in stopping Krishna from eating it the third time. The three fistfuls

could easily be the three planes of existence, this world (*bhu*), the divine world (*bhuvah*), beyond (*svaha*), or the three states of consciousness, sleeping (*sushupta*), dreaming (*svapna*), awake (*jagrata*), or the three modes of material nature, goodness (*sattva*), passion (*rajas*), ignorance (*tamas*), or anything else at all.

Krishna alone knows what Krishna means.

Om Swami



## Pearls from Bhagavad Gita

मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण  
 भक्ति-योगेन सेवते ।  
 स गुणान् समतीत्यैतान्  
 ब्रह्म-भूयाय कल्पते ।

*Mām ca yo  
 avyabhicāreṇa bhakti-  
 yogena sevate |  
 Sa guṇān  
 samatītyaitan brahma-  
 bhūyāya kalpate.*

*He who, with unwavering  
 yoga of devotion, serves Me,  
 transcends the Gunas and  
 becomes fit for the status of  
 oneness with Brahman.*

**Bhagavad Gita 14-26**

**T**his is an innocent-looking *sloka* but with great spiritual content. It occurs at almost the end of chapter 14 of the



## Wisdom for Self-Improvement-24

*Gita*, right in the midst of six *slokas* (22 to 27) which proclaim the importance and greatness of a '*gunatita*'.

'By what signs is one distinguished as a *gunatita*?' asks Arjuna and the reply comes in *slokas* 22 to 25.

A *gunatita* is one who has all the following characteristics, namely, for him pain and pleasure, honour and dishonour, the lovely and the not-so-lovely,



are all the same; he sits like one unconcerned. Neither the rise of *sattva* because of enlightenment, nor the rise of *rajas* because of the necessity for work, show any change in him; nor does he abhor delusion when it comes due to rising *tamas*.

He does not himself start any action. Such a one when he serves with an unwavering devotion to the Lord is already earmarked for being in *Brahman*.

The characteristic of '*gunatita*' is so immense and precious, that when scholars interpret the word '*guru*' they say '*gu*' stands for '*gunatita*' and '*ru*' stands for '*rupa-varjitah*' (that is one without attributes of a form).

Sanskrit language is infinitely famous for its interpreting words by the very letters that go to make up the word. An example is found in *Srimad Ramayana*.

Once when Ravana enters the *puja* room of his spouse Mandodari, he is aghast by the writing '*Rama*' (राम) on the walls of the room as well as everywhere. When he asks Mandodari what it was all about, she answers, "They all stand for you and me together: '*Ra*' stands for your name and '*ma*' stands for my name!"

'*Avyabhicharena*' is another characteristic usage in Sanskrit. '*Vyabhichara*' is going astray, meaning one succumbs in all ways to all the senses. So, '*avyabhicharena*' means the steadfast quality of unwavering, without any iota of exception.

Prof U. Krishnamurthy

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# Bliss of the Self – 12

What we generally call as 'knowledge' is simply information that we gather through the senses with the help of the mind.

**W**hile the ninth verse of 'Forty verses on Reality' (Ulladu Narpadu) of Sri Ramana Maharishi refers to turning the mind inward, the next verse describes what is true knowledge.

Sri Ramana says there is no separate existence for knowledge apart from ignorance. To enquire, 'Whose is this knowledge? Whose is this ignorance?' and thus to know the primal Self, this alone is true knowledge.

*Jnana* is the *svarupa* of Brahman, the Self. The corresponding word for the Sanskrit term *jnana* is *arivu* in Tamil. This *arivu* generally

comes into being along with the *triputi* - the knower, the knowledge and the known. It is not possible to have any worldly or scriptural knowledge without these three entities.

The expression 'knows' naturally implies the following: 'Who?' 'What?' and 'How?'. All such knowledge, implying the knower, the act of knowing and the known, is in the realm of duality. All these happen within nature. Hence this knowledge is termed *apara vidya*.

*Apara vidya* is actually *avidya*; it is just ignorance. Therefore, this knowledge cannot be accepted as *brahma svarupa*. *Apara vidya* is ignorance, for, even when there is knowledge,

ignorance exists as its companion. Worldly knowledge cannot exist without ignorance, and ignorance cannot exist without worldly knowledge.

### ***Jnani and Ajnani***

Once, a simple-minded *sadhu* saw a number of scholars asking questions, and Sri Ramana Maharishi giving them suitable answers.

After they left, this man asked with great humility and apprehension: "Swamiji, all these people have studied various books and are learned. They are able to ask you questions of great depth and they understand the answers, whereas I know nothing. I am an ignorant person. What will be my fate? Is there any hope for me?"

Sri Maharishi replied: "Yours is unlearned ignorance, and theirs is learned ignorance; that's all! You say, 'I am an *ajnani*'. If you enquire who this 'I' is,

then real knowledge will dawn upon you! These scholars too, if they make their noisy minds quiet, and know their own Self, all their doubts will vanish, and they will also become peaceful."

What is the knowledge of *Brahman*? Knowing one's Self alone is true knowledge. All other knowledge exists as a mixture of knowledge of the objects of the senses, and ignorance.

While a person may possess knowledge about a particular subject, he may be quite ignorant of many others: Omniscience is never ever possible in the realm of worldly knowledge.

### ***Who is a Pandita?***

According to the *Sastras*, a person should not be called a *pandita* on account of his great scholarship in the knowledge about the world. One who has that knowledge which makes the Self known alone can be considered a

*pandita*, says Sri Adi Sankara in the *Gita Bhashyam*.

A Guru is not for teaching something new; on the other hand, it is to turn the attention of a *mumukshu* towards the Self, towards the knower, the 'I'.

The world is actually a mixture of *chit* - the 'I', the knower which is pure awareness, and *idam* - the known, the objects. In short, this constitutes what we define as 'MY world'.

What we generally call as 'knowledge' is simply information that we gather through the senses with the help of the mind. All these ideas, images and information are then framed in certain names and forms preserved in the form of thought-impressions in the brain. This process is defective at the very first step.

For, the thought 'I', the first person, the centre of

thinking, is itself illusory. All kinds of information that arise from this erroneous basic premise in the form of thoughts and linguistic expressions are mere waves in the mind (*vikshepa*).

For a person who does not know English, for example, the brilliant expositions of an English scholar or the primitive usages by an illiterate, are both mere sounds! Hence 'knowledge' and 'ignorance' are only relative terms.

In *Vedanta*, 'knowledge' refers only to the pure awareness, the knowing-principle, the intelligence behind all knowledge. Terms like knowledge and experience, are synonyms for consciousness. This consciousness is what the *Vedas* call *jnapti*.

The experience of 'I am' is the light which illumines both knowledge and ignorance. When we follow the quest 'Who am I?' with

the eye of attention, the 'I' in the experience of 'I am' can be seen to disappear into the simple experience of 'am'. In this experience 'I am', 'I' is the personal element and 'am' is existence.

It is consciousness that underlies and illumines both 'I know' and 'I do not know'. This awareness is existence, beingness - the *sat*. That indeed is the treasure that we are seeking. Remaining established in that original source, which is pure awareness is wisdom.

As all people have the consciousness 'I', in and through all that the person experiences, it can be asserted that every one of us, without exception, has the experience of the Self. The *Sruti* also says that this Self is hidden in the experience of all. Yet the suffering continues as a result of mixing up the functions of the body-mind-senses with the consciousness-'I'.

Eliminating the functions of the *upadhis* from consciousness and holding the 'I am' ablaze in awareness is *Atma-Yoga*. When we perceive objects by the light of consciousness, we claim that 'we know'. When we do not perceive objects, we say that 'we do not know'.

In fact, it is consciousness that illumines both the presence and the absence of objects. The person who claims, 'I do not know' must be conscious to say so. That is, he himself is the consciousness!

Therefore, Sri Ramana generally remarks: "All are *jnanis*. There is no *ajnani* at all." Where is it possible for ignorance to stay? Just as darkness cannot remain in the sun, ignorance cannot remain in the Self.

Nochur Sri  
Venkataraman



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



# Ekatma Panchakam

## *the Five Verses on Self*

A brief work of profound significance by Sri Ramana Maharishi on the nature of Self

In 1947, upon the request of a close disciple, Suri Nagamma Sri Ramana Maharshi composed five verses that was titled *Ekatma Panchakam* (Five verses on the One Self). The original verses were in Telugu in the *venba* meter and later translated to Tamil.

These verses turned out to be the last verses ever composed by the Maharshi and, in a perfect cosmic arrangement, turned out to be his complete teaching.

Here are the five verses rendered in simple English.

The first verse points out the nature of Truth and the ignorance arising due to false identification with the body that causes the illusion of both seeking and realising.

The Maharshi says, ignoring one's Being as Pure Consciousness, one identifies with the body and goes through innumerable births, but in the end realises and 'becomes' the Self. Know this as similar to waking from a dream in which one has wandered about the entire world.

The second verse dismisses all forms of seeking as ultimately ridiculous including even self-inquiry by stating that the very question 'who am I' is no different from an intoxicated man questioning his own identity.

The Maharishi says one always remains as the Self that is Pure Consciousness. To ask oneself, 'Who am I?'

or 'Whence arises I?' is no different from a drunken man asking, 'Who am I?' or 'Where am I?'

### Incorrect Identification

The third and fourth verses reveal the why of the previous verse. All seeking is in the wrong direction and ridiculous because just as the picture is always in the screen and can never seek the screen, or the ornament is always in gold and can never seek the gold, our body/mind complex is always within Pure Consciousness and can never seek Pure Consciousness.

In short, we seek for Truth imagining it to be within us. But the very seeker we imagine to be is within Truth.

The Maharishi says the body is within Consciousness. Yet one imagines Consciousness is inside the inert body. This is the same as a viewer seeing a picture

on a screen and imagining that the screen is within the picture.

Does a gold ornament exist apart from the gold? Can the body exist separate from Consciousness? The ignorant one asserts, 'I am the body'. The one who has realised his true nature as Pure Consciousness sees everything as Consciousness.

The final verse aptly summarises the highest teaching of Maharishi's entire earthly life by stating that no words can ever capture the Truth that is only pointed through the eternal medium of silence.

All words are only appearances on the screen of Consciousness and can never therefore help understand the screen itself that ever abides as silence.

The verse says, the one true Consciousness alone abides forever. The ancients from

the very first teacher pointed to this Truth by speaking without words, through silence alone. Who can ever capture that through speech then?

