

PEACE

A Quarterly Spiritual Magazine with a Message for Universal Brotherhood

DECEMBER 2020



Pranavodhanuh Sharohyatma Brahmatallakshya Muchyate !
Apramattena Veddhavyam Sharavat Tanmayo Bhavet !!



Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti
God is One, men call Him by various names

PEACE

A quarterly Journal of Peace and Illumination

Founder: H. H. Sri Swami Omkar

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Vol. 94 **December-2020** **No.4**

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PRAYER FOR UNIVERSALITY

Oh Lord, Bless us with a heart of Universality, with a heart that feels for all, including the dumb animals, in which thou dost abide.

Let us realize now more than ever, that the man who is devoid of Love, Love Universal, is a mere animal in human form, but not a human being, the living image of thyself. Let our one prayer be to love all as Thy children, to work and breathe in Thee, loving all Thy children in all religions as our own, for in loving the least of thy children, we are only loving thee.

Om!

Om!

Om!

SWAMI OMKAR

MEDITATION

(On the all- pervading God)

O Holy Spirit of God, who art about and within, let me perpetually, be conscious of Thy abiding Love. So possess my body, mind and heart that all difficulties, cares and earthly limitations dissolve. May the Grace of God, our sweet Lord, procure all creation, the blissful consciousness of His Presence.

Om, Santi, Om!

SISTER SUSHILA DEVI

GREETINGS

Divine Atman! Beloved and blessed children of the Divine!

May this Christmas bring cheer and endless delight in your lives by remembering Jesus Christ's sacrifice and selfless service to the humanity. May you imbibe the Divine qualities of Jesus and realize that you are one with Him, the Lord.

May the dawn of the New Year inspire you to feel His Presence above, below, all around and within yourselves and lead you to a life of sanctity and Purity and from moment to moment experience the glory, love and effulgent splendor of God now and always!

Wish you all a very happy Sankranthi (Pongal) and may this Sankranthi bring you all prosperity and happiness.

We are honoured to convey Parama Pujya Swami Omkarji's and Pujya Sri Jnaneswari Mataji's Divine blessings to all of you both in the East and the West on the occasion of Holy Christmas, the dawn of the New Year 2021 and Sankranthi (Pongal).

May Peace be unto all!

Om!

Om!

Om!

With best wishes,

Vinamrananda Saraswati

Those who realize the Self enter into the peace that brings complete self-control and perfect patience. They see themselves in everyone and everyone in themselves. Evil cannot overcome them because they overcome all evil. Sin cannot consume them because they consume all sin. Free from evil, free from sin and doubt, they live in the kingdom of Brahman.- Upanishad

SPECIAL NOTE

Pranams to embodiments of Divine Atman!

“Everyday is my Birthday” is the Divine message given by Swamiji on his Birthday.”

An Ashram Devotee from Hongkong once wrote to Swamiji as to how one can protect oneself from the impending danger to the world on account of the oncoming ‘*Ashta Graha Kootami*’ (Eight planets conjoining in the same house). In reply Swamiji stated, “Dear Brother, I am not at all worried about the ‘*Ashta Graha Kootami*’ which is predicted to happen in the month of February. To me everyday is the same! Whether Planets come together or not, God’s splendor is ever shining without an iota of change. According to the Laws of Nature, there may be some changes in the operation of the world but they hold no value to those who follow and live in God and they are always protected.

As a precaution against the spread of Corona Virus and to ensure health and safety of the Devotees, we seek your pardon in expressing our inability to conduct the 127th Birthday Celebrations of Pujya Sri Omkar Swamiji.

Swamiji used to celebrate his Birthday in a modest way by asking the Participants to do *Nama Samkirtana*, Chanting, Prayer and Meditation. In line with the practice adopted by Swamiji, the Mother Ashram will conduct the following events to commemorate Pujya Swamiji’s Birthday.

19-01-2021	6am to 6pm	<i>Nama Samkirtana</i>
20-01-2021	6am to 6pm	Chanting of <i>Om karam</i>
21-01-2021	6am to 6pm	Chanting of Peace Prayer and Meditation.

Ashram Devotees by strictly following due precautions against Corona, may follow the above Schedule in Ashram

Branches located in their towns or in their own houses as may be convenient.

The true gift to Swamiji on his Birthday would be to adhere to the schedule of programs as given above.

May Swamiji's Divine Blessings be ever upon you all!,

In the Service of Gurudev

Managing Committee, Sri Santi Ashram

Note: -

1) Devotees may please note in their diaries as to how many times they have chanted the 'Peace Prayer' during the Birthday Celebrations of Pujya Swamiji and send the information to the Ashram email address or through whatsapp message on Ph. No. 9963573618.

2) Details of the Birthday celebrations conducted at your places between 19-01-2021 to 21-01-2021 may also be intimated by email at the Ashram email address.

Obituary

With profound regret we place on the records of the Ashram, the sad demise of Smt. Kola Seetha Devi Garu (wife of Sri Kola Subba Rao Garu, General Secretary, Sri Santi Ashram) on 13-9-2020. She was an ardent devotee of Swamiji, well-wisher of the Ashram and a great soul who has rendered yeomen services in the cause of the Ashram. We, on behalf of Pujya Sri Jnaneswari Mataji, Managing Committee of the Ashram and the inmates of the Ashram convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and pray that the departed soul may rest in Peace.

Managing Committee, Sri Santi Ashram

BIRTHDAY MESSAGE

(On the Occasion of 127th Birthday of SWAMI Omkarji Maharaj)

-SWAMI OMKAR

Dear friends of PEACE magazine in the East and the West and all over the world! On this happy birthday, my heart longs to touch your devoted hearts with dedication, with God's Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience. May you all feel God's eternal light, infinite light, universal love, now and here, as you read this message, wherever you may be. This is my ardent prayer and earnest longing, wishing you the happiest life of peace, on this birthday as well as on all the birthdays to come in the future. Verily, my birthday is your birthday for there is only one birthday- the birthday of illumination- rebirth into God Consciousness. Everyday is a birthday for wise souls of aspirations. In memory of this birthday let us now repeat the simple, helpful and inspiring **Peace prayer** as many times as possible, making all our dear ones and children also, to repeat it with heart and soul.

May the birthday message be concluded with the repetition of the Vedic chant- wishing peace of all, invoking God's richest blessings even on the dumb animal friends and other creatures as all life is one.

May Peace be unto all!

Om

Om

Om

(PEACE, 1968)

Laziness and talkativeness are twins. They go hand in hand. Laziness is worse than leprosy for leprosy effects only the physical body whereas laziness attacks the physical, mental and spiritual bodies.

—Swami Omkar

“BE IN HARMONY WITH THE FINITE”

Swami Ramananda Tirtha

Often the question is asked, “How to be in tune with the Infinite?” This question has bewildered many and non-plussed even some good souls who are pining for God realization. This is so because they have not properly understood what God is, how to seek Him, and where He will be found. If one gets a clear conception of these matters, the problem becomes easy, dispelling all darkness, confusion and bewilderment.

Let us first see what God is. He has no body or form. He has no name. So He is beyond the purview of the five senses. But the matter does not end there. We are told that our body itself is His body. All bodies are His. He is enshrined in the stillness of one’s own purified heart. So God has to be seen in all forms, both sentient and insentient. All the world is Brahman. No more is it necessary to close one’s eyes and seek Him. He is here, there and everywhere. Whatever we see or touch, it is He, it is He!

God comes to us in the form of certain good qualities. He is all Love. He is Purity. He is Light. He is all that imports beauty into this universe. He is Omnipotent, the all Powerful. The way to be in tune with the infinite, i.e., God is to cultivate these qualities or attributes, which are His. Purity is the essence of Godhead. So all those who pine for God must first make purity, their own. Remove all the filth and trash from your heart, make it all pure and the image of the Beloved will be found therein. All *sadhanas*-practices-must lead to this purity. So our first endeavor is to be pure cent per cent. This may not be possible all at one stretch. But one step forward will lead to the next and on and on it goes.

How to achieve this purity? Again, the mind is bewildered. Be a witness to the workings of your mind. Search, introspect and have constant vigilance on your mind and make firm determination to retrieve the lost ground. Remember always that there is no defeat in this realm. Seeming setbacks are no recession. They are all a swing to give a forward push. Do not lose heart. Pick up courage and march on. And you will attain the goal.

