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चित्तमाराडेतनु

The Path of Introspection



ब्रह्मचित् आप्नोति परम्



Remembering the Self-effulgent Eternal Light.

Poojya Swamiji performing Ārati at Baba's Shrine on Deepavali day (Nov 4).

Narayanashrama Tapovanam

Thrissur, Kerala 680 563, India

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VICHĀRAŚETĤU

It is true that the progress of human civilization and society depends on material affluence and advancement. But material prosperity will be sustained only when the minds of people are nourished by cultural enrichment and spiritual values. True object of wealth is to gain dharma, leading to spiritual wisdom and inner abundance, by which external wealth will become redundant and life will be led to its true fulfilment.

—Swamiji

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Deepavali observed in Ashram (Nov 4)

Poojya Swamiji near the Tulasi Mancha at the Ashram main building

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Message from Poojya Swamiji

Strengthening the Society

By Wisdom and Cultural Values

20 November 2021

Dear and blessed Readers:

Hariḥ Om Tat Sat. There is no doubt that all of you respect values and ideals. By striving to follow them, you are strengthening and enriching your lives considerably. The individual, family, societal segment as well as the nation and globe will surely grow weak if values are allowed to decline. Education is the only valid means of instilling and preserving values in any society any time.

It is in this background that I started Vicharasethu 57 years back, when I visited Jamshedpur, the premier steel city of India, for the first time and gave lectures to a devout audience there. I felt that

Mere listening to lectures will not be sufficient for any seeker to pursue his or her sādhanā.

mere listening to lectures will not be sufficient for any seeker to pursue his or her sādhanā and keep association with me and the Ashram. Whatever is heard is likely to slip away, but whatever is written and is present before, can be read and reflected upon repeatedly. Any such *reflection has untold effect in our minds and intellects* in bringing about greater clarity and enrichment.

All the articles in Vicharasethu, as you know, are written by us, ascetics and inmates of the Ashram – something quite unique. As a principle and measure of austerity, Vicharasethu does not carry advertisements too. Our land's culture is ancient and very great. It always links us to pre-historic Vedas and the eternal thoughts, values, disciplines and aspirations they embody and instil.

True, one's efforts are always in the visible world and to acquire visible things to provide comforts and facilities to our life. But none of these has any power to imbue wisdom or inner strength. At

Happiness and strength have to emerge from our own mind and intelligence.

the same time, in the absence of inner enrichment, none will be able to live happily, assimilating the impacts and challenges of the world. Happiness and strength have to emerge from our own mind and intelligence. This is where our cultural values and associations become paramount. The timely insight they impart and the consequent confidence and lightness one is able to generate in himself, are ineffable indeed.

To subscribe to a magazine and **read it regularly is far greater than going to a temple and worshipping there.** The message and inspiration spirituality provides are immense and often instantaneous. They imbue sufficient inner strength, stability and confidence in an earnest mind and heart.

While we can write and publish Vicharasethu, to make it vibrant and effective, it should reach more and more people and homes. *This is obviously an effort resting entirely upon our readers.*

Keeping this in mind, let us make January 2022 a month to expand Vicharasethu-readership. I would like each of you to **enlist at least 3 subscribers to read Vicharasethu** and imbibe its esteemed message, thereby enriching their life as well as that of the younger generation in their family.

Left to themselves, the young minds will not be inclined towards wisdom and deeper cultural enrichment, without which human society is bound to become weak and diffident. Let us strive to be useful to the society in this regard.

Our **mission of strengthening and widening the cultural glory** of our land will become effective only when our readers join us wholeheartedly. This is a sphere where none can afford to relax or relent.

Love and Āśīrvād, *Swamiji*

* * *

Identify with the All-embracing Sentient Space

देहेन्द्रियप्राणमनोऽहमादिभिः

स्वाज्ञानक्लृप्तैरखिलैरुपाधिभिः ।

विमुक्तात्मानमखण्डरूपं

पूर्णं महाकाशमिवावलोकयेत् ॥384॥

dehendriya-prāṇa-mano'ham-ādibhi:

svājñāna-klṛptair-akhilair-upādhibhi:.

vimuktam-ātmānam-akhaṇḍa-rūpaṃ

pūrṇaṃ mahākāśam-ivāvalokayet..384..

Comprehend the Self as full, indivisible like mahākāśa (the great space) and free from the adjuncts of body, senses, prāṇa, mind, ego, etc., all created by ignorance.

It is for the seeker to enhance, reinforce and crown his Self-experience to the desired extent and absoluteness. He should not lack in discrimination and diligence in this effort. The differences found in Knowers are due to the variance in their level of enriching and ornamenting their realization. The potential and possibility are the same for all, like the infinite sky around us. But individual parameters do vary. Hence the seeming dissimilarities between Knowers. Some rarely turn to be avadhūtas, like emperor Rishabha. Some become childlike and unpredictable in their ways.

The external expanse is material, the internal is spiritual. That is the only difference. While the external is inert, insentient, the internal is sentience alone. Everything within has to be approached, pursued and attained by knowledge, wish and will. Clarity is all-important. Employing the mind and intelligence properly is even more so.

Shankara re-states that the body, made up of pañca-kośa, is a creation of ignorance. Do not give undue importance to it. Remember: for one third of the day, it becomes non-existent, together with the world around. What greater truth and fact can it claim, and be given to it?

You are not the body, as opposed to what you seem to think. The truth is that you have a body. It is yours, not you. Body is, in fact, an

Body is, in fact, an idea, a notion, the mind creates and preserves.

idea, a notion, the mind creates and preserves. That is why, body, mind, etc. are called adjuncts, upādhis. **You, your nature, is free from them. Do not miss this fundamental truth.** At no time should you feel limited by these in your assessments.

Even in broad daylight, how many shadows are there! But is any one of them a fact, an existence? You see them alright, but *you cannot accept them as an entity* you know of. What the senses report is not the final. Body, mind, intelligence and the like are ultimately mere notions in the Consciousness you are. **They have no existence besides Consciousness, as sleep evidences** about the presence of

your own personality.

Reflect meaningfully upon your real nature, the indivisible Consciousness, **devoid of all adjuncts including the ego.** Do not foster any doubt in this. Think of the huge, endless sky. Does it have any mass or weight? But it is within it that all huge planets and celestial bodies are ceaselessly revolving with their respective gravitational forces. If the inert space can bring and host this wonder, how much more creative and potent cid-ākāśa, sentient sky, the Self, the presence denoted by the term 'I', would be!

Herein lies the **might and measure of true spiritual wisdom.** It is a question of understanding the nature, potential and magnitude of Consciousness, the Self, that every human is. Ego is just a float

Ego is just a float in it, while intelligence is a bubble; mind is another.

in it, while intelligence is a bubble; mind is another. While these are supra-material, non-physical, body is material, physical. It is like the gaseous bodies within the orbit of space, together with the massive and weighty planets as well. **Do not set any limit to the Self you are.** Human life is meant only to realize this truth and make itself meaningful and fulfilling!