Thus seen clearly, these five verses can put a complete end to all forms of seeking, including the constant need to read more and more books, or to listen to various professional speakers and endless discourses on that which is beyond the grasp of words, or to seek any kind of experiences which are of the nature of rising and falling.

The verses are a clear recognition of the ever abiding eternal Being that is Pure Consciousness, ever unentangled, untouched and imperturbable by any thought, any feeling, any experience, any action.

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NELLAI CANCER HOSPITAL



With the blessing of **Late Dr. Shanta, Chairperson of Adyar Cancer Institute, Chennai**, the **Nellai Cancer Care Centre** has been at the forefront of delivering exemplary cancer services, in and around Tirunelveli, for more than a decade.

By setting up the **Nellai Cancer Hospital**, we aim to close the cancer care gap in the region. This project has been blessed by **Maha Sannidhanam** and **Sannidhanam of Sringeri Mutt**.

### Our mentors in this journey

**T S Krishnamurthy**, Former Chief Election Commissioner of India

**Dr. Krishnakumar Rathanam**, Med. Oncologist, Meenakshi Mission Hospital

**T. Anbumani**, Retd. Chief Admin. Officer, Tata Memorial Hospital

**Dr. Hymavathy Rajee**, Breast Onco Surgeon

**Dr. Aruna Chandrasekharan**, Surgical Oncologist

**Dr. Sundarraaj Lakshmiiah**, Head & Neck Oncosurgeon, UK

# WE SEEK YOUR SUPPORT

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To close the  
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## Vigilance in Adhering to Dharma

The internal vigilance to uphold dharma gives a person the moral authority and credibility

**W**e all have heard the famous quote 'Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty'. It is absolutely true. Mahatma Gandhi showed us and the world that we must fight for freedom, but that should be through *dharmic* means. The Indian freedom movement was based on *ahimsa*, non-violence, and love for everyone including the British, our erstwhile colonial rulers.

A *dharmic* approach may take longer, and involve some suffering. But, the result is pleasant and long lasting.

Having got freedom, what will you do with it? You should, of course, preserve it

and let all the people benefit under it. So, *dharma* is even more important, both before liberty, and after attaining liberty.

The standing, permanent challenge is however, how will we sustain *dharma* forever. This requires unceasing vigilance. At all levels. In government; organisations; community; family; and self.

If every citizen, worker, official, manager, business person, administrator, politician, and leader had her/his active *internal* vigilance, *dharma* is likely to strike deep roots. It will, in turn, uphold the society, nation and the world.

These two truths bear repetition: *Dharayati iti dharma*, that which upholds is *dharma*; and *Dharmo rakshati rakshitah*, where and when *dharma* is protected, it, in turn, protects us.

*Dharma* is not a one-time quest. While Gandhiji's achievement was historic, it cannot be taken for granted for all time. Every era, generation and time has to continue to fight for it.

We come across instances where enlightened business and society leaders take a principled stand to deal with instances of striking and disappointing examples of violation of *dharma*.

A recent example is a large Indian business group noticing the break of *dharma* in one of the companies in the group, a scam in recruitment. A small shareholder raised this issue, directly before the top executive in the group. To its

credit, the management acknowledged the scam, shown regret for the incident, and done amends. It has applied *danda neeti*, and punished the guilty.

There are lessons here for all organisations and their internal and external stakeholders. It can happen anywhere. The infringement of *dharma* could be by anyone. Prompt dealing with such infringement enhances the credibility and character of the institutions and persons concerned.

There is another striking example of such strident treatment of *dharmic* violation in a foreign land, Singapore. The violation is not by a citizen, or any unknown person, it is by a minister. The government promptly suspended and charged him.

We can draw our action implications. One, do not



take *dharma* for granted. Be alert to disturbing signals. Not always looking for them. Not suspicious or paranoid.

Two, because *dharma* prevails for some time, do not assume that it will always reign. Never. Some individuals and groups see opportunities for *adharma*, when they sense complacency about *dharma*.

Three, if it is in your power, do not accept breaches of *dharma*, under your watch. Take necessary actions – punishment; counsel; correction; reinforcement of systems etc.

Four, whenever a case of *adharma* is reported, keep an open mind. Do not jump to conclusion of guilty or innocent. Let the due process of enquiry proceed.

Five, from every such instance, both found guilty

or exonerated, draw the relevant lessons for yourself and your stakeholders.

Lastly, exert a positive influence on people close to you, such as your siblings and other youngsters to have a strong foundation of *dharma*. Make them aware of their internal enemies, especially *kama*, desire, and *lobha*, greed.

Essentially, practice vigilance, not only about others, but also yourself. Your internal vigilance will give you the moral authority and credibility to apply *jagrata* on others.

If every leader, citizen, worker, business person and others practised unceasing vigilance, we can approach the ideal of *Rama Rajya*.

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The joy and peace of beholding the eyes of one's *ishta devata* is beyond description

# Subhekshana,

*the Merciful Glance of Isvara*

One of the auspicious names contained in *Vishnu Sahasranama* is in the verse that begins as 'Vyavasayo vyavasthanah....!', and ending with *Subhekshana*. *Subhekshana* means the one who has auspicious eyes. The word is a combination of *subha* (auspicious) and *ikshana* (glance).

Sri Sankara elaborates in his commentary on the

*Sahasranama* on the power and beauty of Lord's eyes. He says, "His mere sight is so auspicious and bestows good on all beings; it gives *moksha* to the spiritually minded, enjoyments to those that desire them, cleanses sinners, removes all doubts, burns up all the *karmas*, and removes all ignorance."

*Chandogya Upanishad* refers to 'Ikshanam' as the Lord's

resolve to manifest in many forms. This *sankalpa* became the auspicious decision which resulted in the universe.

In *Valmiki Ramayana*, Hanuman describes to Sita the greatness of seeing Rama's eyes as well as being seen by his eyes, "*Rama kamala patrakshah sarva sattva manorathah.*" Sita says, 'Those who are blessed see the beautiful lotus-like eyes of my *natha*.'

Fortunate ones get this merciful glance from their *sadgurus*, who are *brahma nishthas* abiding in *Brahman* at all times. Their very look extinguishes the accumulated suffering of devotees and brings instant peace.

One such *brahma jnani* who transformed even agnostics as ardent devotees with a mere glance was Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal, the 34<sup>th</sup>

Jagadguru of Sri Sringeri Peetham.

### **Netra Darsanam**

The ecstasy experienced by devotees in having *darsan* of Lord Balaji's eyes at the Tirumala temple is legendary.

Every Thursday, after the morning *puja*, the *mula murti* at the temple is divested of all ornaments and flowers, and draped only in *dhoti* and a top cloth. The wide three-finger *namam*, or *tilak*, on the forehead is also reduced in size, which results in the devotees witnessing the unique *Netra Darsan*, divine eyes of the deity.

The feeling of peace and joy that arises in the minds of devotees who are focussed on this great moment is indescribable.

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## ARE SPIRITUAL LEADERS 'WEAK'?

*Spiritual leaders should remain grounded to reality to be effective and command wide respect*

There is a school of thought that expresses misgivings about business leaders getting 'spiritual', though globally spirituality in workplace is gaining momentum.

The distractors seem to say that leaders with spiritual bent of mind may be 'weak' in decision making, as they are more concerned with the bigger picture, while

'natural leaders' are aggressive, dealing with the issues here and now.

There is some misunderstanding between the terms spirituality and religion, and we tend to use both the terms interchangeably. While the terms are not diametric opposites, they are not the same.

Spirituality connotes an experience that connects

something larger than you. It is living the everyday life personally, or as part of any organisational regimen, in a reverent and a *bhava* of surrender, impelled by a deep faith on the guiding hand of the supreme power that regulates everything in the universe.

Religion on the other hand is a personal set of attitudes, worship, beliefs and practices. There are people who consider themselves spiritual, but not religious. There are also individuals who are devoutly religious, but are not what most would consider deeply spiritual.

Spirituality favours a holistic and inclusive approach based on the recognition that pure consciousness, or *Brahman*, is a unifying force, leaving no one out. Everyone is part of this universal hologram, though people tend to approach the core of their being in myriad ways.

Bhagavan Krishna explains in *Bhagavad Gita* (4-11) that everyone follows My path knowingly or unknowingly. In whatever way people surrender unto Me, I reciprocate accordingly, says Krishna.

### Spiritual vs 'Natural' Leaders

Spiritual leaders are inclusive in their outlook and actions, and they show keenness to enhance the role and wellbeing of everyone in the organisation. Spiritual leadership is characterised by defending integrity, goodness, teamwork, wholeness and inter-connectedness. Spiritual leaders are kind at heart, and they do not like to degrade or criticise others; instead, they offer motivation through personal example.

A recent research study in South Korea has validated how the spiritual leadership model has benefited several

large organisations in that country.

The study has measured the impact of spiritual leadership on a few dimensions, such as leadership vision, individual faith and demonstrated actions, and it concludes that high level of spirituality in leaders is positively associated with achievement of organisational goals and productivity gains.

Spiritual leaders are generally people-oriented, while 'natural' leaders are task-oriented. As a business guru mentioned, natural leaders may have difficulty seeing the forest for the trees, while spiritual leaders may have difficulty in knowing which tree to fell first!

Natural leaders typically possess a strong drive and determination, and they have often a better understanding of their own motivations and

desires. They are often impatient, and are more focused on results and tangible outcomes. They are at ease with colleagues with high levels of critical thinking skills adept on strategy issues, as they are more inclined towards making decisions based on logic and reason.

Such leaders are looked upon as indispensable in critical or crisis situations, such as to turn around a loss-making business by taking harsh decisions.

## Spirituality and Pragmatism

While leaders with a spiritual bent may be more focused on leading through personal example and inspiration, it does not mean they cannot be pragmatic in their approach, or cultivate passive aggressiveness.

Spirituality lies in working with an eye on excellence in everything you do. True



spiritual leaders choose to be role models in their actions. They take inputs from everyone instead of relying solely on their own judgement. They value dissenting voices, ensuring that creativity is never stifled, but they remain firm on completing the task once a decision is made.

Those spiritual at heart show high discipline in their conduct, expecting everyone to reciprocate, and be equally responsible and accountable.

### Hiss, but Not Bite

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the great spiritual master, used to narrate a delightful parable to drive home the point that whatever role you take, live up to it, but remain authentic.

Once, a few cowherd boys tending their cows in a meadow noticed a poisonous snake around, striking fear

in everyone. A yogi was passing through the place, and the boys alerted him about the snake.

The fearless yogi confronted the snake which approached him with raised hood. The yogi chanted a *mantra*, and the snake immediately calmed down and lay at his feet like an earthworm.