For achieving the self-purification, human body is the fittest instrument. Put it into selfless service of others. God is manifested the most in the human form though He is present in all. He can respond to our love. He would react to our devotion. He is happy at our dedication. He exults in our renunciation. And He loves us all the more because we love Him! He is near at hand. Shower your love on any human being who is just nearby; serve him, without any idea of return and that is worship, this is *aradhana*, this is *arti*. What everyone does in this spirit is an act of worship! "Oh Lord, whatever I do is only Thy worship". How true are these cravings of a real devotee!

Be more human if you want to be spiritual. Neglecting God in man, you are seeking him in temples, mosques, churches, in mountains and forests, on the banks of the Ganga and, other holy rivers. See God in the living form, do your bit by Him, renounce everything in the dedicated and selfless service of man and you are sure to be lightened!

How simple, how easy is the path! May we all see it and march on! The Infinite works through the finite. To be in tune with the finite is to be in tune with the Infinite!

OM!

OM!

OM!

(Peace-Jan.1970)

RELEASE THE PIGEON: AVERT THE DEATH

SWAMI SIVANANDA

The Rajah of Tanjore was on his death bed. Doctors had given up hope. The grief-stricken royal household hung their long faces down and awaited the end of the life they loved. Sleepless nights and torrents of tears had left them weary and speechless; their blank looks sought the floor more than the monarch's face.

"Get thee gone, you beggar; great doctors have failed: and you are going to succeed?" shouted the gatekeepers of the royal household. The target was a mendicant. Little did they realize that he was the renowned saint Raghaviah.

Raghaviah was a contemporary of the great Muslim Mahatma who has since then been known by the name Nagore Andavan. They lived the life of Avadhootas. Their almost naked bodies clung "loosely" to an enlightened and ready to fly away to its original Sweet Home any moment. Their bearded face radiated a peace that eluded the palace. The light in their eyes put to shame the most ravishing beauty of human form. There was that something about them that compelled attention, reverence and love.

Raghaviah and Nagore Andavan were one at heart. Many were the miracles they played together. In all cases they aimed at *Viswa- Kalyan*. They healed the sick, brought prosperity to the faithful, conferred spiritual felicity on the devout.

Raghaviah gazed at the care-worn face of the gate-keepers: "May not a beggar succeeds where the doctors failed?" tell me what the matter is with the king. Let me see if I can help. I am not here to beg, but to bless."

The elderly mother of the Rajah heard this calm stout-hearted declaration of the monk. The maternal heart clung to the ray of hope that this apparently insignificant person threw into her heart.

She ran to greet the beggar; the gatekeepers looked away in perfect disdain. The drowning man clutches at the floating straw.

“May I see the Rajah, mother? Perhaps God might show us some way out.”

Struggling between the hope generated by the *Sadhu*’s confidence, and the hopelessness betrayed by his appearance, the mother took him to the Rajah’s room.

Raghaviah gazed at the Rajah in silence. He smiled. In spite of themselves, all those around him smiled; they felt their burden lighten.

“I cannot suggest any medicine myself,” said Raghaviah; the ladies burst into tears. “But, I can tell you where to find relief.”

Between sobs, the mother pleaded: “Please!”

“Go at once to Nagore Andavan. You will find him underneath a tree in the mangrove. Represent your case to him. He will give you the necessary medicine.”

A car sped along the road to Nagore. The royal mother’s heart was a mile in advance!

The most venerable, usually haughty, mother of the Hindu monarch, lay prostrate at the feet of a half-naked, ash-besmeared body of the Muslim Fakir, Nagore Andavan.

“Save my son, *Prabho!*” cried the mother, catching hold of the feet of the *Fakir*.

The *Fakir* turned his head away. “Hmm! You do all sorts of foolish things and then come to me when you are in danger!...All right..... Will you do just as I tell you to do?”

“Yes, *Prabho!* Anything.”

“Go straight to the Palace. Near the ceiling above the king’s head you will find a newly plastered circle on the roof. Cut it open. A pigeon is struggling for its life in the wall. Release it forthwith. Your son will be all right. It is on account of this heartless action of his that he is suffering: exactly the same pain that afflicts the

pigeon the king has to endure! If the pigeon breathes its last, the king too, will die at the same moment. Rush. He will survive, but you must take a vow this very moment. Never to cause the least injury to any living being. Remember all life is sacred. An ant has as much justification and right to lead its own life as the highest Brahma has. Man has no business to interfere with the life-course of any being. Go!”

The mother rushed to the palace armed with the Saint’s blessings. She made a bee-line to the Rajah’s chamber. Masons were summoned: the plaster was removed in an instant. A pitiable sight. Struggling between life and death, lay a pigeon, its half-closed eyes reflecting the voiceless agony it was enduring within the lethal chamber. The mother nursed it back to recovery. The Rajah sat up in his bed. Every grain of rice that the pigeon ate, every drop of water that was put in its mouth, revived the Rajah. The Rajah admitted. “There was a hole in the wall over my bed. Pigeons used to live in it. They soiled my bed. I felt they were a nuisance. I ordered that the hole be blocked.

The mother was impatient: “You have been saved, son, by the miraculous grace of the Nagore *Fakir*. Go to him. Bow to him. Take the vow in his presence that you will never cause the least hurt to any living being. Lose no time.”

The Hindu monarch’s crown swept the dust off the Muslim *Fakir’s* feet. It was he who originated the name “Nagore Andavan” by which the saint has since been known. The Rajah had a huge temple built on the Saint’s Samadhi after he passed away; he gave vast lands to the temple, and willed that thousands of pigeons should be fed from the produce of those lands. This custom is adhered to till today: and the temple continues to radiate miraculous grace, healing power, peace, unity and prosperity.

Glory to Nagore Andavan! My Salutations to him!

MY OPTICIAN

SWAMI OMKAR

The way I came across my optician is very interesting. It was nearly ten years ago that my eyes were paining on account of too much strain, especially at night in writing messages. Hence, I had to go to the King George Hospital to get my eyes tested and examined. After thorough test and dark room examination of three days, I was finally given the prescription of the glasses that were suitable to my eyes.

With that prescription paper, I went to one of the noted opticians in the town of Visakhapatnam. He was kind enough to receive me with all devotion and veneration. He took the prescription receipt and did a test of his own, fixing one glass after another on my eyes, asking me to read the small letters or alphabets on the wall. After the examination, I was selecting modest looking frame for the glasses, requesting the optician to tell me the price of certain frames that were in his glass window cases.

Instead of complying with my request by telling the prices, he was asking me to select whatever I liked. Again I told him thus, "As the Ashram is fundless, I do not wish to spend much money on the glasses and before I select I want to know the price." "Without caring for my request he again insisted that I make my own selection first. Thus, we were arguing and fighting with words. I did not like his business way, of trying to sell the glasses without telling me the price. Perhaps, he too did not like my way of insisting to know the price instead of selecting the glasses. Thus, when I was in a dilemma, displeased with the optician and disgusted with myself, he said gently, 'Sir, I feel from within that I should offer you a pair of glasses free, without accepting anything from

you, except your blessings. "I was hardly able to believe what I heard. I was overwhelmed for a moment, for I felt a touch of God's love and my eyes were filled with tears of gratitude. The glasses and the optician disappeared. I was no longer in the Popular Optical Store, but only in the Presence of God, surrounded by His Light, Life and Love.

When I came down to the plane of the earth, my optician was looking at me with all devotion and veneration, with the offering of spectacles in his hands. How good is God! How blind are we to His Omnipresence! How He expresses Himself in a thousand little things as well and big things! **'Eyes have they. Yet they see not'**. Blessed are the eyes that can see Him in everyone and everywhere, in small things as well as in big things!

As already written, this incident happened nearly ten years ago. Since then the optician has become my life long friend and a great devotee and an ardent well-wisher of the Ashram, all these ten years. He no longer lives in the Popular Optical Store, aloof, away or separated from me. He lives in my eyes and I see him often and often through his glasses.