* * *

Abide in the Sentient Space

The task before you is simple and brief. You have to understand the entire Universe as inert and the power of knowing and cognition that you have, as the divine factor, the supra-worldly.

Now, these two are innate in your personality – the material physical body and the meta-physical or supra-material presence.

Separate the two and then rest within the sphere of Sentience.

That is liberation!

– Swamiji



Remembering the Self-effluent Eternal Light.

Baba's shrine in Ashram Mandapam lit up during Deepavali (Nov 4)

Sensory Regulation

A Pleasant and Effortless Way

राम उवाच ।

विनेन्द्रियजयेनेदं नाज्ञत्वमुपशाम्यति ।

तदिन्द्रियाणि जीयन्ते कथं कथय मे मुने ॥ (6u.163.1)

Rama said: Without gaining mastery over the senses, this state of ignorance will not attenuate. Therefore, O Sage, tell me how the senses can be won over.

Unrestrained life is degenerative

We get born into the world in and through his body. This born body is the sole abode for our senses. The body, sustained by nourishment, facilitates functions of the senses. Our entire life and interactions take place in the plane of the senses alone. Sensory interactions become predominant as one grows. And virtually senses begin to rule the individual. Mind and intelligence are generally more prone to follow the senses than to assert their independence. This is solely due to ignorance arising from lack of introspection and evaluation.

As long as this is so, without sense-regulation, one will not have the benefit of mind and intelligence, which really hold the key to human

In the absence of sense-regulation, human life will degenerate

life. In the absence of sense-regulation, human life will degenerate, *losing all the scope for gaining sustained inner delight and fulfilment.*

In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna stresses sense-regulation throughout. In fact, **sense-regulation is the apūrvatā (unique message) of Bhagavad Gita.**

When will spiritual wisdom become effective

श्रीवसिष्ठ उवाच ।

न च प्रभूतभोगेषु न पुंस्त्वे न च जीविते ।

न चेन्द्रियजयोन्मुक्तौ दीपस्तनुदृशो यथा ॥ (6u.163.2)

Vasishtha said: Just as a well-lit lamp will not enable one with impaired vision to see objects clearly, scriptural revelations will not have any transforming effect as long as one is given to sensory indulgences. Even humanhood and life on earth will be of no avail, if one lacks sensory-mastery.

Like any other text on any subject or branch of knowledge, our Scriptures reveal the knowledge of the supreme Truth, very clearly with ample illustrations. Yet, many are not inclined to read them. Most of those who happen to read,

Most of those who happen to read, invariably fail to understand the import.

invariably fail to understand the import. Of course, the Upanishads make it clear that the supreme Reality, in the nature of knowledge, **cannot be easily grasped except**

when one with the requisite experience, purity and skill explains it to the seeker. Read directly or heard from an incompetent source, the knowledge of the inmost Self will not be assimilable.

Right from birth, we are exposed to the external world our senses reveal. Senses have no power to reveal anything beyond. But the whole mystery of existence and revelation lies within the body. None takes interest in trying to probe into his own within and understand the treasure his mind and intelligence hold.

It is not that Scriptures do not reveal the truth. **People are unable to catch the revelation simply because their mind and intelligence are clouded, blunted.** How to redress this miserable plight?

Lack of sense-regulation leads to inability and confusion in understanding Scriptural revelations.

It is lack of sense-regulation

leads to inability and confusion in understanding Scriptural revelations. So, what is first required is to have regulation over the senses. Any discussion on spiritual wisdom thus underscores the need for sensory regulation.

Importance of reasoning in spiritual pursuit

तदिन्द्रियजये युक्तिमिमामविकलां शृणु ।

सिद्धिमेति स्वयत्नेन सुखेन तनुरेतया ॥

चिन्मात्रं पुरुषं विद्धि चेतनाजीवनामकम् ।

यच्चेतति स जीवोऽन्तस्तन्मयो भवति क्षणात् ॥

संवित्प्रयत्नसंबोधनिशिताङ्कुशकर्षणैः ।

मनोमतङ्गजं मत्तं जित्वा जयति नान्यथा ॥ (6u.163.3-5)

In winning over the senses, listen to this means of faultless reasoning. This will, by self-effort, take you comfortably to spiritual perfection without undue trouble or torment.

Know man to be Consciousness itself, which becomes alive because of its power of animation. Due to its sentience and sensory-cum-inner manifestation, it becomes the living individual soul (jīva).

By employing Consciousness as the sharp hook to pierce and pull the elephant of mind, running amuck, one wins over the senses, not by any other means.

To gain sensory-regulation is not at all difficult, but one must know the art and science of the whole pursuit.

Body together with senses is made up of matter, and is hence inert. It has no power to function independently. In

conjunction with the inner mind, both body and senses can function purposefully. This fact gives us ample scope to gain control over the senses. Sage Vasishtha speaks about it.

Senses can function only when the mind employs them. Hence, the key to sense-regulation lies in the mind. The only faculty to act upon the mind is intelligence. That

To gain sensory-regulation is not at all difficult.

is why spirituality gives importance to introspection, a function of the intelligence. When introspection aims at infusing purity, refinement and expansion into the mind, it is called ‘infusional introspection’. Scriptures are meant to initiate and intensify this.

Yoga-vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa emphasizes *introspection throughout, by which, Knowledge of the Self is infused and imbibed*. It necessarily reforms, refines and attunes the mind. Mind imbibes required qualities through relevant introspection alone. Being an effort of intelligence, introspection rests on reasoning and rationality. **This is how reasoning becomes an essential condition – sine qua non – of spirituality.**

Sage Vasishtha merely speaks to Rama. But with every word and sentence, he is instilling into the Prince deeper and deeper knowledge, which brings about spiritual refinement, purity, expansion and elevation. In gaining sensory control also, the same reasoning is the deciding factor. Introspection involves the mind, which begins to **understand that sensory objects by themselves have no power to give sustained delight.**

Contentment, happiness and joy are ‘emotional’ in nature and hence belong to mind. So, to have delight, why should the mind get linked to senses or objects of the world? The real course will instead be to turn within and unearth the delight Consciousness itself hosts.

*Turn within and
unearth the delight
Consciousness
itself hosts.*

Is not the whole spirituality an effort to bring out inner delight and contentment?

When this *realization grows stronger, automatically sensory dominance will decline* and objects of the world will not evoke any substantial interest or concern. The change is inner and ‘introspection’ is the way to bring it. That is why Sage Vasishtha repeatedly explains in detail, with examples, the whole subject of spiritual enquiry, revelation and ecstasy.

See what he says: “Rama, employ the Consciousness as a powerful hook to pull the ear of the elephant-mind. Mind is superior to senses, intelligence is superior to mind. By intelligence acting upon the mind, one can gain control over senses. Unless the seeker turns within and lays his hands on his own mind and intelligence, sensory indulgences will continue unchecked, *bringing more and more downfall to the seeker.*

Imbue placidity through sentient space

चित्तमिन्द्रियसेनाया नायकं तज्जयाज्जयः ।

उपानद्गूढपादस्य ननु चर्मावृतैव भूः ॥

संविदं संविदाकाशे संरोप्य हृदि तिष्ठतः ।

स्वयमेव मनः शाम्येन्नीहार इव शारदः ॥

स्वसंविद्यन्नसंरोधाद्यथा चेतः प्रशाम्यति ।

न तथाङ्ग तपस्तीर्थविद्यायज्ञक्रियागणैः ॥ (6u.163.6-8)

Mind is the commander of the army of senses.