The yogi asked the snake why he was going about spreading fear among all. He asked whether he could teach the snake a sacred word that would initiate it in the spiritual realm, by doing harm to none. As the snake bowed before the yogi, he taught the holy *mantra*.

Some days passed and the cowherd boys noticed that the snake would no longer bite or show any sign of aggression, even when stones were thrown at it. One day the boys came closer, caught the snake by

the tail, whirled it round and dashed on the ground. The snake became unconscious. The stunned boys thought it was dead and went away.

The snake regained consciousness, but it moved slowly, remembering the yogi's sacred word. It maintained its life on dirt, leaves, and the fruits that dropped from trees.

About a year later, the yogi was passing through the region, and noticed the snake in a famished condition. When he asked the reason, the snake replied, 'Revered sir, you ordered me not to harm anybody. I have given up anger even when the boys torment me. I live only on leaves and fruit”.

The yogi exclaimed: "What a fool you are, not able to protect yourself. I asked you not to bite, but I did not forbid you to hiss. Why did not you scare wicked people

by hissing? You must frighten people, but never inject your venom into them”.

The mark of true spiritual leaders is thus pragmatism blended against backdrop of self-consciousness, or what is known as the art of conscious leadership.

Such leaders would temper their idealism so as not to be out of touch with reality. Where a business group is struggling with moral issues or internal conflict, a spiritual leader with his authenticity would help everyone find resolution and peace.

This is because such leaders lead with the humble recognition that all our efforts and outcomes are based on the power, authority and blessings of the divine, and not one's own.

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# Decoding the Vijaya Mantra

A simple *mantra* of great value as suggested by the Sringeri Jagadgurus

*“Sri Rama, Jaya Rama, Jaya Jaya Rama”.*

Jagadguru Sri Vidhusekhara Bharati Mahaswamiji during one of his recent *anugraha bhashanams* mentioned an important *mantra*: “Sri Rama, Jaya Rama, Jaya Jaya Rama”.

This *mantra* is also known as *Vijaya Mantra* and it is a compound of three phrases: (1) “Sri Rama” as an address to Lord Rama; (2) “Jaya Rama” as a eulogy to him; and (3) “Jaya Jaya Rama” as the utmost dedication and devotion of a practitioner towards Lord Rama.

This *mantra* is available in the *Rama Rahasya Upanishad* (2.56-57) of *Atharvaveda*. As per *Narada Purana*, its seer is Lord Brahma, the meter is *Virat*, and the deity is Lord Ramchandra himself, who had initiated Sri Hanuman into it. Hence *Meru Tantra* mentions it as '*Hanumad-Upasita Mantra-Nayak*', meaning the greatest among all *mantras*, practiced by Lord Hanuman.

In *Ananda Ramayana*, both Lord Siva and Krishna instruct that a *sadhaka*

should recite this *mantra* at least twenty-one times a day.

Normally, one has to keep his *mantra* secret. But, in case of *Vijaya Mantra, Ananda Ramayana* permits its oral chanting, mental recitation and public singing as well.

In the same treatise, Lord Krishna has directed Yudhishtira to perform an *anushthanam* (which is a special spiritual practice) of this *mantra* by reciting it a hundred thousand times.

Hanuman, in *Rama Rahasya Upanishad* has mentioned a set of basic rules for the *anushthanam* of *Rama mantras*. These are: bathing three times a day, eating only fruits once a day, maintaining celibacy, and sleeping on the floor.

### **Practising the Mantra**

With the above background, we can decode

the instruction of Sringeri Jagadguru with some practical steps.

First, chant the *Vijaya Mantra* (“*Sri Rama, Jaya Rama, Jaya Jaya Rama*”) twenty-one times every day soon after getting up in the morning, or while going to bed at night, or both. Chanting by holding a *tulasi mala* or white sandalwood *mala* is recommended.

In case of a special *anushthanam* or propitiation, one should recite the *mantra* 112 rounds a day for nine consecutive days, or forty-one rounds a day for thirty days. Begin on an auspicious day. This practice will result in 100,000 recitations as prescribed by Lord Krishna in *Ananda Ramayana*.

On the day of completion of the *anushthanam*, one should visit a nearby temple

and worship Lord Rama, along with donating food as per his/her capacity.

In case a female *sadhaka* faces her menstrual cycle during the *anushthanam* period, she should postpone her *japa* and worship till the prescribed recitations gets over.

*Vijaya Mantra* constitutes three words, 'Sri Rama', 'Jaya', and 'Rama', which are the divine names of Mahavishnu. They occur in *Vishnu Sahasranama* and *Rama Sahasranama* of *Ananda Ramayana*. 'Sri Rama' is the 12th name in the latter, while 'Jaya' and 'Rama' are found as the 509th and 394th names in *Vishnu Sahasranama*.

*Vijaya Mantra* is a 'Nama-Mantra', and does not need any personal initiation or any complex rules and regulations. The devotee from any caste, sect, gender,

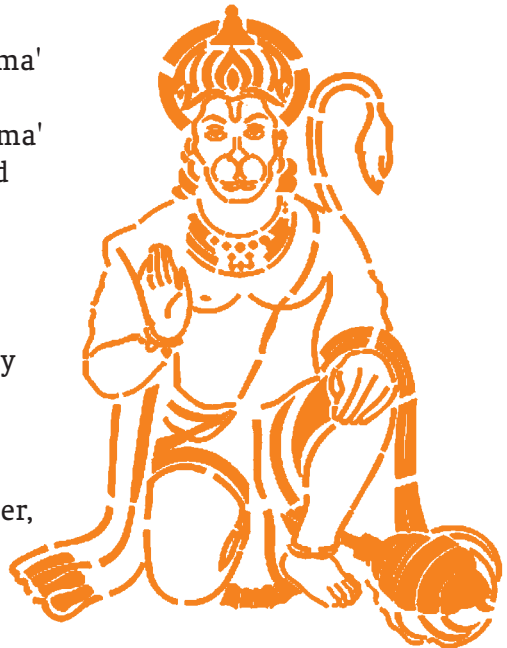
religion, and age-group is free to recite and chant the names of the Lord at any point in time.

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# Hakini Mudra

*A simple hand gesture that has immense benefits for the mind*

**T**here is a *mudra* or hand gesture in our traditional system, known as *Hakini Mudra*, which is also called 'Brain Power *Mudra*' or '*Mudra* for the mind'. It is considered a power gesture that enhances one's brain power.

The *mudra* is useful for those who are engaged in considerable mental work (and those used to multi-tasking) which leads to stress and brain fatigue.

The *mudra* is also good for those who have forgetfulness, since it enhances concentration, memory and focus.

## **Hakini Devata**

Hakini is mentioned as a *devata* in our scriptures. The name occurs in *Sri Lalita Sahasranama* in verse 108 as "... *hardrannaika rasika Hakini rupa dharini*". It means the one who assumes the form of Hakini and loves the offering of saffron-flavoured rice.



Readers familiar with the 1000 holy names of Devi mentioned in *Sri Lalita Sahasranama* would know that the *slokas* 101 to 110 contain an important reference to the six *chakras* in our body, and the presiding *devata* for each *chakra*.

Thus, verse 103 refers to the *Manipuraka chakra* and the divine mother in the form of Lakini presiding over flesh in living creatures. Likewise, the form of Kakini abides in the *Svadishtana chakra* and presides over the fatty substances in living beings, while as Hakini, the divine mother presides over the marrow of all beings.

The Hakini *rupa* is associated with *ajna*, or the third-eye, *chakra*, which is the energy centre positioned as one's imagination and instincts. Hakini is thus the goddess of the third eye, and she is depicted as a two

petal lotus, symbolising the two hemispheres in the brain. The *mudra* helps balancing the mind and the *pranas*.

When done regularly, the *mudra* enhances one's concentration and thinking capabilities.

### How to Practise?

The *mudra* is simple to perform.

- Sit in a relaxing comfortable meditation or yoga pose.
- Breathe easy and keep your focus towards the breathing.
- Keep your hands on your thighs or knee such that your palms face upwards.
- Now slowly lift your hands and bring them closer to each other such that your palms face each other.
- Bring the fingertips of your right hand closer to those of your left hand.

Allow each finger to touch its corresponding finger of the opposite hand.

- Lift the hands with joined fingers and keep them close to your forehead, the site of *ajna* or the sixth *chakra*.
- Now move your gaze upwards and focus it towards the *chakra*.
- Breathe in easily while you place your tongue against the roof of the mouth.
- Allow the tongue to relax as you breathe out.

By keeping the fingertips of both hands together, touching each other, you connect the flow of energy between the two sides of your brain and body.

*Hakini mudra* can be done for 30-35 minutes at a stretch, or for 12 minutes at a stretch and three times in a day. Practising the *mudra* in

the early hours of the morning at sunrise will provide optimum benefits.

You will feel noticeable benefits if you practice this *mudra* for at least two months.

Since this *mudra* helps in balancing breathing and aeration to the brain, it also balances the blood pressure, and thus it is helpful for the heart and lung functions. In Ayurvedic terms, the *mudra* balances the *Prana vata* – *Udana vata* – *Vyana vata* – *Avalambaka kapha* – *Ranjaka pitta* axis coordination.

In general, the *mudra* practice, along with Ayurvedic treatment and medicines, *yoga* and *pranayama* makes a powerful combination to treat many diseases.

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~~Past~~

Present

~~Future~~

## ENLIGHTENED LIVING

Maintaining awareness of the present moment unlocks the beauty of life

One day, as Buddha walked, soon after his transformational experience under the Bodhi Tree, he came to a

river where some children were playing.

One of those children was a young girl, nine-year old,

named Nandabala. She saw Buddha and instantly realised that he was not an ordinary monk. Here was someone unique. She ran up to him and offered what she had with her: A little tangerine fruit.

Buddha, in his grace, accepted the tangerine and blessed her.

Then Nandabala said, 'I am sure that there is more you can tell us. Every word falling from your lips is like divine nectar. We want to hear more. Will you give us a discourse? And this is my *dakshina* (offerings made to a teacher) in advance.'

Buddha asked her to gather all the children so his first discourse was to them. Buddha asked them, 'Do you all have tangerines for yourselves?' He noticed everybody was holding one.

He said: "When you children peel a tangerine,

you can eat it with awareness or without awareness. Anything you do in life – there are two ways to do it. You can either do it with awareness or without awareness.