In these ten years, not only my optician has supplied me several times with a change of glasses, getting always the best and the latest model glasses all the way from Bombay, but also he has supplied free glasses, spectacles, for all the members and devotees of the Ashram, always free. If any poor man or woman goes through the Ashram to the optician, he gives the best test and most experienced examination in all the country and supplies them, out of the fullness of his heart, with a set of glasses, freely with all his love, without expecting any reward in any form.

To me, he is not a mere ordinary optician but a divine optician, for God exists and abides only in the selfless and dedicated hearts

of his consecrated children. Verily, where love is, there is God! I may forget myself, but I can never forget my big-hearted optician. Even as I am writing this message, I see him first and foremost through his glasses and then the rest of the world, for to me God exists in the selfless, devoted and consecrated. Verily, in loving any of the least of His children, we are only loving God, for, all are His children as He is Omnipresence, the one without a second.

May the Almighty bless my loving optician with His choicest blessings of health, peace, prosperity and long life, so as to continue his selfless services in his humble way, among the sick and poor, is the ardent prayer of Swami Omkar!

May Peace be unto ALL!

OM!

OM!

OM!

Obituary

Swami Prajnaranya Maharaj, also known as Yogi Protoplasm, was closely associated with Swami Omkarji Maharaj. From his student days itself, he was visiting our Ashram and learning the subtle aspects of Sadhana from Pujya Omkar Swamiji and was spending his time doing Sadhana at our Ashram. He was conducting a number of *Sadhana Sibirams* for Sadhaks in our Ashram. He has conducted special *Sadhana Sibiramu* during the Ashram's centenary celebrations. With profound regret we place on the records of the Ashram that Swamiji attained Maha Samadhi in Yogi Rama Tapovanam on 9-9-2020. Though he is not physically present, his blessings will be forever upon *Sadhaks*. The inmates of the Ashram and Sadhaks pay respectful homage to the Divine Lotus Feet of Pujya Sri Prajnaranya Swamiji.

Managing Committee, Sri Santi Ashram

Mother I Bow to You

In honour of our Beloved Jnaneswari Mataji's Birthday

Mother I bow to you,

I do not know whether you are the Divine Mother,
But that all orphaned hearts feel the love of a mother in you-I know.

So in that faith of a child- I bow to you.

Mother I bow to you.

What spiritual heights you have scaled- are beyond my Ken;
But that you lean down in compassion to us, earthlings- I see.

So, in that humility of a recipient- I bow to you.

Mother I bow to you.

Whether you are missioned to change the world
with the magic wand of your powers-I do not know;

But that you have had the strength to transform

Your human mould into a divine image- I see.

So, in that awe of a miracle- beholder- I bow to you.

Mother, I bow to you.

What part you play in the divine scheme of things-

Is more than I can appraise;

But I see that you are a luminous star on the

Brow of Indian womanhood,

The living fulfillment of a woman's destiny.

So, in that joy of a star-gazer- I bow to you.

(Peace-Sept, 2008)

THE SOUL OF CHRISTMAS

SWAMI OMKAR

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

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

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

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

What shall I eat on Christmas day? Whom shall I invite to Christmas dinner? What presents shall I give to my friends and other dear ones? How and where should I entertain my guests on Christmas day or after Christmas dinner? These are some of the thoughts prominent in those that are getting ready for the Christmas. Is this the proper way to celebrate the birth of Christ?

As the Christmas is approaching, I try to merge deeper and deeper within myself, to feel spirit of Christ in the stillness of my heart so that I could share a true message with all of you. I have a faithful picture of Virgin Mary in my room. Often my eyes wander towards the Holy Mother and I gaze at her innocent, pure and blessed face. As I look at her blessed face, the message

flashes that it is only the pure in heart that can conceive Christ. In spotless purity universal love and infinite Peace, Christ is born.

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

How many more years shall we allow to pass without realizing the true Spirit of Christmas? Let each one of us ask the vital question in the silent moments of his or her life. What is the soul of Christmas? The answer comes in stillness that the soul of Christmas is Christ-consciousness. Christ is the soul of Christmas. Where is Christ-consciousness in our endless hurry, needless worry and restless activities! How pathetic it is to forget and deny the Christ on his very birthday in the name of outer Christmas!

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

Let us try to understand now; what is a real Christmas gift. The only Christmas gift that can never be rusted or stolen by thieves is the living Truth. It is the assertion and manifestation of one's Divinity. Hence in the stillness of our pure and loving hearts let us kindle that flame of Christ consciousness and share it not only with our dear and near ones but with the whole humanity. This is the only real offering that we ought to offer and share with those whom we love. Instead of being sad and dejected for being poor in the goods of the world, with the thoughts: - O! I cannot entertain my friends or I am not rich to give proper presents to my dear ones, let us be happy with the thought of sharing Truth of

Christ with all those whom we love. This is the richest gift, the immortal life-giving and soul awakening offering that you can give to one and all- to kings or peasants, to friends or foes, nay to the whole of humanity.

My dear readers of Peace in East and West, I beg you to draw nearer, pray, open your hearts attune yourselves with the Universal Energy to accept my humble gift- Christ consciousness- the soul of Christmas- on this blessed day of Christ's birth.

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

May silent adorations be unto the soul of Christmas, the living Christ, who is shining in all of you. May Peace and goodwill abide forever all over the world.

AMEN !

OM! TAT! SAT! OM!

It is true the pure heart has great power. It can protect itself from all dangers. It will not be easily snared. But it is wrong to dally with evil for long. Even a wise man's heart will falter at times. The mark of wisdom is to keep at a distance from things which entice the heart. But if a person approaches them and yields to them step by step, even to test himself, he will surely be lost.

- Ramakrishna Paramahansa

It is not merely by repeating God's name and singing His praises that we serve God; every work that we do is His worship; because every bit of our activity belongs to His *Prakriti* or will. So let us do all work as service, or as an offering to Him, the Supreme Lord of our being.

—Swami Ramdas

LIVING VEDANTA

SWAMI RAMATIRTHA

They call Vedanta Divine Fire. If Vedanta does not remove your misery and suffering, then it is not even of the same rank as the material fire. If Vedanta does not make you happy, if it does not cast off your burdens, then kick it aside. But you acquire Vedanta only when you put it into practice.

Yudhishtira was the heir, apparent to the throne of India. There is a story related to his boyhood. He was studying at school in the Infant class. One day the Head Master came to his class for inspection and asked the boys how far they had advanced in learning the Primer. The other boys, one by one, laid before the master all they had read. When the turn of Yudhishtira came he opened the Primer and said cheerfully, "I have learnt the alphabet and also the first sentence." The master asked "Is that all?" the boy then said hesitatingly, "The second sentence also." The master expected this intelligent boy to fare better and not to be snail-slow. He was angry and, taking a rod, began to beat the boy for his slovenliness. The boy received the beatings cheerfully and was as happy as ever. The master got exasperated and beat the boy again, but found no signs of anger, fear or sorrow on the beautiful face of the prince.

The master reflected and said to himself, "What is the matter? I am so severe on him and he does not resent it in the least. He is cheerful, calm and quiet." The first sentence in the Primer after alphabet was, "***Never lose your temper! Never get annoyed! Have no anger.***" The second sentence was, "***Speak the truth! Ever speak the truth.***" The boy had said he had learnt the first sentence, but he only hesitatingly said that he had learnt the second sentence.

Now the master's eyes fell on the first sentence, ***"Never lose your temper..."*** and the other eye fell on the boy. Then the meaning of the sentence flashed through his mind, the face of the boy which was calm, placid, bright, happy, cheerful and beautiful, brought home to the heart of the teacher the meaning of the sentence, ***"Never lose your temper."***

Heretofore, the master had learned the substance of the sentence only through the lips, but now he knew that it could be lived..... carried into effect. He felt ashamed that he had not learnt even the first sentence. The boy, by learning a thing, did not mean learning it by heart but realizing and becoming one with it.