Sublimate the mind, and then the senses also

will be won over. It is like walking with leather shoes to make the whole earth covered by leather.

Dwell in the sentient sky of your own heart. Consequently, the mind will become placid, like fog getting cleared in autumn.

To the degree the mind becomes quiescent by applying the sentience on itself, O noble soul, it will not become so by austerity, pilgrimage, knowledge, sacrifice and other ceremonies.

Vasishthadeva says, mind is the ‘commander’ of senses. What more do you want? Every one of you should think seriously as to how much time you spend closely with your mind to improve its

*Dwell in the sentient
sky of your own
heart – the mind
will become placid.*

quality and skill! Even while engaged in the sensory world interacting with its objects variously, none seems to cognize that senses and the body are material and hence insentient. Mind alone animates and activates them. In all sensory interactions, what counts is the mind. So the focus should be on the mind. But is it so? This **inattention to the mind and intelligence should stop**, and one should spend enough time to make them more qualitative and enriched.

So, **do not blame the senses**. Make your mind more friendly, and gain the desired sense-control or moderation through the mind itself. What is required is *a shift from*

the external gross to the internal subtle, where senses have nothing to do. Senses can reveal only the external objects, nothing inside the body, where reigns the paramount treasure of human life. Thus, the **shift from the external gross to the internal subtle is indispensable**.

To turn to the mind and make it friendly in employing the senses is like walking with leather shoes, feeling as if the whole earth is covered with leather. See the magic of efficacy in the whole process.

Learn, says Sage Vasishtha, to **dwelt in the sentient sky of your own heart**. Are you grasping the message? It is the mind that pictures in itself the entire world with infinite variety and distances. What you experience is the mind-picture of the world. Tell me then how expansive the mind is! With the eyes you see the external expanse of the sky. Should not the mind which reflects this external expanse be far greater in magnitude and subtlety than the objects?

Try to conceptualize it and begin to live in the inner space of sentience. Once you start doing this, Vasishthadeva says, your mind will become placid. Like the fog melting under the autumn sun, the

*Begin to live in
the inner space
of sentience.*

mind will be cleared of all its dross. Introspection and inner focus on sentience are thus greatly effective in spiritualizing oneself. Vasishthadeva emphasizes that austerity, pilgrimage, knowledge, sacrifice and other ceremonies are not equally effective in making mind peaceful and placid.

See how Rama remains enraptured as Vasishthadeva goes on speaking for 18 days! *Be a votary of this great inwardness, inner placidity.*

यच्च संवेद्यते किञ्चित्तत्तत्संविदि संविदा ।

नूनं विस्मर्यते यत्नाद्भोगानामिति तज्जयः ॥

स्वसंवेदनयत्नेन विषयामिषतोऽनिशम् ।

किञ्चित्संरोधिता संवित्तत्प्राप्तं वैबुधं पदम् ॥ (6u.163.9-10)

As consciousness cognizes thoughts, feelings, emotions and memory, so it can also obliterate and forget all these. Such obliteration is itself the true inner spiritual victory.

If the consciousness (mind being its expression) is able to refrain from coveting the objects even to a small degree, that withdrawal will lead one to the abode of the enlightened.

As the seeker grows in spiritual sādhanā and understanding, he will realize that there is altogether only one presence in the body, namely Consciousness. It is totally different from matter and energy. So, none of the laws and rules pertaining to matter and energy apply to Consciousness. It is supreme in its potential. Within the body, nothing is generated as such, as in the gross world. *Everything is only notional.*

Thus feelings, emotions, memories and the like are only notional. That is why they emerge and subside alike every time. Think well and say whether Consciousness does

not have the power to obliterate everything that is felt or experienced within the body. In fact, nothing which arises in the mind or the intelligence remains there for long. Does it not clearly point to the truth that Consciousness is supreme and that alone survives? So be clear that the inner presence or Consciousness can wipe off everything in it and become serene, placid and full. **This obliteration is the real inner spiritual victory**, Vasishthadeva says. This is what leads to the abode of fulfilment.

Righteousness leads to inner sublimation

स्वधर्मव्यवहारेण यदायाति तदेव मे ।
 रोचते नान्यदित्येव पदे वज्रदृढीभव ॥
 संवित्प्रवृत्तिमर्थेषु विरुद्धेषु विवर्जयन् ।
 अर्जयञ्छमसंतोषौ यः स्थितः स जितेन्द्रियः ॥
 संविद्रसिकतास्वन्तस्तथा नीरसतासु च ।
 यस्य नोद्वेगमायाति मनस्तस्योपशाम्यति ॥ (6u.163.11-13)

“By whatever comes as a result of doing what is righteous, I am pleased. I need nothing else”. (Thinking like this,) be Self-seated firmly like a diamond.

Taking your attention away from the unrighteous, be contented, free from ambitions. *One seated like this is said to have won over the senses.*

The mind of one who is free of agitation both in the pleasant and unpleasant circumstances, attains ‘quietitude’.

If whatever seemingly rises in Consciousness, equally subsides too, what should the seeker aim at? Vasishthadeva says, “Never fret or fume. Do not doubt or falter. Be seated in your own Self. Do not be attentive to anything wrong or unrighteous. Be free of all ambition. Be contented every time. This will naturally mean ample sensory control. **You need not strive for it additionally.** It is implied, implicit, in the reflectional process. Mind’s sublimation and enrichment will itself bring about sensory regulation and moderation.”

*Do not doubt
or falter. Be
seated in your
own Self.*

Remember, I always make it clear and emphasize that spirituality, right from the beginning to the end, is a ‘mento-intellectual pursuit’, which, when well done, will automatically bring whatever sublimation or moderation is necessary to the senses. To be a sthita-prajña and sthita-dhī is the goal of spiritual seeking. Bhagavad Gita clearly says that to be a sthita-prajña, one has to have sufficient sense-mastery. There is no conflict in this at all. There is no scope for anyone to doubt or speculate in the matter. Be clear about it.

Abidance in Consciousness purifies the mind

संवित्प्रयत्नसंरोधान्मनः स्वायनमुज्झति ।
चेतश्चपलतोन्मुक्तं विवेकमनुधावति ॥
विवेकवानुदारात्मा विजितेन्द्रिय उच्यते ।
वासनावीचिवेगेन भवाब्धौ न स मुह्यते ॥

साधुसंपर्कसच्छास्त्रसमालोकनतोऽनिशम् ।

जितेन्द्रियो यथावस्तु जगत्सत्यं प्रपश्यति ॥ (6u.163.14-16)

By consciously restraining the activities, the mind quits its course, to be free of desultoriness and pursue discrimination.