When you do it with awareness you are awake; when you do it without awareness, you are sleeping. Most of our reactions are without awareness. What does it mean to eat a tangerine in awareness? When you are eating the tangerine, you are aware that you are eating the tangerine. This is called being in the present moment.

The tangerine Nandabala offered me had nine segments. I ate each morsel, in awareness, and saw how precious and wonderful it was. I did not forget the tangerine, and thus the tangerine became something very real to me. If the tangerine is real the

person eating it is real. That is what it means to eat a tangerine in awareness.”

## The Nemesis

Maintaining awareness of the present moment requires doing one thing at a time so as to focus on your chief activity. Multi-tasking is the nemesis of mindfulness.

This comes only when you slow down a bit. Imagine peeling an orange, removing a segment, putting it in your mouth and biting down onto it. Its juices bursting in your mouth and hitting your taste buds, your mouth feels alive with the tangy flavour. This is called eating with awareness.

Imagine if you could simply do and focus on whatever it is that you are doing in the moment. This does not mean you need more time; it simply means that you do whatever you are doing with complete awareness.

Millions of us climb stairs every day, and yet if you ask them how many stairs they climbed, they would not have a clue. This is just about how mindful we are.

## Zen Practice

Zen is breaking the automaticity of our actions and infusing them with mindfulness. Everything we do then becomes meditation, leading to greater peace.

Zen is when your mind is just quiet. It is not chattering; not rambling, not talking to you or anybody else; not thinking about the past, not thinking about the future. That is when your mind is perfectly, 100 per cent silent. Then you gain incredible insight into the nature of things, into the nature of your own life.

Your mind starts serving and not ruling you. It would come only when you summon it, and not barge into your life and your

actions. This is what good meditation does to a meditator.

Surely, we need to think to perform numerous tasks throughout the day, you might say. I agree. But there's a difference between your mind thinking on an intended line of thought versus endlessly blabbering. Zen is having your mind in tune with the intentions, actions and speech.

The tangerine is truly present in your life. Living in mindful awareness means living in the present moment. Your mind and body dwelling in the very here and now. A person who practices mindfulness can see things in the tangerine that others are unable to see.

When you get a hand of mindfulness and begin to put it to use in your daily life, you will change forever (for the better). You will see things in life you were

unable to see earlier. The beauty, bliss, adequacy – the completeness of life will come to you effortlessly. Every tiny thing of beauty is magnified for the one who is aware.

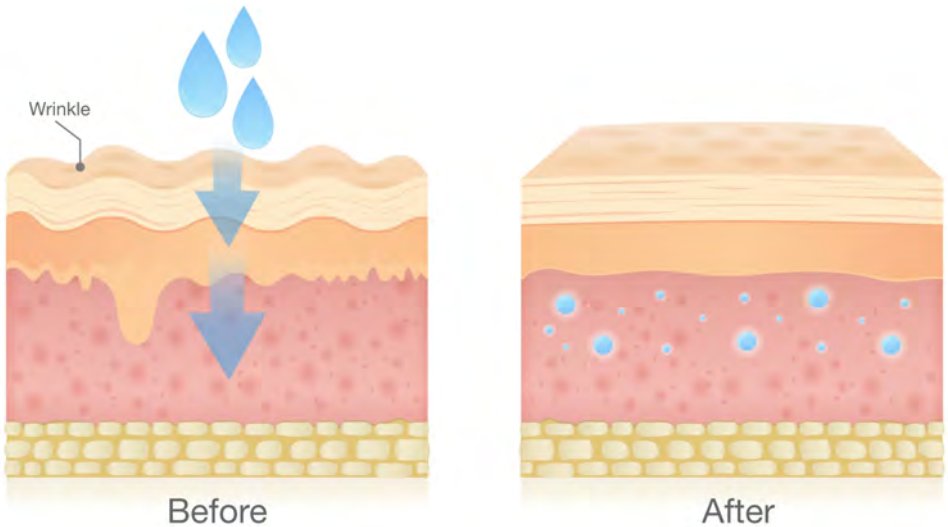
Because life is full of beauty for anyone who eats their tangerine with awareness.

*Om Swami* 

*Edited condensation from the author's book 'Mind Full to Mindful'.*







## Anti-ageing Therapy and Ayurveda

Old age or ageing is inevitable for all human beings, but an active, healthy life during the later years of one's life will ensure graceful ageing

**T**reatment of disorders related to old age and treatment of old age-related health issues fall

under the category of *Jara Chikitsa* in Ayurveda, and *Rasayana* is an important aspect of this treatment.



The word, *Rasayana* comprises two parts: *Rasa* means nutrient fluid, while *Ayana* means a way.

*Rasayana* is one among *Ashtanga* Ayurveda, one of the eight elite branches of Ayurveda. In fact, *rasayana* can be called as 'Ayurvedic Geriatrics'.

*Rasayana* covers one or more of several fields, such as immunity modulators, anti-ageing, preventive care, disease modifiers, medicines for convalescence care, tissue strengtheners and rejuvenators and longevity enhancers.

*Rasayana* is included in the '*Swasthasya Urjaskaram*' category of medicines, which means 'that which enhances or fortifies or enriches the quality and quantity of health to the optimum level in an already healthy individual'.

Thus, *Rasayanas* are beneficial for healthy

individuals and are given with an intention of maintenance of good and optimum health and to prevent the impending diseases by enhancing immunity.

*Rasayana* includes those medicines that help in formation of strong tissues (*dhatu*s) and support the passageways (*srotas*) in the body related to specific *dhatu*s. While it is predominantly preventive medicine as stated above, it is also extended to act as curative to some extent.

## Preventive and Curative

*Rasayanas* help in supplying the *Rasadi Bhavas* to the *dhatu*s and help in effective cure. When a medicine is taken, the *rasa* (taste of the medicine), *guna* (qualities), *veerya* (potency), *vipaka* (effect after assimilation) and other qualities are transported to every part of the body.

Collectively these will enhance and support *ayu* (life span), *bala* (strength), *veerya* (vigour), and *vaya sthairyra* (anti-ageing property). *Rasayanas* are those methods and materials which help in making available the essence to each and every cell of the body.

Good digestion, metabolism, cardiac and mental health are all maintained as a result of the preventive dimension of the *rasayana*.

The other dimension of *rasayana* is its curative aspect (*Vyadhi Hara Rasayana*) where the medicines are prescribed as 'recovery medicines' in the follow up of treatment protocol of any disease.

*Rasayanas* are thus immune modulators, rejuvenators of tissues and good for balancing body-mind health.

## Administration of *Rasayana*

*Rasayanas* are not just oral medications or formulations made up of single herb or many herbs. There are *adravya rasayanas* where it is not medication administered to the patient, but lifestyle changes that restore or maintain good health in the patient. These are explained as *Achara Rasayanas* and can be followed by everyone to maintain physical and mental well-being.

Ayurveda clearly states that *rasayana* can be administered only to patients who have undergone purification therapies or *Panchakarma*. *Rasayana* does not yield good results in an unpurified body, just as colours do not adhere attractively on a dirty canvas.

An interesting aspect of *Rasayana* therapy is that the success of the treatment lies in the deposition of the

patient. He should be a disciplined person with self-control and right conduct. Laziness, carelessness and irreverence towards the line of treatment limit the efficacy of the treatment.

A busy person who cannot devote enough time and care towards his physical health will have little benefit from the treatment. Attitude thus influences the effectiveness of the therapy.

*Bhavaprakasha* treatise mentions several single herbs that are used as best *Rasayanas*. These include juice of *Brahmi*, juice of *Guduchi*, paste of roots and flowers of *Shankapushpi* and powder of licorice.

There are several Ayurvedic formulations readily available as *rasayana* such as the *Narasimha churnam*, *Asvagandhi lehyam*, *Chyavanaprasa lehyam*, *Agasthya rasayanam*, *Madhusnuhi rasayanam*, to

mention a few. Even the *lehyam* prepared with the humble vegetable ash gourd becomes a *rasayana* when it is processed with the right herbs and is widely known as *Kushmanda rasayanam*.

### Word of Caution

A word of caution about *rasayana*. Any anti-aging medicine is not required for lifetime. Ayurvedic physicians would recommend any medicine to continue only for a certain period of time, unless absolutely necessary,

While the *rasayana* medicines rejuvenate the body tissues and organs, this does not mean that they should be prescribed for life. This is because the body and mind develop dependency on these medicines, which is not ideal. Food, healthy sleep, exercise, healthy relationships and lifestyle should be the promoters of one's lifespan, not medicines in the long run.

Also, some *rasayana* medicine may produce side effects. For example, it is known that long term intake of *chyavanprash* can cause excess body heat. *Narasimha rasayana*, a famous rejuvenator for healthy hair growth, if taken excessively, can cause weight gain.

*Rasayanas* such as *Chitraka* and *Bhallataka* may cause gastritis, burning sensation, or increased blood pressure when used protracted period.

Likewise, *Ashwagandha* may cause stomach upset, if taken for an unusually long term.

In general, for *rasayana* medicines, a two-to-six months period consumption is ideal. Take them for the long term only if your doctor prescribes it. That too, please check with the doctor from time to time should you continue such a medicine or better to stop.

In modern days, quality of life in general has improved greatly, and with the increased life span of individuals it is crucial for elders to maintain good health.

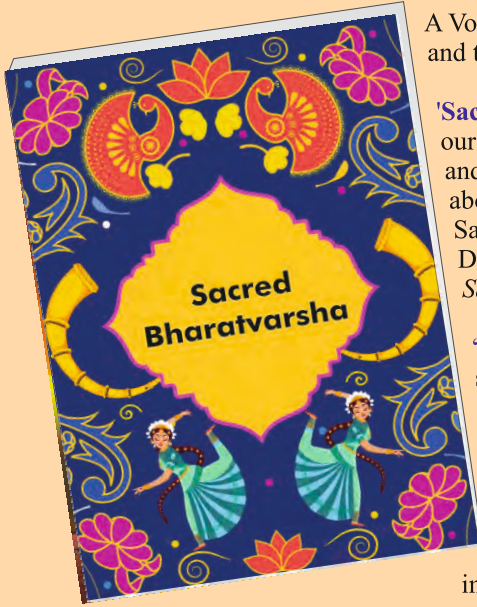
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Ahnika Darsan of Sri Sannidhanam  
on 31<sup>st</sup> Vardhanti



# The Grand Vardhanti of Sri Sannidhanam

A round up of key events at Sringeri

The 31st Vardhanti of Jagadguru Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati Sannidhanam was celebrated at Sringeri on August 21, 2023, the auspicious day of *Naga Panchami*. Early in the morning, thousands of devotees had *ahnika darsan* of Sri Sannidhanam at Sacchidananda Vilas.