No sooner did the master understand the meaning of learning than the stick fell from his hand and his heart relented. He took up the boy and clasped him in his arms and kissed his forehead. He patted the boy on the back and said "I congratulate you on having truly learnt at least one sentence of the Scriptures. Ah! I have not learnt even one sentence, for I get angry and lose my temper. You are more learned than I." When the master thus cheered the boy, he said, ***"Master, I have not yet learnt this sentence thoroughly because I felt some signs of anger and resentment in my heart when I received your thrashing."*** Thus was the boy speaking the meaning of the second sentence, he was speaking out the truth, when there was every temptation to conceal his inner weakness. The child thus proved that he had learnt the second sentence also: ***"Speak the truth...."***

This is the way of learning. This is the way to learn Vedanta, live Vedanta, and practice Vedanta. It is then that the Divine Fire of Vedanta blazes within you, burns up all impurities of the heart and grants you eternal freedom and bliss.

Pujya Mataji- An unfathomable Personality

Chandra, Ananda Ashram

The lives of ordinary mortals are stories of their interaction with the external world around and the mind triggered reaction to it. We trudge along life quite often as a victim of the mind rather than its victor. In contrast, the lives of saints, transcending the concepts of victor and vanquished, stand out as message to humanity. A saint's life shines as a beacon light beckoning us to approach it and bask in its warmth. A study of their lives introduces a new inspiration into the weary soul. However, without their grace, we may remain blind to the teaching which speaks forth through their small actions. One may argue that we must remain open and sincere to benefit from their company. Nevertheless, it is only by their grace that such association can touch us, enter our hearts. What we happen to observe of their lives, even if we don't have the depth to understand the full import, are treasures. We delight in sharing them with kindred souls for the very joy it generates in our hearts.

I had the great good fortune of spending a few weeks this year in the holy company of our beloved Pujya Mataji in Shanti Ashram. Though I had known Mataji earlier during her visits to Anandashram, observing Mataji amidst the day to day life of Shanti Ashram undoubtedly revealed some new aspects of her personality. As everyone knows, Mataji is very reticent, and is simplicity personified. She dons humility as her attire, nay, it is her being. During visiting hours of the devotees, Mataji would be sitting on the veranda looking very gracious. With polite enquiries, a quick rapport would be facilitated and she would apprise them of Swamiji's Peace Prayer. The session would invariably end with reciting the Peace Prayer. She would advise them to repeat the

prayer at home or write it as many times as possible. If there were youngsters in the group, Mataji's face would light up. She would beam a gentle smile on them and enquire about their studies etc. She would also ask them to read aloud the Peace Prayer in her presence. Her conversation with them would consist of a few sentences only but it would express her interest in them and carry across a gentle ray of grace.

When aspirants come to stay in the Ashram as first timers, Mataji goes through endless trouble to ensure their comfortable stay, from getting the room ready, inspecting it, arranging for suitable food to be served and even more so if they happen to be from other states or foreigners who are not familiar with Andhra cuisine, and supervising the serving etc. whatever offerings are brought to Mataji, be it fruits or sweets, she always sends a portion to all of us. Still she would sound apologetic that she couldn't give us more! Does a mother ever become content with what she gives to her children!

Mataji is readily available to whomever seeks her company for peace and solace. A family of three couples from Mumbai, who were old time devotees, were visiting the Ashram after a long interval and they had much to share of their lives' ups and downs. Mataji would sit with them for hours, listening to them and offering them soothing smiles, comforting words and gently prompting them to sing some bhajans and to share jokes. In her serene way, she would infuse joy and comfort into them. Needless, her solitude and presence had pacified their minds and bathed their souls in peace.

Generally, Mataji does not appear to exhibit emotional reactions outwardly. However, if we happen to be fortunate and attentive, sometimes we may notice that the subject under

reference had deeply touched her, arousing a deep compassion in her, as her eyes would wear a faraway look and an unfathomable expression. Mataji also wields the necessary firmness in the running of the Ashram. Her simplicity combined with a supreme aloofness restrains us from a too familiar or casual approach. One day, Mataji was removing a clip from a bunch of papers with great difficulty and secured it in a small box. When we smiled at this, she said in a stern voice, 'Ashram's resources are precious. I don't like anything to be wasted or used extravagantly. A telling lesson to us steeped in consumerism, though she is not at all anxious to teach or preach. The resident inmates stand in awe of her. She seems to play outwardly the role of a father and teacher and mother with them. Mataji's stoic silence wards off our attempts to broach her with questions on her *sadhana* days or her earlier life, so then we abandon our venture. At times, she even sounds annoyed at our attempts. Still, if we make bold to approach her with an earnestness and humility, she may relent and allow us a few glimpses. Generally, she is reluctant to respond to any queries on her personal life or health.

Mataji rejoices if anyone comes to the Ashram for *sadhana*. There are *sadhus* and *sannyasis* who come to Shanti Ashram for a long period of *sadhana* or seclusion. Mataji takes great care in arranging for their stay and periodically checks on their needs. She would visit them now and then with a gracious smile, during her evening walks and spend a few minutes with them. This is part of her spiritual ministry though she does not don this role apparently. Mataji is well aware of the facile or half-hearted attempts of many a seeker in their *sadhanas*, for she once posed a question sternly, 'who wants self-control? No one is interested in such things.'

During my stay, I had the pleasure of accompanying Mataji during her evening walks. She walks so briskly that one of the inmates who used to go with her on these walks remarked, ‘She walks so fast that her feet don’t seem to touch the ground at all. Though I am about twenty years younger than her, I can’t keep up with her’ Mataji was not only walking fast, but she would dash across short cuts on the rough ground strewn with twigs, sharp stones and dry leaves, which at times provide shelter to reptiles and scorpions, and that too in the dark. On one such night, I hung on to her *pallu* for fear of stepping on any reptiles. Not only was she flying like a wind as we had to be in *Bhajan* Hall in time for the Silence hour, she was rushing through those short cut paths in the dark hour! It was amazing to see her sprinting like a young girl! And only a few weeks earlier, she had sustained a hair-line fracture in one of her toes.

My best time with Mataji was while sitting with her in the central courtyard after the night *Arati*. She exudes such a gentle yet powerful peace at this hour that my mind would eagerly await this hour athirst to drink from the fountain, leaving behind its pastime of endless and pointless chatter. As we sat before her under the star-lit skies, we would lose ourselves in that Silence. When we surfaced, the mind would whisper, ‘Light and Peace’. Burden and cares manufactured by the mind would have melted away. We would walk back to our dwellings in a meditative mood. Is there any better way to retire at night?

Pujya Swami Omkarji in his welcome message beckons the visitors with a clarion call, ‘it is my one ambition, that you should not leave this place until you fill your hearts with Peace and Love.’ The power of peace here is so unobtrusively potent that it seeps into our being without the least effort on our part. Mataji nourishes

our soul more by her silence than by words. To inhale the fragrance of her Presence, we have to pass through the gate of humility and sincerity. One night, as I sat before her as a helpless child that I was, laying my head on her lap, the Mother Divine caressed my restless soul with the balm of her Love!

Mataji's humility camouflages her spiritual heights. Once I was sharing with her my interest in reading about the lives of saints and *sadhakas*. She also concurred with me that she too found such reading very inspiring! She does not make obvious even the fact that she solely relies on the Divine.

Ashram activities flow smoothly around Mataji's serene and unassuming presence. Her actions are done in a methodical and calm way. Though nothing escapes her notice, she does not reveal it unless something demands her attention or action. She is at ease with everything, whatever her external response.

The teachings of saints cry out in bold relief in their actions and interactions. We may or may not feel the transforming power of their company consciously, but their presence awakens our souls to the possibility of scaling the summit of our own being. The seed they sow in our hearts by the very power of their benign presence will sprout forth in our lives sooner or later. Saints' lives are an open text book for us to learn. If we are humble and open-minded, immense benefit will flow to us from their being.

Mataji is at once the string-puller and the witness of the play!

Hari Om!

(Peace September 2010)

We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty.

-Mother Theresa

A KING AND A BHAGAVATAR

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

A Brahmin, learned in the *Sastras* and the *Puranas*, went to a king and told him that he desired to read and expound the *Puranas* in the Palace. The Brahmin said, “Maharaj! The Bhagavata is a great book of *dharma*. You must study it under a good teacher. If you command me, I shall expound it to you. I am known to scholars as a great *Pandit* learned in the *Dharma Sastras*. I long to read and expound the Bhagavata in the Palace,”

The king was a shrewd man with sound common sense. He said to himself; “if this man had read and understood the true import of the Bhagavata, he would be performing meditation and austerity. He would not have come to Royal Palace in quest of money and fame.” Addressing the Brahmin, he said: “Learned one! I too am eager to make you my teacher and hear your exposition of the Bhagavata. So, read the work again once or twice and come later.”