Imbued with discrimination (viveka) as well as liberality, one gains victory over his senses. Such a one is not overpowered by the torrential waves of desires in the ocean of worldliness.

By incessant association of Mahātmās (wise souls), and by nurturing well the insight of Scriptures, one wins over the senses and perceives clearly the truth of the world.

Vasishthadeva emphasizes the role of viveka (discrimination) coupled with liberality. The two together will bring all that the seeker needs to achieve liberation, which implies adequate sense mastery. So, *do*

*Imbued with
discrimination (viveka)
as well as liberality, one
gains victory over his
senses.*

not be obsessed with sense control. Intensify your viveka (discrimination) and let the mind equally imbibe expansion. With these two you will be able to have the desired measure of sense-regulation as well as true spiritual perfection.

Sensory attraction is actually a creation of mind itself. It is a handiwork of consciousness. To gain mastery over senses, you do not have to do anything with senses. The

sāadhanā is inner, mental, in the plane of consciousness. Mind alone animates the body and activates the senses. And what follows? Senses come in contact with objects and send electrical pulses to the brain centres, which interpret them as knowledge and the like. There is no independent sensory work. Think well and understand.

Any effort to separate the senses, giving them independent power, and feel that they are powerful and it is hard to control them - is absolutely fallacious.

To gain mastery over senses, you do not have to do anything with senses.

Consciousness and its plane are the only factor in our whole life, experience and knowledge. Mind, intelligence and ego are its own functional expressions. Be centred in Consciousness. Know, feel and experience it more and more.

You will find your own body and senses, the world they seemingly spread forth, are but notional floats in the Consciousness within, like shadows in water or reflective brilliance in crystal. Body is Consciousness, its radiant expression; the senses too; the manifold world with its multiple colours, shapes and other details also is nothing but Consciousness. The splendorous Consciousness displays multiple brilliances, with no addition or alteration in its innate nature or extensiveness.

Association with the Wise

In the close association with Wise souls, when the seeker listens to and absorbs their exposition of the matchless insight of the Scriptures, his mind and intelligence get refined progressively, to lose their identity and be the inner spiritual brilliance, Consciousness. The same inner singular brilliance manifests as the manifold world.

Avidyā (ignorance), multiple colours, sound, smell, taste and touch are of Consciousness alone. That is why they come to be revealed. In this one comprehension, all problems are resolved, wants become extinct, doubts dissolve, and clarity reigns in full splendour. Where is any attraction or repulsion caused by world, senses, thoughts and reasoning at all?

Sage Vasishtha with matchless excellence involves the Prince's mind and intelligence in this magnificent introspection, with lightning effect, as a result of which Rama climbs

*Rama climbs the pinnacle
of inner realization,
floating in the ecstasy of
Consciousness.*

the pinnacle of inner realization steadily, floating all the while in the transparency and ecstasy of Consciousness. Ah, what an inexplicable effect, all done by the mind and intelligence alone, no matter where they exist, and associated with which all factors!

The Great Drama of Consciousness

Dear readers, this Swami feels like stopping the discussion and narration. He finds nothing to be discussed. When it

is all one Consciousness, which reveals inside and outside, the body, senses and the world-objects around, where is any second factor at all? All are itself, its own manifold revelation! What or who controls what, whom or which? Where is anything ‘separate or additional’? **All are notions surfacing in the same singular Consciousness!**

Still, like Krishna and Rama, this Swami too feels that as long as he can, let him continue to live and move, with the seeming senses at work, the mind, intelligence and ego also engaged in their respective display. Whether they do so or not, the fact and truth remain the same. The splendour and revelation are of one Consciousness, as in dream.

Sleep evidences that the dreaming and dreamer spring from the singular sleeper alone. There is no dream, no dreamer or nothing dreamt at all, separate from the sleeper. Why then all this ado for nothing? It means nothing. It causes nothing. *Consciousness ever remains the same. Leave it to itself.* Let come what will, and also go what will. It is all a matchless drama of Consciousness alone!

Do not think that whatever Vasishthadeva says is repetitive. Not at all. He is only instilling into the Prince, as well as the readers, the singular process of ‘infusional introspection’. May be, left to himself, Rama would not have been able to do this on his own. So, *as his beloved Teacher, Vasishthadeva is helping and guiding him with introspection.*

It is like chanting a mantra over and over again, or reciting

a poem repeatedly to make it one with your inner being. Each time it involves the mind and memory, transforming them vibrantly after what is recited and memorized.

So, what you should do is to attentively read, think and imbibe the lines of introspection, **lending yourself to be ‘transformed, refined and sublimated’** after it.

*Lend yourself to be
‘transformed, refined
and sublimated’.*

The might of introspection is ineffable indeed!

(to be continued)

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Yuktātmatā – All-fold Integration

Regulation at the sensory level, evenness at the mind level and clarity at the intelligence level is sādhanā.

– Swamiji



***Preparations for the online 20th Śrīmad Bhāgavata Tattva
Sameeksha Satram (Nov 17)***

*Mataji Sulabha Devi's sacred Śrīmad Bhāgavatam book being placed in
its shrine for its annual journey from Narayanashrama Tapovanam to
Sabha Niketan, Naimisharanyam.*

Be Associated with Lofty Devotees and Knowers

What gratitude can anyone express to Sages like Sanatku-mara? Like the unfailing sun in the sky, Mahātmās impart their magnanimity as a gift to the hearts and minds of people, without looking for any rewards, returns, approbations or even honour. Self-knowers (ātma-jñānis) are indeed Self-rejoicers (ātma-ratis).

By contact and association with them, the incumbents receiving their knowledge-lustre verily become illumined, enlightened. *There is no need for any reciprocity for them – there is none possible either.* For the fully

There is such a fulfilling dimension hidden in the deep recesses of human personality.

contented heart, where is the need for anything external to bring contentment? That there is such a fulfilling dimension hidden in the deep recesses of human personality, is **what makes one's life elevated and enriched.**

A grand culmination

In due course, King Pṛthu entrusted the kingdom to his sons and proceeded to the forest as an anchorite. In such an eventuality, what should the better halves do, is a question of many householders. But with queen Archis, this doubt

did not arise at all. As Seeta followed Rama, she accompanied Pṛthu in all faith, resolve and devotion, infused by the attitude “with him, the forest will be my palace too”. A standing, eternal model for all householders indeed!

In time, the great King felt fulfilled and contented with life. Thereupon, directing the senses inwards, withdrawing the outgoing mind, intelligence imbued with clarity, dissolving himself in the Selfness that shines within, Pṛthu left his body.

Every living being has to die ultimately. But it is the human alone who can choose to leave the body in such a majestic, brilliant note of fulfillment and glory. *Having experienced and known whatever is to be experienced and known, having lived joyously, feeling fully contented, there being nothing more to be gained, to shed the body with such grandeur is very rare. Know that it is a great, incomparable emperor who attained this grand culmination!*

*It is the human alone
who can choose
to leave the body
in such a majestic,
brilliant note.*

Those who regard retirement as an unwelcome state, a phase of futile waste, should look into the life of King Pṛthu after he quit the throne and lived in the forest. When he was on the throne and in the palace, was it not **his mind within the body** that generated delight and contentment? Next, when he ascended the ladder of renunciation to

adopt the exiguous forest life, negating all comforts, living on fruits and roots, enduring discomforts of austere life, it was **still the very same mind** that generated joy and contentment.