As part of the event, many *homas* and special *pujas* were conducted for the welfare of humanity. *Sahasra Modaka Ganapati Homa* was conducted on August 17, and *Maharudra Yaga* that commenced on August 17 ended on the Vardhanti day in the divine presence of Sri Bharati Tirtha

Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sannidhanam.

Earlier, Sri Sannidhanam performed a special *puja* at the Kalabhairava temple in Narasimha Vanam.

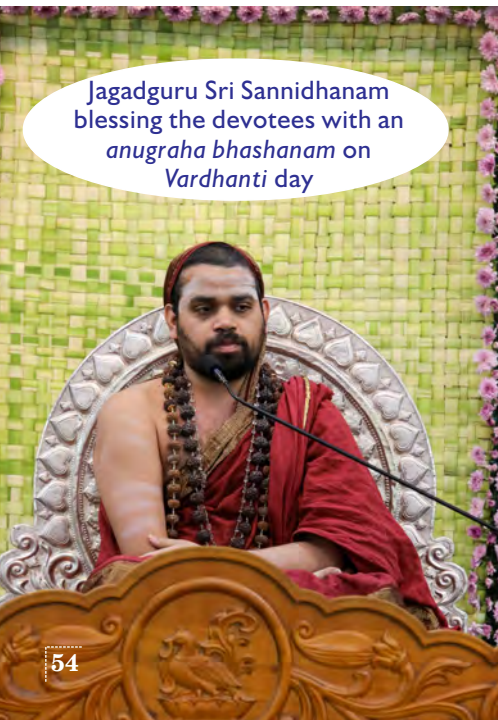
On the occasion, Sri Sannidhanam released a Tamil book titled '*Sri Guru Tattva Prakashika*', a commentary penned by Sri Taramangalam Subrahmanya Sastrigal on the 108 glorious names of Sri Adi Sankara. He also released fresh editions '*Vedanta Sarvasvamu*' (Telugu) and '*Global Trade in the New Millennium*'.

In his benedictory discourse, Sri Sannidhanam





Jagadguru Sri Sannidhanam performing arati in the presence of Sri Mahasannidhanam on the first Sravana Somavara, Vardhanti day



Jagadguru Sri Sannidhanam blessing the devotees with an anugraha bhashanam on Vardhanti day



Sri Sannidhanam releasing the Kannada translation of Advaita Vijaya Vijayanti



*Purnahuti of Maharudra Yaga  
in the divine presence of  
Ubhaya Jagadgurus*



*Sri Sannidhanam gracing Sahasra Modaka-  
Ganapati Homa Purnahuti performed for  
the welfare of humanity on the occasion  
of his 31<sup>st</sup> Vardhanti*



explained the greatness of Sri Adi Sankara as the peerless preceptor of the world. Explaining the meaning of the Jagadguru's single verse work *Ekasloki*, Sri Sannidhanam advised every person to dedicate some time for daily *sadhana*. He elaborated the three-fold *sadhana - Adhyayana* (studies), *Japa* and *Dhyana* as instructed by Bhagavatpada.

Sri Sannidhanam performed the *Sravana Somavara puja* in the afternoon and the special *Chandramoulisvara Puja* in the night.

### The 3-day Advaita Workshop

During Aug 4-6, 2023, a three-day *Advaita Ghoshti* (workshop) was organised at Sringeri, with Sri Sannidhanam inaugurating the event and gracing many sessions. Several eminent scholars conducted discourses on various topics specific to Vedanta.

Leading *pandits* delivered talks on various aspects of *advaita*, such as Vidwan Ganesha Ishwara Bhat ('*Introduction to Advaita*'), Vidwan Nagaraja Bhat ('*Advaita as the Essence of all Darshanas*'), Vidwan Kuppa Vishwanatha Shastri ('*Advaita, the Primary Principle of Sanatana Dharma*') and Vidwan Maheshwaran Namboothiri ('*Advaita in the Siva, Vishnu and Bhagavata Puranas*'). Vidwan Mani Dravid Sastri presented a *Vakyartha* on *Prakriyadhikaranam* of the *Brahmasutras*.

On the concluding day, the Jagadguru released the Kannada translation of *Advaita Vijaya Vijayanti*, a Sanskrit work authored by Sri Kashikananda Giri Maharaj.

In his *anugraha bhashanam*, Sri Sannidhanam recalled the glory of our *Guru Parampara* and how the *Advaita Vidya* has been

handed down since time immemorial through the *parampara*. This knowledge cannot be grasped by one's limited intellect, and not something that can be learnt from a book.

The *Kathopanishad* says:

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।  
क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया दुर्ग  
पथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति ॥

*Uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya  
varānnibodhata;  
Kṣurasya dhārā niśitā  
duratyayā durgam  
pathastatkavayo vadanti.*

*Uttiṣṭhata jāgrata* means 'wake up from the sleep that is *avidya* (ignorance), and *varān prāpya* means 'seek refuge in an eminent guru'. *Nibodhata* - Make effort to understand this *advaita tattva*.

Why should we learn under an eminent guru?

क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया  
दुर्ग पथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति

*Kṣurasya dhārā niśitā  
duratyayā durgam  
pathastatkavayo vadanti*

Because this is a very subtle principle which must be learnt only from a right guru.

This subtle knowledge is referred to as '*kṣurasya dhārā*', like the sharp tip of a sword. If we do not properly understand the meaning, we run the risk of misunderstanding and misinterpreting, leading to *anartha* (misdeed).

There are people who do not properly understand the *advaita siddhanta* and criticise it. There are also people who professes interest in *advaita* and learn it in some manner, but they miscommunicate and misrepresent by saying that that you do not need to observe any *niyama-s* (spiritual disciplines), or *achara* (scripturally-stipulated conduct and way of living), because there is nothing but

*Brahman*, and we therefore do not have to engage in any such scriptural observances.

As per norm, when a knower of Truth (*jnani*) gives *upadesa* (spiritual instruction) to an *ajnani* (one who is in ignorance), he should not directly preach the highest truth, but do so gradually, step-by-step. If the *ajnani* does not have the capacity to understand the *tattva*, he must only be prescribed that *karma-anushtana* which he is eligible for.

Bhagavan Sri Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita*:

जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः

समाचरन् ॥

*Joṣayetsarvakarmāṇi vidvānyukta: Samācaran,*

Which means that a *jnani* has no need for performing *karma*, but he must not advise another person not to engage in it. While there is

no necessity for a *jnani* to engage in *karma*, if an *ajnani*, following the example of the *jnani*, were to give up all *karma*, it would land him in trouble.

Therefore a *jnani*, in order to set an example for others until they gain the eligibility to give up *karma*, should also himself engage in *karma*. As a person performs *karma*, he acquires *chitta-shuddhi* (purity of mind), and gradually attains the eligibility to renounce *karma*.

“Once a person with no knowledge of *Vedanta* approached me and mentioned that his son whose *upanayanam* was performed and all the associated rituals were taught to him, was properly performing *sandhyavandanam*, but now stopped doing all that. When I asked for the reason, the father replied that this college-going son attended some class on *advaita*, and he

was taught that *advaita* propounds giving up all actions.”

“I explained that it is not true at all that *advaita* means that one must give up everything immediately.

Sri Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita*:

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं  
पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।

न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं  
समधिगच्छति ॥

*Na karmaṇāmanārambhān-  
naiṣkarmyaṃ puruṣo'snute |  
Na ca saṁnyasanādeva  
siddhiṃ samadhi-gacchati ||*

One cannot give up all *karma* right away and attain the state of *naishkarmya*; instead, after performing *karma* over a sustained period, one gets to a state where all *karma* will leave that person on their own. Simply just giving up *karma* without even performing is not equal to *Naishkarmya*.

We must therefore engage in *karma-anushtana* until we attain the state where there is no further need to perform *karma*. We must learn this *advaita tattva* from a *guru* who has learnt it in a traditional manner from a *guru-sishya parampara*. A *guru* is certainly needed in order to be able to appreciate and grasp the essence of *sastras*.

There is a *paribhasha* or definition which we must correctly understand, and then try to interpret the statements of the *Sastras* in accordance. This is *Sastra-maryada*, and the *krama* or the set procedure to undertake such study.

Every word in the *Sastras* does not have the same meaning. The meaning depends on the context and factors such as its *prakarana* (section/ passage of occurrence), the content that is mentioned before and the content that follows, the



Vidvan Sri Manidravida Shastri delivering a Vakyartha during the Advaita Goshthi



The organisers and participants of Vedanta Retreat offering their respectful pranams at the lotus feet of Sri Sannidhanam

*tatparyam* (purport) of the specific statement, etc. Considering all this, a specific *sabda* (word) is interpreted. Some words have multiple meanings.

Only a person who has a thorough knowledge will have the right understanding of the *Sastras*. And that is called *Sastra-maryada*.

We may have understood what *advaita* is about, but the first step is adhering to our *svadharma* (ordained duties) in a desire-free manner (*nishkama*). Anything we do, be it *puja*, *japa*, or *homa*, we should do it with *nishkama buddhi*, and this aids us greatly in the pursuit of the *tattva* and establishment in it. This observance of *dharma* is therefore the first step to foray into this *jnana marga*, with *moksha* (liberation) as the ultimate goal.

Sri Adi Sankara has propounded this path

exhaustively in a manner everyone can understand. Every aspect of our *sanatana dharma* ultimately culminates in *advaita*. There are three *margas* or approaches in our *dharma*: *Bhakti Marga* (the Path of Devotion), *Jnana Marga* (the Path of Knowledge) and *Karma Marga* (the Path of Action). *Jnana Marga* is the final step.

*Bhakti Marga* and *Karma Marga* are the formative steps. Therefore this *Advaita Siddhanta* (which is the focus of the *Jnana Marga*) is preminent. People must understand this nuance, specifically the spiritual seekers.

One must first understand the *svarupa* (true essence) of *advaita* and that is why this *Ghoshti* was organized.

Many scholars who have learnt as per tradition have shared several aspects about *advaita* in a manner that all can understand.



How long does it take to attain this accomplishment? The *Sastras* say:

आवृत्तिसकृदुपदेशात् ।  
*Āvṛttir-asakṛd-upadeśāt.*

If we need butter, we have to churn the buttermilk. For how long? Until we get the butter. That is the meaning of the aforementioned statement.

Our duty is to engage in our practices until the effect of the *pratibandhaka* (obstacles) for one's *sadhana* wanes. When it occurs, *Isvara* will dispense the *phalam*.”