The scholar was somewhat angry when he heard what the king said. But what was the use of getting angry with a king? He returned home without uttering a word. As he walked home, he said to himself in grief: “this king is a great fool. He cannot recognize a learned man. He asks me to go back to him after reading the Bhagavata again. I have spent twelve years in reading the *Sastra*. I have got the whole of the Bhagavata by heart. And this king wants me to read it again!”

Coming home, he told his wife, what had happened. After thinking for a while, she said: “After all he is a king. Do as he bids you. Read the Bhagavata once again and then go to him and tell him that you have done his bidding. If you should please the king somehow and get appointed as the palace story-teller, our fortune is made. The Brahmin took his wife’s advice and read the Bhagavata again with great care. He was now able to answer any question on the work. On an auspicious day he went to the palace again.

The king received the Brahmin with great respect. To the king's query if he had re-read the Bhagavata, the Brahmin replied: "Your Majesty! I have come here after reading the *Purana* again a number of times as your Majesty commanded. My only desire is that I should expound the Bhagavata to you and help to enhance your glory and righteousness!" Said the king: "O learned one! Be assured that I shall be your student and learn the Bhagavata from you. But, go home now and return after reading the work once again."

Thus disappointed again, the Brahmin returned home and told his wife what had happened. She said to him: "There is some mystery in this. Read it once again as the king said. Let us see."

With great perseverance, the Pandit began to read again. Determined not to be disappointed this time, he went to a solitary abode and read the book with great attention and deep concentration. This time he discovered new meanings in the work. The glory of God's incarnation moved his heart in spite of himself. He even forgot to take his food in time. He found rare truths in the Bhagavata which he had not discovered before. He had no thought even of going home. He now realized that fame money and honour are but flies. After a time, he even ceased to read the Bhagavata. He spent his time in meditation. He gave up all idea of going to the king's palace.

While thus he spent his time in meditation and penance, without attending to the household, his wife was puzzled and grieved by the turn of events. She asked for leave to see the king and conveyed her anguish to him. The king, on learning what had happened, was mightily pleased. He started to go and see the Brahmin himself. When he came to the Ashram, the king saw a new luster in the Brahmin's countenance. The light of supreme wisdom shone bright in his face. The king fell at the Brahmin's feet, and said: "you have won the grace of God. I bow to you. Forgive my sin."

Learning and scholarship are quite different from true wisdom, the knowledge of the Real which comes only through devotion.

Mahatma Gandhi

Swami Omkar

When I think of Mahatmaji, I forget everything, even these outer celebrations in his memory. Only **Truth** and **Non-violence** stand before me. I feel them in the very cells of my being and I face these ideals all around, not only within but even without. How blessed are the rare and precious souls who are centered on Truth and non-violence, even in the tests and trials.

It is very easy to praise and flatter the greatness of Sri Gandhiji, but all difficulty comes when we try to walk in his blessed footprints. Narrow and rugged is the way that leads to Heaven, to Rama Rajya. Body consciousness leads to bondage and ignorance. God-consciousness gives freedom and Peace. To me Mahatmaji is still alive. He is always alive. He is eternally alive, so long as truth and non-violence exist in the world.

Happy to see on this holy day, that some of the devoted sisters and brothers of the Ashram are spinning in memory of Sri Mahatmaji. May this spinning lead to the concentration of mind and of the unity of life and peace of all! It is the individual peace that leads to and paves the way to universal Peace. Therefore, may this individual spinning unite us with ***sutratma***, the universal breath. May it thus make us all one with all the children of God, in all religions and nations.

May all homage be unto Sri Mahatma Gandhiji, the idol of millions of his devotees and the ideal and inspiration of all the seekers of Truth in the East and the West. May we show our homage and worship to Sri Mahatmaji, not with mere words but by following his loving ideals of Truth and non-violence, in thought, word and deed. May there be peace on earth and in heaven and may peace be unto all! This is the ardent prayer of one who loves Gandhi Mahatmaji.

(This is from a message delivered by **Swami Omkarji** on the eve of Gandhi Jayanti in October, 1970)

The Maharshi and Healing

Dr. T. N. Krishnaswami

Some people hold that spiritual healing should be practiced as a part of *sadhana*. Spiritual healing is a process by which power from a higher level is invoked, to descend and help at the lower human level. The higher is not reluctant to respond to the lower but many difficulties stand in the way of the lower in touch with the higher. Prayer should be from the highest state of consciousness possible to us. Christ said: "When thou prayest enter into thine inner chamber and having shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

But if a man can purify himself utterly of self-will he becomes One with the Father, that is a *Jivan-mukta*. Then his very presence is the greatest good and the greatest balm to all human suffering. Miraculous cures may result from the outflow of healing grace from him. If a sick man makes himself a recipient of this grace, then by his faith he gets cured, but the cure is natural and spontaneous and not the result of any purpose or intention on the part of the Master.

But what of healing by one who has not attained this supreme level? Can he influence God as an advocate influences a judge? If God is Spirit or Consciousness no one can influence It or make It do anything for any one. What is it that heals and how is one to influence It? Bhagavan did not encourage pondering such problems. They are of no help for spiritual progress. One should concern oneself with the Self alone. Whether the body is sick or well there is the same 'I'. One should experience the 'I' which is in everyone and the same is in everyone.

This does not mean that Bhagavan was indifferent to the sufferings of those around him. He was supremely compassionate. Once a lady devotee brought the news of the death of her only daughter and on hearing it Bhagavan wept along with her. The Buddha advocated contemplation of suffering and its causes as

the way to escape from it. Suffering is the prime problem of existence, but the earthbound mind cannot comprehend spiritual truth. To draw conclusions about God for what we see on earth is entirely wrong. The earthbound mind may think of the external world as a theatre for divine vengeance and wonder what can be done to pacify the anger of God; but God neither punishes nor rewards and cannot be influenced.

It is the very nature of the mind to create mysteries and be baffled by them. Bhagavan warns us against seeking a remedy in the outside world. There is no place to be gained in it. Our concern is with the spirit which is within. The body, being made up of matter, cannot suffer. Neither can suffering touch the Self, which is Spirit. What is it that exists between the two which suffers? This question takes us in search of something within us which is eternally young, beyond time and ever free, but which at present obscured. One should set aside some time daily in which to be separate from oneself and the outside world and to abide in God. "If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you." The panacea for all the ills of the world is to stop being an individual and be one with God. Bhagavan said that the primary disease, the root of all other diseases, is ignorance of the Self. When asked to cure his own body at the end he said, "The body itself is disease." The root symptoms of this disease are body-consciousness and world-consciousness. One should try to heal this main disease other than the lesser diseases for which the body suffers. The cause of suffering is ignorance of the real nature of the world. One is advised to shun the world by diving into oneself. The relation between body-consciousness and world-consciousness produces suffering. We use the body to keep up contact with the world, unaware of the painful consequences of such contact.

One should not seek the small solaces of this world as if they were the things of God. All experiences—birth and death, health and sickness, good and evil—are equally manifestations of one's mind and are on the same level of reality or, rather,

unreality, as the mind itself. The world, the sorrows are all dream experiences of a sleeping mind. When there is awakening everything vanishes, including the person who felt compassion in the dream. One should therefore use the manifestations of God to guide one to their Source. To study them in themselves is only to increase one's perplexities and to get involved in them.

Once a devotee who had strong faith in the Maharshi brought the corpse of her only child right into the hall where he was sitting. He asked what it was. She said: "My dead son! I pray and beseech you to grant him life." The Maharshi sat silent for awhile, as was his custom, and then gently said: "Please remove the body to a nearby cottage and let us see what happens in the morning." Nothing happened and the boy lay dead. But something happened to the minds of the relatives and they removed the corpse and cremated it, realizing that they should not expect the dead to rise. The Maharshi later remarked that even an incarnate God cannot raise all the dead. He has no individual will so he cannot decide to perform such and such a miracle. If miracles happen in his ambience he witnesses them; that is all.