His wife, Archis, understanding Pṛthu's love and values in such a resolve, stood by him faithfully as a full complement to his austerities. Though she had to bear the ordeals of forest life, Archis found that **being a loyal partner to her husband in his austerities, was so glorious and brilliant that the little physical discomforts hardly mattered**. This example should be an eye-opener for any wedded couple!

"The aged father must be looked after by the children, who dutifully should take up the task. The mother too has to be nursed by the offspring." Those who think and argue like this must re-examine their position. What kept the mind of royal couple aglow, subduing all incidental hardships and trials, is the vibrant love each had for the Supreme.

The line of thinking that wedded life is a demand and persuasion of youth alone, old-age renders it time-barred, and that the final lot of the mind of the aged, is but dejection and remorse of helpless loneliness; thoughts like these are to be erased off.

Association with those who are associated with God

Pṛthu's successors were noble and austere. In due course were born ten sons in this lineage, who, obeying the command of their father, set out to the sea-front for a long

period of *tapas*. On their way they met Lord Rudra.

The instructions Rudra gave them is called *Rudra-geeta*. In this hymn, which is in praise of the virtues and qualities of the supreme Lord Mahavishnu, Rudra himself stresses that association with lofty Devotees of the Lord, is greater than devotion to any deity, personal god or external form:

क्षणार्धेनापि तुल्ये न स्वर्गं नापुनर्भवम् ।

भगवत्सङ्गिसङ्गस्य मर्त्यानां किमुताशिषः ॥ (4.24.57)

It is from lofty Devotees that every seeker can learn and evolve in his devotion. **Let his focus be on these Devotees more, not on mute God.** Holy association with those who love the Supreme, has the most augmenting effect in human life. When compared, the value and benediction bestowed by association with such Devotees even for half a second, far exceeds the attainment of freedom from rebirth.

*It is from lofty
Devotees that every
seeker can learn and
evolve in his devotion.*

True Devotees are those who have achieved purity of heart. Thoughts and reflections on God, reciting stories of Godly excellences are meant for gaining this purity. Control of the mind is to be through all of these.

न यस्य चित्तं बहिरर्थविभ्रमं तमोगुहायां च विशुद्धमाविशत् ।

यद्भक्तियोगानुगृहीतमञ्जसा मुनिर्विचष्टे ननु तत्र ते गतिम् ॥

4.24.59

The mind enriched and sublimated by the practice of devotion will automatically drop its allurements for external gross objects of enjoyment. It will not slip and fall into the inner caves of *laya*, stupor and idleness, lethargy. Freed of distraction and vicious influences, the mind becoming fit and ready to comprehend the subtlest Truths, will itself be able to realize God.

The mind will itself be able to realize God.

The final call of Bhakti

श्रेयसामिह सर्वेषां ज्ञानं निःश्रेयसं परम् ।

सुखं तरति दुष्परं ज्ञाननौर्व्यसनार्णवम् ॥ 4.24.75

The knowledge of the Self alone is auspicious leading to final felicity. One riding the boat of knowledge will easily cross the ocean of misery.

Devotion is the journey towards God. Most important part in that is the association with Knowers and Devotees.

The author of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam points out that numerous temples or abodes of holiness or the large variety of devotional practices in this holy land, cannot indeed bless anyone. The closeness of association and feeling of love for Devotees of the Lord and the Knowers, even for a second, is far superior to the heaven.

Some consider that deliverance from further birth is the goal of human life. For some others, attainment of heaven is the best objective of life. But Śrīmad Bhāgavatam categorically says that the blessing received from a Knower far exceeds all these. **Elevation and fulfilment for human life**

would be had only from the Knowers of Truth.

Bhakti for Bhagavān has to grace one's heart. In terms of the mind, the quality by which such dawning will take place is purity; and in the language of the intelligence, it is knowledge. Any practice which does

Any practice which does not engender purity and wisdom is hollow.

not engender purity and wisdom is hollow. This fact is being explained by no less a source than Lord Rudra.

Every devotional seeker must certainly know what is true devotional life, its progress and culmination. The author of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam does not miss to explain and emphasize this point. *That he makes Rudra himself speak this truth should be specially borne in mind.*

Devotion leads to Knowledge

All external delusion, with the attractions and repulsions it arouses towards the outer objects, must cease. Stupour and lethargy, caused by tamo-guṇa, too must vanish. These are the obstacles that the seeker faces while pursuing samadhi.

The only means and watchword is attentive discrimination.

If the distraction as well as stupour and lethargy has left, the mind becomes adequately pure and subtle. Then, the introspecting seeker will perceive by himself, what exactly is the truth called God. ते गतिं विचष्टे - *te gatim vicaṣṭe* – they comprehend You, O Lord!

What did the Sage Author proclaim right in the beginning?

“vedyam vāstavam-atra vastu śivadam, satyam param dhīmahi” – here, what is to be known is the ultimate Reality, which yields the auspiciousness... let us contemplate on that supreme Truth.

The same principle Krishna declared in Bhagavad Gita (18.55), concluding his discussions.

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः

- By devotion he comes to know Me, the Supreme well in essence, what and who the ‘I’ is.

Devotion to God is the ladder leading to the knowledge of supreme Truth. As devotion matures, knowledge grows. In the end, **knowledge will become a direct realization and**

Devotion to God is the ladder leading to the knowledge of supreme Truth.

fruition, and begin to continuously grace the mind as a blissful treasure.

Rudra confirms this fact: Among all auspiciousness, the best is the knowledge which yields liberation. **There is only one means to cross over all afflictions - the boat of Knowledge.** Only by getting into it and rowing, one can reach the destination.

Devotees should not miss these vital declarations and revelations.