“Do set aside some time every day for your *sadhana* - whether half an hour, an hour, or even five minutes. But when you set aside that time, have the firmness of thought and resolve in mind that apart from your *sadhana*, you will not think of anything else. Through this your *sadhana* becomes

fruitful”, said Sri Sannidhanam.

## Veda Sammelans

As per the direction of the Jagadgurus, annual *Veda Sammelans* are regularly organised in many parts of the country. The first *Sammelan* this year was organised in Vemulawada, the famous *Siva Kshetra* of Sri Rajarajesvara temple in Telangana on May 18, 2023, where more than 300 Vedic *pandits* belonging to all the four Vedas and the available *Shakhas* had taken part.

This was followed by another *Sammelan* at Kalady on May 19, 2023, where hundreds of scholars from Kerala belonging to all the four Vedas participated and performed the *parayanam*.

The third *Sammelan* took place at Shenkottai at the premises of the local Sringeri Mutt branch. Around 170 scholars belonging to all four Vedas and 10 different



Guruvandanam in progress during the Veda S sammelan in Vemulawada led by Dr. V R Gowrishankar, CEO & Administrator of Sringeri Mutt



Veda Parayanam in progress in the Annual Veda S sammelan in Telangana at the Siva Kshetra Vemulawada

*sakhas* had taken part and performed the *parayanam*.

At all the above events, Sringeri Mutt CEO Sri V R Gowrishankar was present, along with Dharmatma Sri Yegnasubramanian, Chairman, Sringeri Vidya Bharati Foundation based in USA, and Vedabrahmasri Kuppa Shiva Subrahmanya Avadhani (the *purvasrama* father of Sri Sannidhanam), Principal at Veda Vijnana Peetham, Tirumala.

Veda *Sammelans* were also conducted at Aurangabad, Puri and Varanasi during July-August, and the details will be covered in the next issue of *Tattvaloka*.

### **Shravana Adhika Masa Parayanam**

On July 18, a special *Parayanam* for the *Adhika Shravana Masa* was inaugurated at *Guru Nivas* in the presence of Sri Sannidhanam. The Jagadguru lit the lamp,

accompanied by chants of *Ekasloki* (penned by Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada) and offered flowers to the *murti* of Sri Ramachandra.

Sri Sannidhanam then chanted the first *sloka* of *Valmiki Ramayana* which everyone repeated; this was followed by *parayanam* of the first *sarga* of *Balakanda* which is popularly known as the *Sankshepta Ramayana*. This is a condensation of the entire *Srimad Ramayana* in 100 *slokas*.

Sri Sannidhanam then blessed the assembly with an *anugraha bhashanam* and mentioned that by listening to and studying *Srimad Ramayana*, we receive profound guidance that makes us capable of resolving various challenges of life. The lives of our forefathers are testimony to this fact. *Ramayana* has been discoursed by many - yet even to this day it remains afresh.





Veda Parayanam in progress in the Annual Veda S sammelan in Janma Bhumi Kshetram of Sri Adi Sankaracharya Kalady, Kerala



Veda S sammelan in progress in Shengkottai at Sri Bharati Tirtha Veda Pathashala

It is not possible for everyone to engage in the *parayanam* of *Srimad Ramayana* in its entirety. In the first *sarga* of the *Balakanda*, Maharishi Valmiki has provided the entire summary of *Srimad Ramayana* in 100 verses. It commences in the form of a dialogue between sages Valmiki and Narada, when the former asks, “Which person on this earth is endowed with all noble qualities?”

Sri Narada replies, “There is only one such person and that is Sri Rama”, and describes a few of the innumerable noble qualities of Bhagavan Sri Rama, following which he recounts various key events from Sri Rama's life, right from King Dasaratha's *sankalpa* to perform the coronation of Sri Rama till Rama slaying of Ravana and Kumbhakarna, and finally the *Pattabhisheka* of Sri Rama and his rule over the kingdom referred to as the '*Rama-Rajya*'.

This *sarga* is called *Bala Ramayana* because it used to be a tradition for children in every household to be taught these 100 *slokas*. Children were made to memorise all the *slokas* and by chanting them daily they developed good *samskaras* even at a young age, endowed with depth of character, and became eminent citizens of the society.

“Thus, understanding the significance of this *parayanam*, may everyone participate in the *parayanam* and become a recipient of Bhagavan's grace. Sri Adi Sankara has composed *Sri Rama Bhujanga Stotram*, glorifying the *gunas* of Sri Rama. This can also be chanted alongside the *Bala Ramayana*, said Sri Sannidhanam”

Sri Sannidhanam mentioned about a sacred *mantra*, '*Sri Rama Jaya Rama Jaya Rama*', and blessed all those who would engage in this *nama japa*.



# *This Festive Season, Give Vidyadhan, a Gift of Knowledge*



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# The Divine Names of Sri Krishna – 10



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.

35) यमलार्जुनभञ्जकाय नमः ।  
*Yamalārjunabhañjakāya  
namaḥ* ।

I pay obeisance to Sri Krishna who brought down the pair of Arjuna trees and freed Nalakubera and Manigriva from their curse.

It was one of the usual days in Gokula when Yasoda's maids were busy with other tasks and Yasoda had to sit down to churn butter. Little

Krishna, a toddler, was hungry and wanted to be fed. Yasoda sat down to feed him with breast milk, but in the meantime the milk on the fireplace had boiled over, and she had to rush to remove it from the fire.

Krishna who was not satiated broke the pot of butter, and moved on to eat it and share it with the monkeys.

Intending to give him a mock punishment, Yasoda went after Krishna with a stick, but seeing him



frightened, decided to tie the little one to a mortar to keep him from mischief, while she completed her tasks.

After a while, Krishna crawled up to the courtyard with the mortar trailing behind him. There were a few boys playing at a distance, and a pair of Arjuna trees that were close together caught his attention.

He crawled across to the trees and went over them, pulling the mortar without even looking back, only to have the trees crash down with a thud. The children were astonished to see two men with resplendent forms emerge from the trees to pay their respects to Krishna and vanish into the skies.

They were actually the attendants of Lord Siva, Nalakubera and Manigriva, sons of Kubera, the God of Wealth, whose misdemeanour in sage Narada's presence led them to be

cursed to become Arjuna trees on earth. The compassionate sage's curse was only a blessing as he helped them to reform and blessed them to await Krishna's arrival on earth for their release.

The advice of sage Narada to the sons of Kubera is indeed a counsel that cautions one on the negative consequences of arrogance on account of birth, erudition and wealth.

The *gopas* who were a witness to this incident vowed that it was Krishna who miraculously brought down the trees. While some elders were inclined to believe their words, many including Nanda, laughed off their account. Nanda was more concerned with 'freeing his son' and carrying him home to safety.

36) उत्तानातालभेत्रे नमः ।

*Uttānatālabhetre*

*namaḥ |*

I pay obeisance to Sri Krishna who brought down fruits from the tall palm trees.

Krishna and Balarama enjoyed the bounties of nature as they roamed about the forests of *Vraja bhumi*.

Their friends Sridhama, Subala and Stoka once came with a request to Krishna to get them fruits from the nearby palmgrove. The *asura* Dhenuka and his kinsmen controlled the access to the grove and the luscious fruits could not be savoured by anyone.

Balarama brought an end to this anarchy by killing Dhenukasura, and Krishna, ever affectionate towards his friends, heeded to their simple request to let them enjoy the fruits.

37) गोपगोपीश्वराय नमः ।  
*Gopagopīśvarāya namaḥ* |

I pay obeisance to Sri Krishna who is the lord of

the cowherds and their maidens - *gopas* and *gopis*.

This is a great *nama* that captures the essence of the special bond that the *gopas*, and the *gopis* in particular, had enjoyed with Krishna, with their simple *bhakti* deserving a special mention.

This bond with the *gopis* is illustrated by the *Rāsakrīḍa* incident, which is often interpreted with certain mischievousness by people not well versed in the scriptures and steeped in Krishna thought.

Sri Suka, when questioned by king Parikshit on the propriety of *Rāsakrīḍa*, warns that as *Yogīśvara*, Bhagavan can conduct and control all beings, steering away from desire and attachment.

Parikshit asks the question – as *mokṣa* can be attained only through *jñāna*, how did the *gopis* steeped only in *bhakti* attain him?

Sage Suka replies that this had been answered in the seventh *Skanda* of *Srimad Bhagavatam*:

कामाद् द्वेषाद् भयात् स्नेहात्  
यथा भक्ति ईश्वरे मनः ॥

आवेश्य तदयं हित्वा

बहवस्तद्वर्ति गताः ॥

*Kāmād dveṣād bhayāt  
snehāt yathā bhakti  
īśvare manah |  
Āveśya tadaghaṁ hitvā  
bahavastadgatiṁ gatāḥ ||*

Bhagavan cleanses the sins and liberates one who constantly thinks of him, whether out of feelings of hatred, fear, desire, affection or devotion.

It is said that the *gopis* belonged to five categories. There were some who were *nityasiddhā* (realised souls), and some *upāsanāsiddhā* (spiritual practitioners). *Śrutis* (the four Vedas), *Rishis* (sages) and *Devis* (celestial women) were born as *gopis*.

The *Padmapurāṇa* mentions that when the sages of Dandakaranya saw Lord Rama, they desired to be born as *gopis* to enjoy Bhagavan's *leelas*.

On a full moon autumn night, Krishna chose to play on his flute, intoxicating animate and inanimate beings. The time had come for him to fulfill his promise to the *gopis* who had diligently and devotedly observed the *Kātyāyanī vrata* during the previous winter and through his *yogamayā*, Krishna wanted to sport with the guileless *gopis* in Brindavana. Permeated by thoughts of Krishna they left their kith and kin and hurried towards the forest.

There were some *gopis* (*nityasiddhās*), who contemplated intensely on the form of Bhagavan from the confines of their homes and realised him as their own Self.

Krishna advised the *gopis* to go back to their homes, but when they emphatically refused to return, Krishna was touched and he took them to the banks of Yamuna. The *gopis* were in unbounded ecstasy at the special attention showered on them by Krishna to the extent that they thought themselves superior to other women. Krishna, the *antaryami* dwelling in everyone, wished to cleanse them of such thoughts and so vanished from their midst.