God radiates his grace throughout the universe irrespective of whether beneficiaries are there to receive it or not, like the sun its light. God's grace cannot be stopped. Bhagavan said that the very existence of a *Jivanmukta* is the greatest blessing to the world.

Spiritual practice aims at helping human awareness to realize its identity with universal awareness. Identification with the body, whether healthy or diseased is a result of misuse of the mind. Due to the misuse a man seeks a comfortable body and a comfortable life. If we are concerned with maintaining and using this body merely to keep in touch with the world, we are thereby perpetually suffering. The compassion of the Enlightened One goes beyond pity for the ills the body is heir to and has rather pity for that false identification with the body which makes these ills inevitable. A jaundiced eye sees everything as yellow; the split mind sees God's hand where it is not. The amount of pain and

poverty in the world has made men doubt if there is a God at all. The omnipresence of God cannot co-exist with the miseries and ills that surround us. God's will is not being done in this world. Man's will has kept God out. So one should not search for God in the world but inwardly. Where the ego is present no good or God can be present. Where the ego is absent no evil or want can be present. The body that is emptied of ego becomes the shrine of God and manifests His omnipresence and omnipotence. Such was the Divine state in which Bhagavan lived and moved among us. He proved the possibility that a man can be one with God. The out-turned mind is bound to see the world and its sorrows; the in-turned mind is still. This stillness is the Spirit.

The purpose of this article is not to argue for or against spiritual healing but only to show both possibilities, both viewpoints. Jesus healed the sick and said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." This showed that two things were necessary and had to conjoin: the grace flowing through the Master and faith on the part of the recipient. In the Maharshi's life healing played little part. The world is as it is because men have desired such a world, not because God created it this way. The Maharshi's teaching is totally directed towards leading us out of such a world to the Source of the 'I' by intensely raising the question "Who am I."

(From the Book "FRAGRANT PETALS" published by Sri Ramanasramam)

If you want to be perpetually happy, there is but one way to follow. Be established in the Self, be centered in the Self.

—SWAMI OMKAR

You need not wait for Him, for He has been eternally in quest of you.

—SWAMI OMKAR

A PERSIAN ROSARY

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

AN ANTHOLOGY- OFFERED

To all the aspiring Souls of Service in the World

1. Love and serve humanity.
2. Praise every soul. If you cannot praise him, let him pass out of your life.
3. Dare, dare and then dare more.
4. Do not imitate. Be inventive. Be yourself. Know yourself. Stand on your own ground. Do not lean on the borrowed staffs of others. Think your own thoughts.
5. There is no saint without a past. There is no sinner without a future.
6. See God and good in every face. All the perfections and virtues of the Deity are hidden in you. Reveal them. The Saviour also is in you. Let his grace emancipate you.
7. Be cheerful. Be courteous. Be a dynamo of irrepressible happiness. Assist everyone. Let your life be like unto a rose; though silent it speaks in the language of fragrance. You are a trinity of body, mind and soul. The food of the soul is Divine Love. Therefore, feed your soul on Divine Love- so that the body and the mind are invigorated.
8. Be deaf and dumb concerning the faults of others. Do not listen to gossip. Silence the talebearer with virtuous conversation.
9. Stop the circulation of the poisonous germs of religious fanaticism through your veins and arteries and those of your children. Never argue with any soul concerning his religious beliefs. Religious controversies lead to hatred and separation. Religion is Love and Fellowship, not

theological dogmas and creeds. When you have Love and Sympathy in your heart for your fellowmen, you have the highest type of religion, no matter by what name you may call yourself. Rest assured that the emancipation of the world is through the nameless God of Love and in Nameless Religion of Love.

10. Develop qualities of essential goodness. Every soul is endowed with the attributes of intrinsic beauty. Discover those attributes and hold them before the world.
11. Religion is a personal relation man and his maker. For God's sake do not interfere with it, do not organize it, neither try to reduce it to so many statements. Organization, in whatever form, is the death-knell of religion. Do not preach this. Practice and teach it. Let no one dictate to you regarding what you should not believe and do in your spiritual life. The ultimate authority is the Authority of the Spirit within you and not that of any man, dead or alive. The unerring Witness is standing in the centre of your being- all powerful, mighty and supreme! His is the final testimony. His is the court of last appeal.
12. God's love is in you and for you. Share it with others through association. Do not court separation from the creatures, but unite with them in love. To know yourself through your fellowmen is to know God.
13. Have courage. Realize your divine origin. You are the ray of the Sun of Immortal Bliss. You and the Father are one. The deathless, radiant Self is in you. Reverence your Celestial station. No harm will ever come to you. God's perfect image and likeness you are, abiding in the fort of His Protection. Association with all the people will lead to spiritual unfoldment and not to deterioration of the soul. Live above the world of faith and infidelity, religion and atheism; orthodoxy and liberalism; truth and error; angel and devil; and you will be living with and in God. The

God of Absolute good, the God of absolute beauty, the God of Absolute perfection.

14. In religion there is no compulsion. The path to spiritual unfoldment is not by restrictions and constraints, not anathema and excommunication, but by constant progress, from world to world, from star to star, from constellation to constellation, forever and without end.
15. The light of lights is in your heart. Uncover it and let it shine for the illumination of mankind. Do not expect a favour from friend or foe, and you shall never be disappointed.
16. Overcome malice, envy, personal spite and prejudice and you are the master of Destiny.
17. Do not condemn a single soul. In condemning him, you are condemning yourself. Never for an instant forget that he is also the child of God. Upon the great sea of spirit, there is room for every sail. In the limitless sky of truth there is room for every wing.
18. Do not murder the character of a soul, under the guise of religion, either by bitter blame or faint praise. Spiritual murder is worse than the taking of a man's life. Have a sin covering eye. See only the beautiful, the lovely, and the noble.
19. Be gentle. Be lenient. Be forgiving. Be generous. Be merciful. Be wakeful. Be thoughtful. Be frank. Be positive. Soar in the atmosphere of freedom. Walk in your chosen path and let no criticism disturb you in the least. This is the way to success, to happiness, to health, to prosperity, to glory. Let me walk in it during the days of my life!

(Peace-April, 2000)

If you want a happy life, tie it to a goal, not to people or things.

-Albert Einstein

THE REAL AND THE UNREAL

SWAMI CHIDANANDA

Homage unto that great eternal divine Reality! The supreme Absolute, the all-transcendent and all transcending Cosmic Spirit Divine, that is beginning and endless, one without a second, boundless and infinite, and of the nature of Divine perfection. May His Divine grace be upon us all!

Loving adorations to revered and beloved Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, in whose spiritual presence we are gathered; this spiritual fellowship each morning is a gift that He has given to us out of His graciousness. Knowing it to be a gift, let us not reject it, let us accept it with sincerity and earnestness- it is beneficial to do so! This gift of early morning fellowship He has offered to us. , not because of anything He has to gain out of it, or it is going to add to Him or benefit Him. But He saw in it our own spiritual elevation and evolution and spiritual good.

I will only offer a single thought for you to cherish and to reflect over. It is a little taught but with great potentialities, if you take it seriously and contemplate it with earnestness and reflect upon it constantly. Our ancestors were rather extra-ordinary, as their experiences were exactly the opposite of what we experience. Their experiences made them conclude that it was not the seen and perceived universe which is real, but it is the unseen that is the Real. The seen is a temporary passing show. The unseen is the permanent unchanging Reality!

The experiences through our senses are of temporary objects: things, names and forms; they experience only things

which keep changing, things which have a beginning and an end, which are imperfect and limited and cannot give us true happiness, true satisfaction. Also these sense perceived things happen to play a rather negative part in human society, in becoming objects of controversy, of quarrel, objects claimed by different people as 'mine'. These things have nuisance value, and they are the cause of fights and quarrels and litigation and even the causes of war between countries. All these things which are temporary, changeful, perishable, limited are regarded as very important by us, and we became enslaved by them; they catch us and hold us in the net of their attractions, and our desire for them reduce the human individual into an abject pitiable being. But our ancestors realized that the entire perceived world of things is unreal, and they appealed to the Supreme Being: "this great show, this attractive marketplace, this Bazaar, that you have spread out, let us not be caught by it, enslaved by it! Save us from being enmeshed in this great net that is being spread here. If we are caught, we will one day lamenting. Therefore, O Thou Great One! O Thou Supreme Being! O Thou Omnipotent, All-Compassionate One:

Asato Ma Sadgamaya!