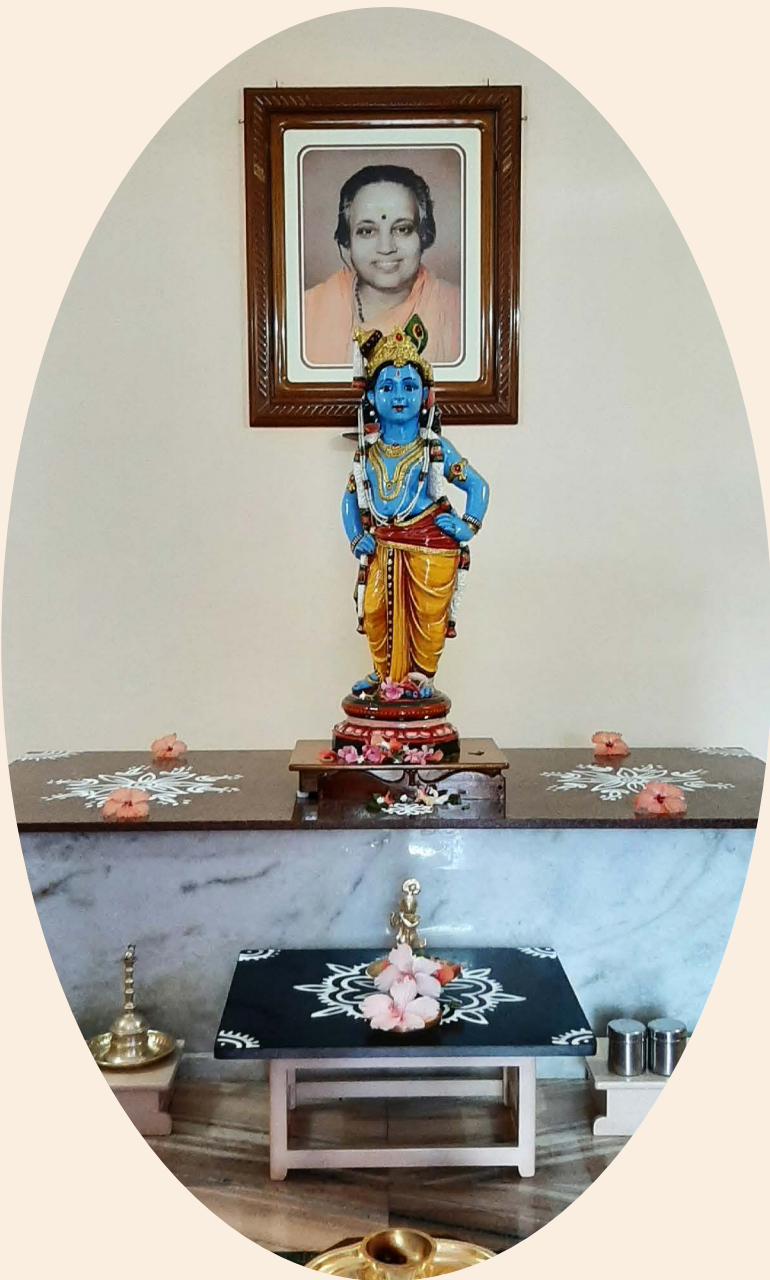
In our country, hymns praising Rudra are well known through the Vedas. But, notice how Śrīmad Bhāgavatam

presents a Rudra-geeta, in which Rudra himself praises the supreme Lord Paramātmā, and in the process **reveals ultimate knowledge about the Self**. They all emphasize only one point: mind-purity and Self-knowledge.

Do not fail to grasp the point that to reflect on these truths is itself a great austere sādhanā.

(to be continued)

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***Re-installing “Little Krishna” on Mataji Sulabha Devi’s Samadhi,
Ashram Samadhi Mandir (Nov 21)***

*Mataji Sulabha Devi’s enchanting Little Krishna
returns to his presiding position on Mataji’s Samadhi.*

Correspondence

Compassion for the Deprived & the Distressed

03 September 2021

Poojya Swamiji: We feel blessed with our association with an organization which looks after a common person!

Yours, BN.

* * *

Dear and blessed BN:

5 October 2021

Harih Om Tat Sat. Your brief email dated 3rd Sep. is before me, and I am reading it again. All appreciation for your generous heart towards the less resourceful fellow beings.

Would you like to know Krishna's words to Rukmini in an intimate conversation with her? For me, it marks a great ideal, value and motivation.

Krishna said: "*We are nishkiñchanas, non-possessors, having nothing with us. Naturally only those like us, who have nothing, come close to us. The aristocratic, the wealthy, therefore, keep away and do not worship us (as we are mostly concerned with the poor, the deprived and distressed).*"

Only those like us, who have nothing, come close to us.

“With so much of good look and heredity, you made a mistake in marrying me. You should have gone to someone better. It is not late. You can still make amends for what you have done.

“We are *delighting in the Self within*. And hence we are full, and have no desire for wealth, progeny or women. How can such a one be dear to any ambitious woman?”

This is our unobliterable culture. I always revel in this, its greatness and grandeur. I also want to let our good, great people know about it, and be enriched and empowered by its elegance and splendour. **All my life this has been my motivation, nothing else.**

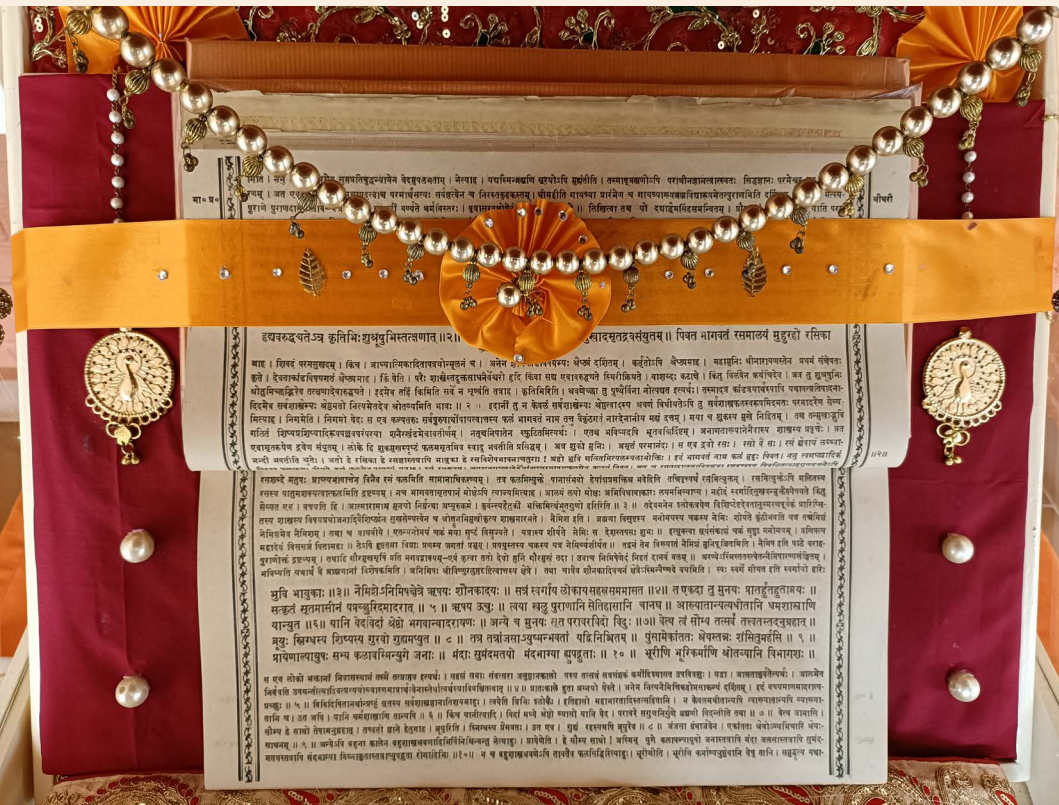
I am a Krishna in this, a Vasishtha and Vyasadeva too. Our people must have the grace and grandeur of the spiritual treasure that human heart and soul hold within.