In utter despair, the *gopis* vented their feelings and sang the glorious *Gopika-gītam*, which is a celebration of Krishna as the *Paramatman*:

न खलु गोपिकानन्दनो भवान्  
अखिलदेहिनामन्तरात्मदृक् ।  
विखवनसार्थितो विश्वगुप्तये सख  
उदेयिवान् सात्वतां कुले ॥

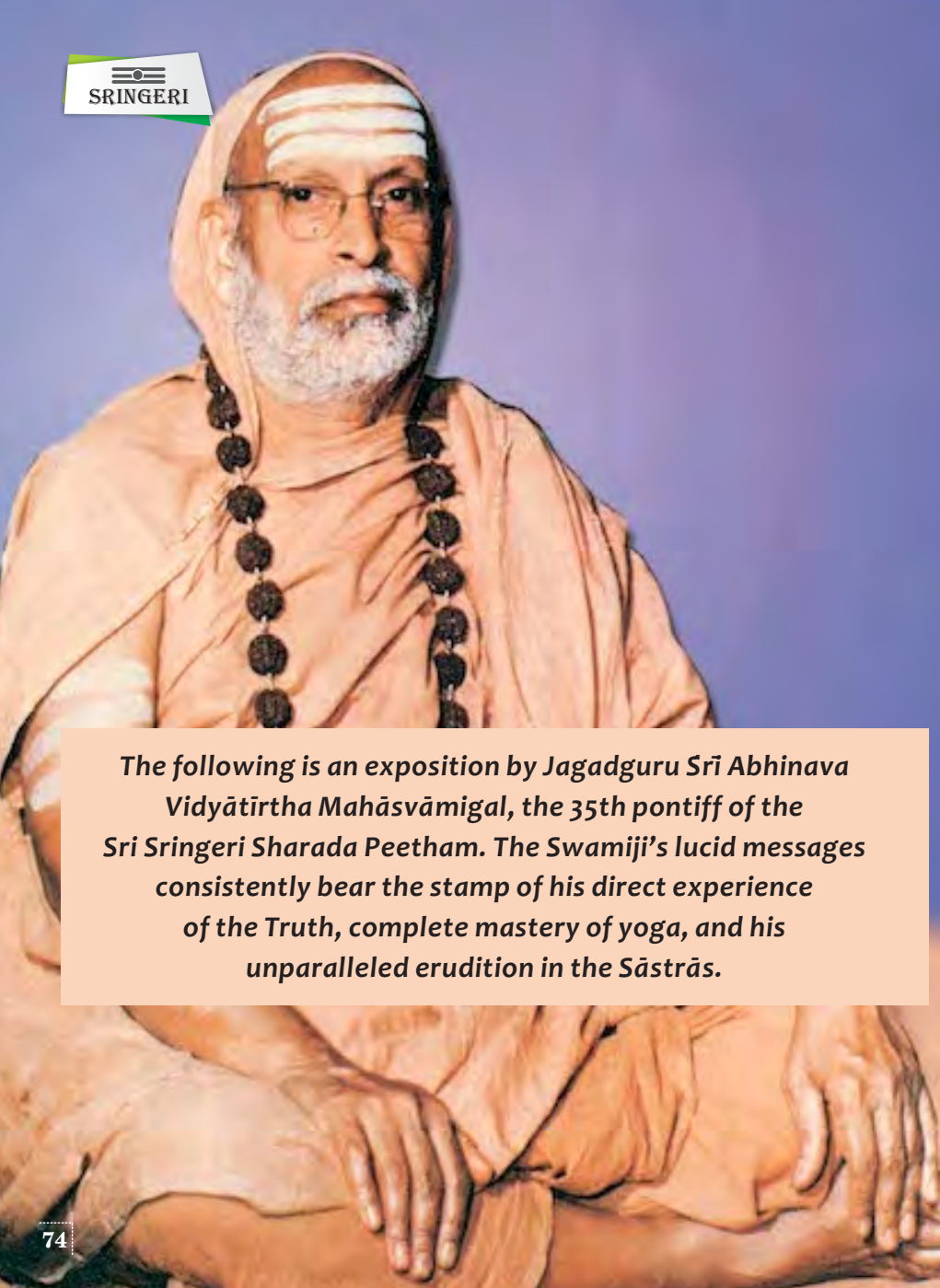
*na khalu gopikā-  
nandano bhavān  
akhiladehinām-  
antarātmadr̥k |*

*vikhavanasārthito  
viśvaguptaye sakha  
udeyivān sātvatām kule ||*

Indeed, you manifested in the race of Satvatas to protect the universe, fulfilling Brahma's solicitations; You are not merely the son of Yasoda and Nanda, you are the witnessing soul in the innermost core of all beings.

When the *gopīs* lost all hope, Krishna reappeared, and acknowledged their constant devotion to him. He performed the divine dance, multiplying himself through *Yogamāyā* into as many forms as the number of *gopis*, standing between two *gopīs*. Simultaneously, Krishna miraculously placed another form of every *gopī* in their respective homes so that they were not missed by their relatives.





*The following is an exposition by Jagadguru Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahasvaminigal, the 35th pontiff of the Sri Sringeri Sharada Peetham. The Swamiji's lucid messages consistently bear the stamp of his direct experience of the Truth, complete mastery of yoga, and his unparalleled erudition in the Sāstrās.*

# Prostrate, Surrender and Become Blessed

**A** devotee prayed to the compassionate Lord to forgive two terrible sins of his. What were they?

The devotee spelt out that in none of his previous births he had done *namaskaṛa* to God. This was a very grievous sin. How did he know that he had never saluted God at any time? The answer is simple.

*Namaskaṛa* to God, according to the devotee, automatically ensures freedom from rebirth. Had he saluted God in any previous birth, he would not have been born. The fact that he had been born showed that such a holy act as prostrating before God had not been performed earlier.

In the present birth, he was now offering his *praṇāms*, and that precisely was the cause of his second fault.

On account of his paying obeisance to God, he would certainly not be born again. Thus, there would be no occasion for him to salute God in future. His inevitable failure to do *namaskaṛa* to God in any future birth was his second sin! These two sins should be pardoned; this was the prayer.

The prayer illustrates how important one should consider offering salutations to God. Normally, most of us prostrate before God daily, but are most casual about the act. This is not correct.

We must regard the opportunity given to us to

offer *namaskāra* to be most valuable and to be due solely to God's grace. God has taken care of us even from the time when we lay helplessly in the wombs of our mothers. The least we can do by way of gratitude is to salute God with all our being.

Will God accept us, for we cannot truly claim to be leading a life much different from that of any animal? We spend much of our energy and time earning our bread and a large chunk of the remaining time in sleep. How then can we claim to be far different from animals unless we are strongly devoted to God and lead a spiritual life?

### **Adi Sankara's Poser to Siva**

In his *Śiva-bhujanga-stotra*, Śankara poses this query to Śiva and then tells the Lord to accept him even if he be on par with an animal.

Why? Is not Nandi the vehicle of Śiva? Surely, if Śiva can accept Nandi, a bull, there should be no problem in His accepting an animal-like devotee. How indeed could Śiva complain about the devotee being animal-like, when He had made an animal itself His own.

It is one thing to be on par with an animal and another to be sinful. What if the devotee be full of faults? Would the Lord then accept him?

Śankara tells Śiva in the verse under consideration that even in such a case, Śiva should extend His love. Why? Had not Śiva placed Chandra on His head even though the latter had violated the promise given by him to view all his wives alike, and had even committed the sin of eloping with his preceptor's wife?

Decidedly, if Śiva could place on His head one who



had such faults, He should have no reason to reject a devotee merely because of the devotee's blemishes.

Let the devotee be on par with an animal and be sinful too, and yet be qualified to be accepted by God. But then should not the devotee's supplication be free from all traces of hypocrisy? Should not the devotee at least be free from double standards?

Here again Śankara disagrees, for he tells Śiva, “If you are opposed to 'two-tongued ones', then how is it that You keep a fork-tongued snake as a neck ornament? If You can adopt a snake, then why not me?”

In conclusion, Śankara reminds Śiva that no matter what a person's

condition might have been, he inevitably becomes blessed on being received by the Lord.


The implication of the prayer is that God's compassion is limitless and so He will accept us, all our faults and limitations notwithstanding, if we offer ourselves to Him. Thus, we will do well to salute God and surrender ourselves to Him. The rest will be taken care of by God.

**Source: 'Multifaceted Jivanmukta'**



# ॥ शोकरा ॥

of the month



*Shami tree is worshipped as the sthala vriksham in many ancient temples. The twigs of the tree are used in havans and fire rituals.*

# PRAYER TO A TREE FOR VICTORY AGAINST ENEMIES

**I**n our traditions, certain trees and herbs are worshipped as being endowed with magical powers. Readers are generally aware, for example, of the potencies of *tulsi* plant and *bhel* leaves. Many, however, may not know the importance of the *Shami* tree and how it is revered to gain victory against enemies and as an antidote for malefic influences.

*Shami*, also known as *chonkar* in Hindi, *vanni* in Kannada and Tamil, and *khejri* plant in English, is one amongst the sacred trees worshipped through many aeons for its powers to confer victory against enemies and ward off evil influences.

*Shami* tree is worshipped as the *sthala vriksham* in many ancient temples. The twigs of the tree are used in *havans* and fire rituals.

During *Vinayaka Chaturti* festival when Ganesa is worshipped with a variety of leaves (*patram*) for doing *archana*, *Shami* leaves are used with the chanting, “*Om Ibhavaktraya namaha, Shami patram samarpayami*”.

The *Ramayana* mentions that Rama worshipped the *shami* tree before proceeding for war with Ravana.

In the *Mahabharata*, in the last year of the Pandava's exile from their kingdom, the brothers had to live *inognito*. Arjuna hid his weapons within the

branches of a *shami* tree. He is said to have retrieved the weapons from the tree on the *Vijayadaśami* day following the Navaratri, with a prayer seeking victory in the ensuing battle with the Kauravas.

*Shami* tree is also said to represent goddess Durga.

According to the *Bhaviṣyad-purāṇa*, Mahaviṣṇu as Lord Balaji worshipped the *shami* tree before setting out to marry Padmavati.

Here is a simple *śloka* to this auspicious tree:

अमङ्गलानां प्रशमनीं  
दुष्कृतस्य नाशिनीं ।  
दुस्वप्नहारिणीं धन्यां प्रपद्येऽहं  
शमीं शुभम् ॥

*Amaṅgalānāṃ praśama-  
nīm duṣkṛtasya naśinīm |*

*Dusvapnahāriṇīm dhanyām  
prapadye'ham śamīm  
śubham ||*

I seek the auspicious and propitious *shami* who destroys inauspiciousness and dispels sins and bad dreams.