From the unrealities here, lift us up into the Reality. Take me, lead me into the Reality!

This is the great prayer founded upon their discoveries that that this entire world is a jugglery, a passing show of names and forms and perishable objects. Through observation, through reflection, by using their intellect they had come to the conclusion that the seen is the unreal and the unseen is the Real. They lifted up their hearts and prayed to the Supreme Being to liberate them

from the unreal and take them towards the great Reality. They made their entire life a pursuit after that great Reality, and they made an unceasing effort to rise above the attractions of the seen names and forms. Ceaseless efforts to rise above, to liberate themselves, to transcend the attractions by being alert, being awake, being active in the discrimination between the unreal and the Real, the transitory and the Permanent, between the non-eternal and the Eternal. Their interior was constant wakefulness and alertness and a constant state of actual discrimination between the impermanent and the Permanent, the non-eternal and the Eternal, the unreal and the Real.

This should be, therefore, the ideal for us seekers, who have committed to the quest after the Imperishable, Permanent, and the Eternal. In this task may the divine grace of the Supreme and the loving benedictions of the Holy Master grant us success! Let us therefore pray:

Asato Ma Sadgamaya - Asato Ma Sadgamaya - Asato Ma Sadgamaya

May God bless you all!

These prophets were not unique; they were men as you or I. they were great Yogis. They had gained super consciousness, and you and I can get the same. They were not peculiar people. The very fact that one man ever reached that state proves that it is possible for every man to do so. Not only is it possible, but every man must eventually, get to that state and that is religion.

-Swami Vivekananda

If each retained possession only of what he needed, no one would be in want and all would live in contentment.

—Mahatma Gandhi

BHAJA GOVINDAM OF SRI SANKARACHARYA

MOHA-MUDGARA

1. O deluded man! Surrender yourself to the Lord, sing of the name of the Lord, take shelter in the Lord! When the inevitable death overtakes you, never, never will the grammatical rule "*Du-krinkarane*" take care of you.
2. O fool! Relinquish the love for wealth. Have pure thoughts. Develop dispassion. Whatever you acquire through right endeavor, with that be contented in mind.
3. Do not be infatuated by looking at the navel and the heart of a woman. This is only a modification of flesh, marrow etc. Remember this in the mind, at all times.
4. Life is as fickle as the water dripping from the leaf of the lotus. The world is devoured by disease and egoism. Everything is drowned in sorrow. Remember this well.
5. As long as you earn money, so long you will have the love of friends and relatives. When you live in an old mortal coil, disabled due to weakness, none in the house will look to you.
6. As long as the breath flows in the body, so long all in the house will look to your health and comfort. When the life-breath departs, when the body is dead, then your own wife will dread to look at you.
7. When you are a boy, you spend the time in playing. When you grow into a youth you run after young women. When you become old, you are drowned in grief. None is interested in the Supreme Brahman.
8. Who is your wife? Who is your son? This *Samsara* is indeed a great wonder! To whom do you belong? Who are you? Wherefrom have you come? Dear Brother! Consider well what is the truth.
9. By company with the wise, detachment is cultivated. Through detachment, delusion is dispelled. When delusion

is no more, the mind becomes steady; and steadiness of mind ends in *Jivanmukti* or Liberation in this life.

10. When youth has gone, where is the question of passion? When there is no water, where is the lake or the pond? When there is no wealth, where are friends and relatives? When Truth is known, where is *Samsara*?
11. Do not have the pride of wealth, men and youth. Time (or death) sweeps away everything in no time. Renouncing all this which is the effect of *Maya*, enter the state of the Absolute, through knowledge.
12. Days and nights, evenings, mornings, winters and springs are again and again coming in a cycle. Time is dancing; life is slowly departing. Even then the chain of desire does not break.
13. Why is this worry for the sake of wife and wealth? O diseased man! Is there none to control you? Company with the wise, enjoyed even for a moment, becomes the boat to take one across the ocean of *Samsara*.
14. With *Jata*, with shaven head, with plucked hair, with coloured cloth, various dresses, the fool appears in many forms for the sake of filling the belly. Even seeing this, he does not actually see.
15. The body is decaying. Hairs have become grey. Teeth have fallen, making the face ugly. As an old man you totter with a stick. Even then you do not leave your cravings and ambitions.
16. In the front you have fire. From the back you have the sun. At night you embrace your knees and keep upon them your head. You take *Bhiksha* with hands and live under trees. Even then you are not free from desires, the real bondage.

(To be continued)

Love does not grow on trees or brought in the market, but if one wants to be "LOVED" one must first know how-to give (unconditional) LOVE.

- KABIR

Dharma Sookshmamu

(Subtlety of Dharma)

MALAYALA SWAMI

You cannot answer the sophistry that doubts the end of any particular study through any particular book. But each single book which deals in its own way a particular topic announces at the end of the book that its teaching is finished. Similarly, every precept or tenet, theory or dissertation, discourse or lecture, religion or philosophy, propounds a particular end to given study. Unless we accept a beginning and an end to the study of any given subject, within the limits of the finite understanding, we can never write 'finis' to any religious or philosophical work. If someone wants you to read all the available books on the subject you will never be able to formulate a proper idea of it in lifetime.

If one were to ask about your lineage, you can answer only to the extent you have an idea of it up to a few generations back; beyond that you cannot answer in a cut and dried fashion the name or occupation of your primordial forefather. Or if you were asked to name the place which is a hundred miles north of your native village, you can give a reply without much hesitation, but later if the question is repeated with reference to the places which are increasingly some ten thousand miles further north, you will at last have to resign yourself to the reply "the horizon is the northernmost boundary, that is all.

All this is being said to drive home the point that there is a limit to what one can do and what one can learn. That is why in the matter of the public records the matter is concerned only with the name of the individual's father, and in ceremonial matters the name of the great-grandfather is the limit to be named- especially in the observance of the death anniversary rites. Similarly, in the case of Dharma also there are certain healthy limits and norms. In giving alms your duty is to offer the deserving poor the most

you can, without inconveniencing yourself. But you must not evade the issue and take refuge in a specious argument like this one: Once a beggar approached a miserly man. The latter said he would like to oblige the poor man, but that his principle is to give all the beggars in the world the same amount, which giving beyond his means, he would not help the present beggar.

Only those who are averse to doing their duty by man and God would talk like this miser. The proper way of doing a charitable work is to place oneself in the other person's position: if he himself were poor, would he not seek alms from those who are rich enough to patronize him? This yardstick has also to be applied to ethical learning, observing austerity and practicing Yoga.

One can define Non-violence as the highest form of Dharma, only in a general manner. That should not elicit the retort: do not trees or fruits or flowers have life, and is not as sinful to eat the vegetarian food that comes of the killing of plants as that of eating meat that comes from animal-killing? The idea of non-violence is not to cause oneself and one's fellows' undue injury explicitly or implicitly. Besides, you cannot attain internal peace without observing external deeds calling for a non-violent attitude and a sense of equilibrium. If you carry any argument too far, it will lead only to logical absurdity; the fact that internal self-restraint is the most important thing should not blind us to the importance of external self-control, too. To go about shouting that mental purity is all that matters, is to hope to pluck the fruits of a tree which you do not nurture properly enough to let it grow.

The observance of celibacy is another important thing. Unless you observe the gross thing, you cannot master the subtle entity. The fact that one may have wet dreams is no argument against celibacy. The point is that voluntarily there must be no lapse on the part of the seeker after Truth. As formerly noted, even the householders are considered to be a celibate if they cohabit with their wives only during the latter's fertile period and that, with a view to progeny alone.

From outward celibacy one must go forward to the inward celibacy- which in Sanskrit means '*Brahmacharya*' or to move in God. Actually, the idea of *Brahmacharya* is to promote the sublimation of the beastly instinct of a man into his spiritual self-identity with God.