Love and Āśīrvād. Nutan Swamiji and Ma also send loving good wishes to you.

Antarātmā, *Swamiji*

* * *

Preparations for the online 20th Śrīmad Bhāgavata Tattva Sameeksha Satram commence (Nov 17)



*Mataji Sulabha Devi's sacred Śrīmad Bhāgavatam
book being placed in its shrine for its annual journey
from Narayanashrama Tapovanam to Sabha Niketan,
Naimisharanyam.*

Correspondence - 2

Worship for Worldly Gain – is Devotion Bartered

14 October 2021

Jai Gurudev. Humblest Praṇāms at Your Lotus Feet, Sampoojya Swamiji. Humblest Praṇāms to Nutan Swamiji and Maji.

Amma had got as ancestral asset a few years ago, as part of her grandmother's will – a substantial amount. With that she now wants to organize Śrīmad Bhāgavata Saptāha at Sri Dhām Vrindavan. She got this good thought as she wanted to see my marriage happen; so, in the form of saṅkalpa she wanted to perform this Saptāha right away.

But Acchan has not allowed her. He says, "First let marriage happen. Then we will do Śrīmad Bhāgavata Saptāha!" As if it is a business deal! His dominating attitude was vivid. Amma is hurt and is helpless. Amma and myself don't have any freedom. It has been like this for years, Swamiji. He has no plan to transform, as well.

We also wish ardently to attend December Śrīmad Bhāgavata Satram through you at Sabha Niketan; but not sure when we will be able to attend and have your Darśan, Swamiji.

Yesterday Amma again slipped over the entrance as she was wetting the courtyard. Amma slid downwards and got up with great difficulty, as her right hand has not completely gained strength and flexibility after the earlier injury. She

somehow got up and managed getting back.

This happened when myself and Acchan (father) were away buying pooja items for his office-pooja that is to happen today.

I am very upset by all this Swamiji. Why my mother is having these falls one after another? Seeking your blessings and protection-shield upon us, Swamiji. We are helpless. I want to see Amma the happiest, healthiest always. I am chanting in mind whenever I can, Swamiji, as you guided. I need to chant with dedication, for which, seeking your blessings,

Once again humblest praṇāms at your lotus feet, S

* * *

26 October 2021

Dear and blessed S:

Harih Om Tat Sat. Your email of 14th Oct is before me. I am reading it again.

Dear S, I have read all you have written about your mother's fall as also about conducting a Saptāha as a dedication for getting you married fast. But somehow your father does not relish or approve of it.

Dear girl, a whole-hearted devotee is never given to fight, resist or resent any obstacle. Whatever happens is dictated by the course of one's own life and the world. All are instrumented by the same auspicious God, Kalyāṇa-roopi.

Imagine how severe was the opposition little Prahlada faced for years in the palace and in the teacher's residence. And what did he do? Did he raise his little finger against the assault or the assaulters? Suppose he had said anything in opposition or resisted the least, do you think he would have been the greatly blessed devotee, that he was?

Devotion knows no resistance, defence or anything allied to these. Just as one mountaineering, reaches closer and closer to the peak with every step, the devotee, by his or her wholesome attitude, resignation and unconditional submission, gets more and more inspired and intimate to God. His vision and experience grow greater and greater every time. Mind always becomes stronger and deeper, when tormented and obstructed. Such wholesomeness alone facilitates and invites Providence's ways and behests.

I would not like either you, your mother or father to do anything in the way of piety and devotion or even a religious ceremony, **in order to speed up or facilitate your marriage.** Anything like that will only *darken your mind and dilute your devotion*. It will be a block to your spiritual growth, maturity and fulfilment. I know of devotees who always kept quiet when their path is obstructed by anyone, including parents.

Is your marriage such that it will swing by performance of any ritual? Say no, a million times. The boy whom you will marry was born before you were. He cannot marry anybody else. If you, your mother or another makes any attempt

to ‘marry somebody else’, all that will be thwarted, if you remain firm in your devotional resignation. When will you learn this? What answer you and your mother have? To undertake conducting of a Saptāha, thinking it will facilitate a marriage, is a barter.

Both of you are good devotees, and I want you to be devotional in meeting everything in your life. If you want a Saptāha to be conducted and it is the fond wish of your mother, let her remain with her fondness exclusively, doing nothing either this way or that.

To undertake conducting of a Saptāha, thinking it will facilitate a marriage, is a barter.

Is God pleased by only rituals and ceremonies, including Śrīmad Bhāgavatam recitation? Ask your mother to take Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and recite it herself! God will be more pleased by it, as Mahavishnu was with Aditi’s Payovrata. *It will be a million times more effective than the Saptāha done by calling others.* **When will you and your mother give your own hearts to the Lord keeping nothing of it with you?**

From today onwards, let your father do anything, from physical hurting to mental torture and other means. Simply undergo all that. That is devotional submission and sādhanā.

Saptāha is held by devotees whose divine thoughts are far less than worldly thoughts, who want others to do

what they themselves should do. **Your Krishna does not look for anything besides your own heart and mind.** Are you not a devotee and therefore in God's special favour and care? Your mother is also God's daughter; you also. God is the father of you both. Live and move like Godly kids. Will Krishna, your God, himself recite Bhāgavatam as an offering to anyone? Why should both of you think of getting Bhāgavatam read by others?

Like the body, mind, heart, intelligence and ego in you are God's own creation, the world surrounding you is also His creation. Should you first and last realize this truth and live in its wholeness or lament for Bhāgavata Saptāha or any other event to be done in honour of God, that too for getting your mother's daughter married? *A shame, demeaning one, leading to the fall of your devotion!* Who would advise you like this? Remember, I am greatly hurt by what you think and do. **I give great place for you and your devotional attitude in my heart.** And if you disregard it, I do not know what will be the consequence!

Ask God whether He wants you to be married! What does He want your mother to do? I think all these thoughts are to be totally shunned. I shall be very unhappy and shameful, if, for making your marriage possible, any particular ceremony or offering is done. *Are you not already wedded to God in your heart?* What further is to

I shall be very unhappy, if for making marriage possible, an offering is done.

be thought of and done?

I see both of you as good devotees of the Lord. Remain so and realize the worth of being so. The moment you think of doing any ritual or offering in order to gain something, *your devotion shrinks and destroys itself*. **‘Ekānta-bhaktiḥ Govinde’** is the supreme gain for a human. Anything else, thought, done or pursued only vitiates its exclusiveness, distancing you from God.

Will you read this letter, think of it and stop all your distracting thoughts, ambitions and motivations? Look into the 12th chapter of Bhagavad Gita and read 8th sloka: *‘Fix your mind in me. Dissolve your buddhi also in me. Once you do so, from then on, you live in Me’*.

I tell you and your mother: Your God looks for nothing from you. He is abundantly rich in every way. What he cannot generate and preserve is devotion. Bhakti can be generated only in the devotee’s heart. He yearns for it. Generate this Bhakti lavishly in your heart. Your God will instantly comprehend and reward it. There is nothing or none in between your heart, its devotion and God, your sole goal. *Saptāha is nothing. Your heart’s exclusiveness is everything.*

Never think of any Saptāha and cause quarrel and resistance from your father. Leave father to his own words, moods and the like. Look at him with your wholesome devotion.