## Shami Tree and the Mysore Kings

The kings in the Vijayanagara empire, which was founded in the 14<sup>th</sup> century with the blessings of Jagadguru Vidyaranya, are known to have worshipped the *shami* tree, and this tradition continues to be followed in the Mysore kingdom. For over 200 years, the *shami* tree occupies an important role in the annual *Dusserah* celebrations in Mysore.

The famous Mysore *Dusserah* procession commences at the Palace Gate and ends at the site of a *shami* tree at the northern part of Mysore, which is known as the Banni Mantap Parade ground.

At the end of the procession, the kings worship the *shami* tree, while the priests invoke the blessings of Banni Mahakali, the goddess of the tree, chanting the *Shami Stuti*, a prayer to the tree. After offering *puja*, the kings used to pluck leaves of the *shami* tree, and keep the same safely until the next *Dusserah*.

In Rajasthan, the local rulers likewise have traditionally worshipped the *shami* tree, known locally as the Khejri tree, as a symbol of auspiciousness and victory.

# Where are the **GREAT KINGS** of Yore?

An eternal message from a young prince transformed his avaricious uncle

**H**ere is a gem of wisdom from *Bhoja Charita*. Readers may know that Bhoja was a righteous scholar-king of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, with his kingdom the capital of which was Ujjain in central India. He was as famous as king Vikramaditya for his scholarship, valour and *dharmic* conduct.

Bhoja was a little boy when he lost his father. On his deathbed, his father



made his own brother Vatsa, the guardian to his young son and the temporary ruler of the kingdom until the little prince attained an appropriate age.

However, the greedy Vatsa wanted to usurp the kingdom. So, he forced his minister to take the boy to the forest, kill him, and bring the head to him as proof of the killing.

The minister took the prince to the forest, but did not have the heart to kill him. So, he disclosed to Bhoja the real intentions of his uncle, Vatsa. The wise little boy wrote the *sloka* below on a dry leaf, and gave it to the minister as a message to his uncle.

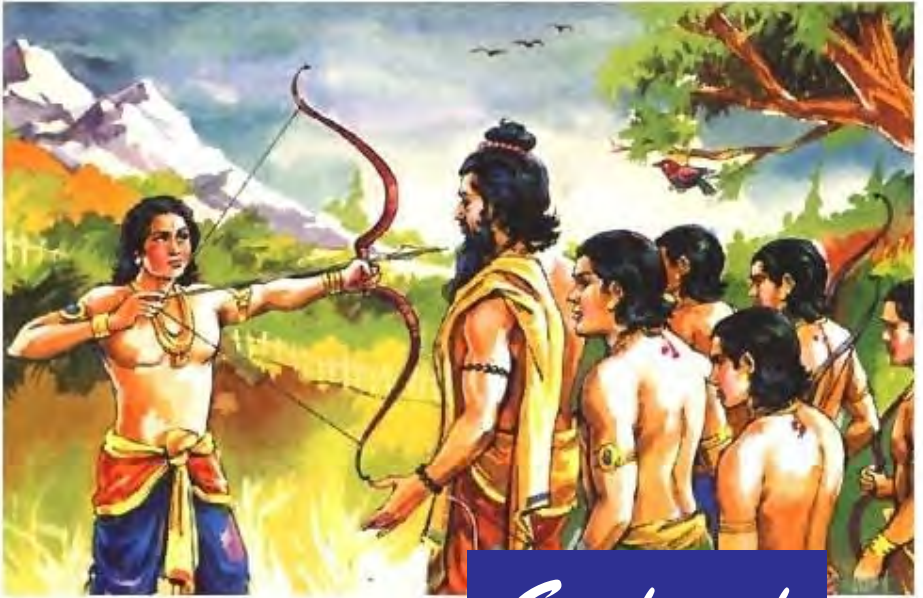
The minister, who was an expert in magic, conjured up an illusory head of the prince, and presented it before Vatsa along with the message of the little prince.

Upon seeing the boy's made-up head and the message, Vatsa regretted his decision and became sad. The minister consoled him and assured him that he could bring back the prince to life with his magical powers. He pretended to perform a sorcerer's trick, and brought back the little prince to the court.

The magical four lines that reformed Vatsa are:

मान्धाता स महीपतिः कृतयुगालङ्कारभूतो गतः  
सेतुर्येन महोदधौ विरचितः क्वासौ दशास्यान्तकः ।  
अन्ये चापि युधिष्ठिर-प्रभृतयो याता दिवं भूपते  
नैकेनापि समं गता वसुमती नूनं त्वया यास्यति ॥





## Good and Bad

A famous story in *Mahabharata* throws light on our intrinsic nature, or the *gunas*.



**A**s young lads, both Kauravas and Pandavas grew up together in the royal palace in Hastinapura. While Pandavas were always inclined towards good and just behaviour, their Kaurava cousins showed tendencies of selfishness and deceit.

Once, their guru Dronacharya, who was coaching the young princes on martial arts and military manoeuvres along with fair play and *dharma*, gave a task to Duryodhana and Yudhishtira.

He told Duryodhana that he would give him a period of five days to go around the kingdom and bring back any person that Duryodhana considered to be a 'good man'.

He then turned to Yudhishtira and told him that he would give him the same time to go around and find any one man who he

thought was bad, and bring him back.

Both the princes set out earnestly on their tasks. Duryodhana travelled extensively and searched far and wide. Yet, he could not find a single person whom he could consider as 'good'.

Yudhishtira likewise combed villages and towns, yet could not find a single person whom he could classify as 'bad'.

Both came back to their Guru to report their finding. All the other students of the Guru who were watching, were surprised, and asked Dronacharya how this was possible. Surely, there were both good and bad people everywhere. How come these two princes had been unable to find even a single person to fit into this ?

The Guru explained that we always see in others what we ourselves are internally.

Duryodhana, being filled with pride and selfishness could not see goodness in anyone. Yudhishtira on the other hand was kind, charitable and just. So he could not see wickedness in others.

The students understood the lesson driven home by the practical demonstration of the Guru.

This episode revealed that the world appears to us as a reflection of our innermost thoughts and nature. Once we cultivate the qualities of kindness, patience, humility and charity within ourselves, we will be able to notice it in the outside world.

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## Say it in Sanskrit

In the previous lesson in the last issue of *Tattvāloka*, the readers were introduced to *ktavatu pratyaya*, the past active participle suffix that can be added to verbs to give past tense meaning.

Nowadays, this usage is very popular in spoken Samskritam. It is distinct from the past perfect usage of *laṅg lakāraḥ* that was learnt previously, though the meaning conveyed is the same.

Study the following sentences:

रामः देवालयं गतवान् ।

*Rāmaḥ devālayaṁ gatavān |*

Rama went to the temple.

कमला ग्रामं गतवती ।

*Kamalā grāmaṁ gatavatī |*

Kamala went to the village.

मार्गे यानं गतवत् ।

*Mārge yānaṁ gatavat |*

The vehicle went on the road.

In the above sentences *vān*, *vatī* and *vat* have been added to the verb *gam* (*gacch*) meaning 'to go', in order to convey the past meaning 'went'. The meaning conveyed and the tense of the verb remain the same in all the three sentences. But the same *ktavatu pratyaya* appears differently, depending on the gender of the subject (*kartā*).

These words to which the *ktavatu pratyayas* have been added should be declined in dual and plural when the *karta* is in dual or plural. So the dual will be obtained in masculine gender by adding *vantaū*. The plural will be arrived at by adding *vantaḥ*.

The word will be as follows in the three numbers (masculine):

गतवान्	गतवन्तौ	गतवन्तः
<i>Gatavān</i>	<i>gatavantau</i>	<i>gatavantaḥ</i>

The word with the *pratyaya* in the three numbers (feminine) will be:

गतवती	गतवत्यौ	गतवत्यः
<i>Gatavatī</i>	<i>gatavatyau</i>	<i>gatavatyah</i>

The neutral gender dual and plural forms will be *gatavati* and *gatavanti* respectively.

गतवत्	गतवती	गतवन्ति
<i>Gatavati</i>	<i>gatavati</i>	<i>gatavanti</i>

The following table gives the forms for the verb *paṭh* to read:

	Singular	Dual	Plural
Masculine			
	पठितवान्	पठितवन्तौ	पठितवन्तः
	<i>Paṭhitavān</i>	<i>paṭhitavantau</i>	<i>paṭhitavantaḥ</i>
Feminine			
	पठितवती	पठितवत्यौ	पठितवत्यः
	<i>Paṭhitavati</i>	<i>paṭhitavatyau</i>	<i>paṭhitavatyah</i>
Neuter			
	पठितवत्	पठितवती	पठितवन्ति
	<i>Paṭhitavat</i>	<i>paṭhitavati</i>	<i>paṭhitavanti</i>

One important point with regard to this *pratyaya* is that though the gender of the *kartā* influences it, the person of the *kartā* will have no bearing on the form.

So across the three persons of *uttama puruṣaḥ* (first person), *madhyama puruṣaḥ* (second person) and *prathama puruṣaḥ* (third person), it will remain the same.

The following sentences will throw more light on this:

1. अहं मम भगिन्यै पत्रं लिखितवती ।  
*Ahaṁ mama bhaginyai patraṁ likhitavatī |*  
I wrote a letter to my sister.
2. त्वं परीक्षां लिखितवती ।  
*Tvaṁ parīkṣāṁ likhitavatī |*  
You wrote the exam.
3. अध्यापिका कृष्णफलके पाठं लिखितवती ।  
*Adhyāpikā kṛṣṇaphalake pāṭhaṁ likhitavatī |*  
The teacher wrote on the blackboard.

Let us now look at a riddle.

जात्या विहङ्गो न परं सपक्षः शब्दायमानो गगने विहारी ।  
युद्धानुकूलो न गजो नाश्वः विविच्य नाम्ना वद किं तदेतत् ॥  
*Jātyā vihaṅgo na paraṁ sapakṣaḥ śabdāyamāno*  
*gagane vihārī |*  
*Yuddhānukūlo na gajo nāśvaḥ vivicya nāmnā*  
*vada kiṁ tadetat ||*

It does not belong to the bird-family, but has wings and moves in the sky, making a sound; suited for war but is neither an elephant nor horse; think carefully and tell me what it is?

**Answer:** (एरोप्लान) *Vimāna*

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*Humble Pranams to...*

Jagadguru Sri Mahasannidhanam performing puja on Vinayaka Chaturthi day



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Jagadguru Sri Mahasannidhanam performs Mahamangalarati  
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