Coming to the final stage of detachment, here again a gradual renunciation is more advisable than rushing things along. The real renunciation is not from works but from the fruits of works. (*Yah tu Karma-Phala-Tyagi, sah tyagi*, as the Gita puts it.)

One can be attached enough to mundane matters to the extent such an attachment is needed for the sustenance of the body and for the appropriate shelter. Beyond that, one must not let one's mind dwell on earthly matters; the mind must be constantly diverted from the object of the senses to its supreme Subject, the inward Soul of all.

This, then, is the subtlety of Dharma. Charity within limits and to the best of one's ability; continence in thought, word and deed, depending on individual circumstances; detachment to the highest extent possible but not to the extreme point where it becomes harmful to the elementary self-preservation needed for the pursuit of self-realization.

"Sati kudye chitra-lekhanam" (only if you have the wall, can you paint a picture on it) being the law of commonsense, please preserve your body to the extent needed and then go on realizing your soul as if it were the only aim of your life. God and Nature move according to the laws of Dharma: so should man, too, to discover his godly nature.

Love must ever be revealed in service; otherwise, love has no value, or love is no love. Love cheerfully sacrifices; love willingly suffers. Where such love is, there is real peace and joy. Such a love illumines and blesses life. —Swami Ramdas

APPEAL

1. We at the Mission of Peace, Sri Santi Ashram, Totapalli, would like to bring to the kind notice of all devotees of Sri Santi Ashram, spread all over the world, that Ashram has been duly registered under :

FOREIGN CONTRIBUTIONS (REGULATION) ACT, 2010

2. The Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, vide its letter No. 0100019772018 dt. 17-12-2019 approved registration and allocated the No. and the same is as hereunder: **Registration No. 010170343**
3. In view of the above, our Ashram, is at liberty and entitled to receive the contributions from the donors residing in foreign countries and in the currency of the respective country, viz. US \$ or Euros etc.
4. We have opened a separate and exclusive account for receiving the contributions from foreign nationals and NRI's and the details thereof are as hereunder:

A/c Name: The Mission of Peace

Name of the Bank: AXIS BANK, S. B. Account No. **918010005985581**

SWIFT Code: **AXISINBB076**

Bank Address: Axis Bank, Saibharathi Enclave, 6-5-18,

Near. Karnamgari Junction,

Ashok Nagar, Kakinada-533004, A.P. INDIA

5. We at the Ashram, Pujya Mataji and members of the Managing Committee, hereby request the devotees of Mission of Peace- Sri Santi Ashram to contribute liberally for the overall development of Ashram by remitting the amount to the above referred account.
6. The donors are requested to furnish their e-mail ID also and convey the details of the contributions to any of the following e-mail ID's to enable us to follow up and also keep you apprised of the utilization and developments arising there from.

srisanthiashram@gmail.com

adityamn07@gmail.com

mattavvs07@gmail.com

saibaba.poli@gmail.com

Drsantikola@gmail.com

7. The blessings of the Almighty God and those of Swami Omkar and Pujya Sri Jnaneswari Mataji would always be showered upon you and all.

For and on behalf of Santi Ashram

The Managing Committee.

APPEAL

(Extension of Goshala for Calves)

Esteemed and beloved Devotees,

It gives us immense pleasure to inform you that with the blessings of Swami Omkarji Maharaj and Pujya Jnaneswari Mataji and your generous and kind support, the mega project for construction of Goshala in the Ashram premises has been realized and the Goshala was formally inaugurated by Pujya Mataji in the month of March, 2020.

With the completion of Goshala, the Cows and Calves are able to dwell in a more protected and hygienic environment.

Due to the increase in the number of Calves during the last one year, it is now felt desirable and essential to provide one exclusive protected open area of size 100ft. x 50ft with gated compound wall and erect a shed of size 20ft.x40ft. therein with a few water tubs in the shed so that the calves can freely move, graze and relax comfortably. This proposal is tentatively estimated to cost about Rs. 6.50 lakhs.

We earnestly appeal to those desirous of participating in this venture to kindly send their donations either in cash or by Cheque/DD drawn in favour of Sri Santi Ashram.

The names of all those who donate Rs. 10000/ or more will be mentioned on the stone plaque at the Goshala.

The donations are exempt from Sec 80(G) of I.T. Act.

In the service of Gurudev,

Vinamrananda Saraswati

ASHRAM NEWS

Mother Ashram:

- 1) Puja Sri Jnaneswari Mataji's birthday was celebrated by the inmates of the Ashram on 13-19-2020 in a simple and unostentatious manner. To mark the occasion, Paduka Puja of Swami Omkarji Maharaj was performed by Br. Suhita Chaitanya. This was followed by Annadaanam and Vastradaanam. Inmates were allowed to have Darshan of Puja Mataji and seek her blessings on this auspicious occasion.
- 2) On the eve of Dasara festival Sarannavaratrulu were celebrated in the Prarthana Mandir for 9 days commencing on 17-10-2020 and culminating on 26-10-2020 as per details mentioned below:

17-10-2020 to 19-10-2020: Durga Puja was performed to Goddess Durga.

19-10-2020 to 22-10-2020: Durga and Lakshmi Pujas were performed

23-10-2020 to 25-10-2020: Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati Pujas were performed

Special Programs: On 24-10-2020, Kanya (Bala) Puja and on 25-10-2020 Matrika Puja, Vahana Puja and Ayudha Puja and on the same evening Shami Puja were performed.

The above Pujas were conducted by Sri Ganesh Acharya, and Ms. Lakshmi under the inspiring guidance of Vinamrananda Saraswati Mataji and devotees of the Ashram participated enthusiastically.

On the 26-10-2020, the Programs concluded with Devi Puja and immersion of the Idol of Goddess in the Canal.

APPEAL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS/SUPPORT

Sri Santi Ashram is conducting various activities in the areas of education, medical aid, poor feeding, running and maintaining a Goshala with more than 100 Cows and residential facilities to Vanaprastha seekers. To support these activities your generous contributions are welcome.

1. Feeding: a) for one day: Rs.5000/- and above.

b) Privileged Donors: Rs. 25000 and above

(Feeding done one day on a day of choice every year)

2. Educational Fund

3. Gosamrakshana Fund

4. Children's Educational Fund

5. Old Age Welfare Fund

6. Library Fund

7. Educational Fund

8. Building Maintenance Fund

9. Ashram Maintenance Fund

Donations to the Ashram are exempt from I. T. under
Sec. 80(G) of I. T. Act

Donations may be addressed to:

The Secretary,

The Mission of Peace-Sri Santi Ashram

Via) Sankhavaram 533446, East Godavari District,

Andhra Pradesh, India, Ph. 7382009962

Email: srisanthiashram@gmail.com

Website: www.srisantiashram.org.in

Obituary

Smt. Savitri Devi w/o Sri G. D. Sharma, who was a well-wisher and devotee of the Ashram and who has rendered exemplary services to the cause of the students of our Ashram schools, breathed her last on 13-9-2020.

We express our deep condolences to the family members of the departed soul.

Managing Committee, Sri Santi Ashram

APPEAL TO SUBSCRIBERS OF PEACE MAGAZINE

Peace Magazine is a quarterly magazine published by Sri Santhi Ashram.

Rates of Subscription: Yearly Rs. 100/

Lifetime Subscription: Rs.1000/ (for a duration of 12 years from the date of Subscription)

The subscriptions may be paid in cash at the Ashram Office or by M.O. or D.D.

Those who remit the amount by M.O. are requested to mention their complete address alongwith Phone No. at the place earmarked therein. Those who wish to renew subscription may remit the amount at least one month in advance to enable updation of our records.

Those who intend to send the amount by way of a Bank Draft may send it in favour of 'Sri Santhi Ashram' accompanied by a letter indicating subscriber's address for prompt delivery of the Magazine. Those who are interested in receiving the soft copy of the magazine may please provide their email address along with the subscription.

Ashram address:

The Secretary, Sri Santhi Ashram (P.O.)

(Via) Sankhavaram-533446 E G. Dist A. P.

So many of us worry about the past and are afraid about the future. Alas! We miss the joy of the present moment. Happiness is *here* and *now*. It is not something we get out of life but a natural by-product of putting our best into everything that we do.

—J. P. Vaswani

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THE MISSION OF PEACE

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