Generate Bhakti lavishly in your heart. Your God will reward it.

Let him be graced by your devotion's benign splendour.
As Prahlada did every time he was confronted. Naturally, there will be no thought of opposition in your mind about your father.

You divide between your father and other. Dear girl, stop this divisive thinking. And float in the ecstasy of evenness and all-fold fondness. Find Krishna in your father's words and resistance. When will you do it? Can I see and hear you so?

Be not miserly in striving for this fullness. **Feel, feel and feel God.** Let the mind become more and more and more devotional. This is a very simple and wholesome process of the devotional mind, reached, possessed and demanded by few. Open your eyes, unfold your mind and sharpen your intelligence to stop all references to your father once for all. Will you do this and well? **I am anointing you both as devotees.** Feel your devotion and blessedness, not make it a mere practice!

Regarding your mother's fall, she has to be careful. When your finger is hurt, it becomes swollen and hence very sensitive. Naturally, in every movement it is likely to be hurt again. So, until the hurt is cured, you have to be careful. Once the finger becomes normal, you can use it freely and naturally.

Because the hand is not healed, your mother cannot use it freely, as she was doing before. This strain makes its movement disorderly and what happened is its effect. She

has to be careful to avoid any fall again. Can a devotee close his eyes and walk, thinking he is a devotee and God will somehow look after him? Carefulness is the price you have to give for human life on earth.

Love and Āśīrvād. Nutan Swamiji and Ma also send loving good wishes to you.

Antarātmā, *Swamiji*

* * *

Become Godly

You have been on a pilgrimage searching the all-pervading Lord! Any external search or pilgrimage means you have missed him! You are looking for Him in a special spot. Is this not fallacious, meaningless?

Let all pilgrimage stop by your understanding that the God whom you want to see is already present in and around you everywhere.

True devotion is an inner process where the mind and intelligence alone are involved. Hence, devotionalize your mind, intelligence and ego.

Let your wish, will and perception become divine. Let all your interactions become godly. You yourself should become godly.

The process is completely mento-intelligential.

— Swamiji

* * *



***Re-installing “Little Krishna” on Mataji Sulabha Devi’s Samadhi,
Ashram Samadhi Mandir (Nov 21)
Arati performed by Nutan Swamiji***

News & Notes

❑ **20th Śrīmad Bhāgavata Tattva Sameeksha Satram** (online programme) from December 26, 2021 to January 02, 2022, will be webcast on the Ashram's Malayalam YouTube channel www.youtube.com/BhagavataTattvam. Organised by Narayanashrama Tapovanam and Hind Navotthana Pratishthan, this online 8-day event (9 AM to 6 PM) includes 2 hours of daily chanting/pārāyaṇa of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and bhajans. The 5 daily Malayalam discourses include Poojya Swamiji's daily morning tattva-pravachanam and a shorter Satsang message at noon. As part of the inaugural activities to record this programme, Mataji Sulabha Devi's sacred Śrīmad Bhāgavatam book was placed in its shrine and taken from Narayanashrama Tapovanam to Sabha Niketan, Naimisharanyam, on November 17.



In a simple sublime function, Poojya Swamiji explained the importance and far-reaching impact of Mataji's austerity that led to the annual Śrīmad Bhāgavata Tattva Sameeksha Satram. Ārati of the Śrīmad Bhāgavata Grantham was performed by Brahmacharini Nandita Swaroopa, followed by Nāma-saṅkīrtanam by Poojya Swamiji, Nutan Swamiji and Ma, Ashramites, long-staying devotees, workers and staff.

❑ **5th Global Bhagavad Gita Convention (GBGC)** will be held online from Feb 19-21, 2022. A Zoom meeting was held on Nov 21 to decide the various action points. Poojya Swamiji, Nutan Swamiji and Ma Gurupriyaji along with devotees from CIRD-NA, as well as India, Malaysia and Kenya participated. Poojya Swamiji lovingly gave guidance, clarity and inspiration to the group to proceed with the preparations. Programme details will be published in the coming months.

❑ **Deepavali - Remembering the Supreme Light (Nov 4):** The observance of Deepavali in the Ashram began with Poojya Swamiji lighting the sacred lamp in Baba's Shrine in the Ashram Maṇḍapam. From this lamp, Swamiji, Nutan Swamiji and Ma lit the traditional lamp placed on a beautiful kolam in front of Baba's shrine. After Poojya Swamiji performed ārati to Baba's photo, hundreds of small earthen lamps were kindled from the main lamp by Ashramites, resident devotees and some of the Ashram domestic assistants, who were invited by Ma to participate in the programme.

Participating for the first time, Ashram assistants also enthusiastically joined in decorating all areas of the Ashram - Prajnana Dham, Ashram Verandah, Samadhi Mandir, Vijnana Bhavan, Annakshetra, Sadhana Niketan, Kananam, Tapovanam Vihar etc. – with lamps, and took Bhakti-bhojanam before returning home.

Our Deepavali concluded with Ma Gurupriya ji's sublime Global Satsang, where Ma as usual re-kindled the flame within telling us about the self-effulgent eternal Light which is always obstructed by our ego.



Ashram verandah - luminous after the placement of lamps by Ashram residents and assistants.

❑ **Re-installing “Little Krishna”:** Samadhi Mandir, built to house the Maha-samadhi of Mataji Sulabha Devi, is the place where Ashram’s morning and evening prayers take place. Mataji’s beloved idol of Lord Krishna has always presided over her Samadhi, enchanting all who assemble for prayers.

Ma Gurupriyaji had long been wishing that Samadhi Mandir be refurbished before Mataji’s Mahasamadhi Day on 17th December, and providentially an artist was found who was able to restore the idol faithfully. Looking more beautiful and alive, Krishna was reinstalled in His original seat on Nov 21, in an impromptu ceremony attended by all staying and working in the Ashram.

Poojya Swamiji himself carried the rejuvenated idol to its rightful position. After chanting of beautiful ślokas on Sri Krishna by Ma, and āratī by Nutan Swamiji, all performed pradakṣiṇa around the shrine led by Poojya Swamiji. Praṇāms were offered to the accompaniment of bhajans, following which, Poojya Swamiji gave a special message in Malayalam, particularly for our workers. The heart



was full as our Lord, seated both on the shrine and in our Guru's chair, weaved us all together with strands of love.

❑ **More Houses for the Homeless:** Since the first foundation stone blessed by Poojya Swamiji with Akshata, Ganga water and Tulasi leaves was received by a recipient family on Sep 29, there has been good progress in the first phase of construction of five houses (started in October). Concrete



roof casting has been completed on 4 houses. A total of 9 houses are now in various phases of construction, with construction on an additional 3 starting by November end.



More Houses for the Homeless

9 houses are now in various phases of construction.

*To be a powerful Nation, we must re-possess our
eternal National and Spiritual Values emergently.*

– Swamiji

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