

Satya ka Avahan

Invoking the Divine

सत्य का
आवाहन

Year 12 Issue 4 July–August 2023



Sannyasa Peeth, Munger, Bihar, India



Hari Om

Avahan is a bilingual and bi-monthly magazine compiled, composed and published by the sannyasin disciples of Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati for the benefit of all people who seek health, happiness and enlightenment. It contains the teachings of Sri Swami Sivananda, Sri Swami Satyananda, Swami Niranjanananda and Swami Satyasangananda, along with the programs of Sannyasa Peeth.

Editor: Swami Gyansiddhi Saraswati

Assistant Editor: Swami Shiva-dhyanam Saraswati

Published by Sannyasa Peeth, c/o Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger – 811201, Bihar.

Printed at Thomson Press India (Ltd), Haryana

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Useful Resources

Websites:

www.sannyasapeeth.net
www.biharyoga.net
www.satyamयोगprasad.net

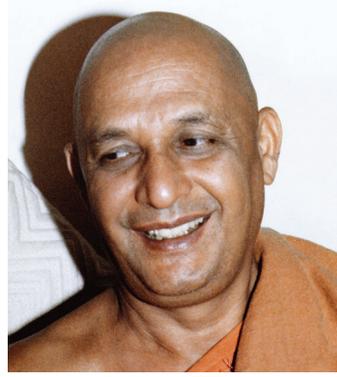
Apps:

(for Android and iOS devices)

Bihar Yoga
APMB
YOGA (English magazine)
YOGAVIDYA (Hindi magazine)
FFH (For Frontline Heroes)

Front cover and plates:

Guru Poornima 2023



SATYAM SPEAKS – सत्यम् वाणी

In a social sense, the purpose of sannyasa is to spread harmony and understanding, to help others to live their lives more fully, to guide others along the path of dharma. In an inner, deeper sense, the purpose of sannyasa is to bring about perfect equanimity and the awakening of consciousness.

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati

सामाजिक दृष्टि से संन्यास का उद्देश्य आपसी समझ और सामंजस्य बढ़ाना है, लोगों को धर्म के पथ पर ले जाते हुए उन्हें अपने जीवन में पूर्णता अनुभव करने में मदद करना है। आध्यात्मिक दृष्टि से संन्यास का लक्ष्य पूर्ण समत्व की प्राप्ति तथा चेतना की जागृति है।

—स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती

Published and printed by Swami Kaivalyananda Saraswati on behalf of Sannyasa Peeth, Paduka Darshan, PO Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger – 811201, Bihar.

Printed at Thomson Press India (Ltd), 18/35 Milestone, Delhi Mathura Rd., Faridabad, Haryana.

Owned by Sannyasa Peeth **Editor:** Swami Gyansiddhi Saraswati

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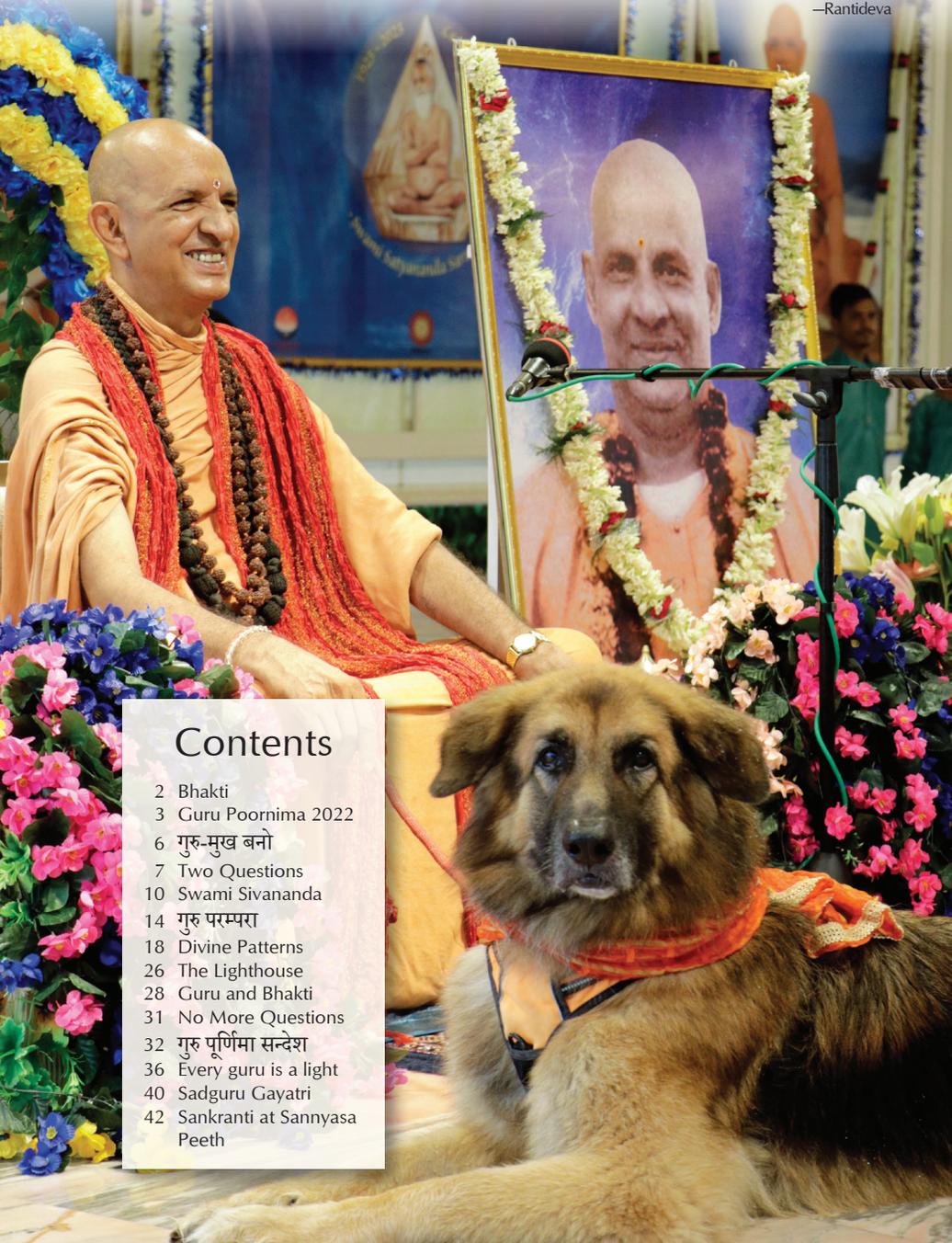
न तु अहं कामये राज्यं न स्वर्गं नापुनर्भवम्। कामये दुःखतप्तानां प्राणिनां आर्त्तिनाशनम्॥

"I do not desire a kingdom or heaven or even liberation. My only desire is to alleviate the misery and affliction of others."

—Rantideva

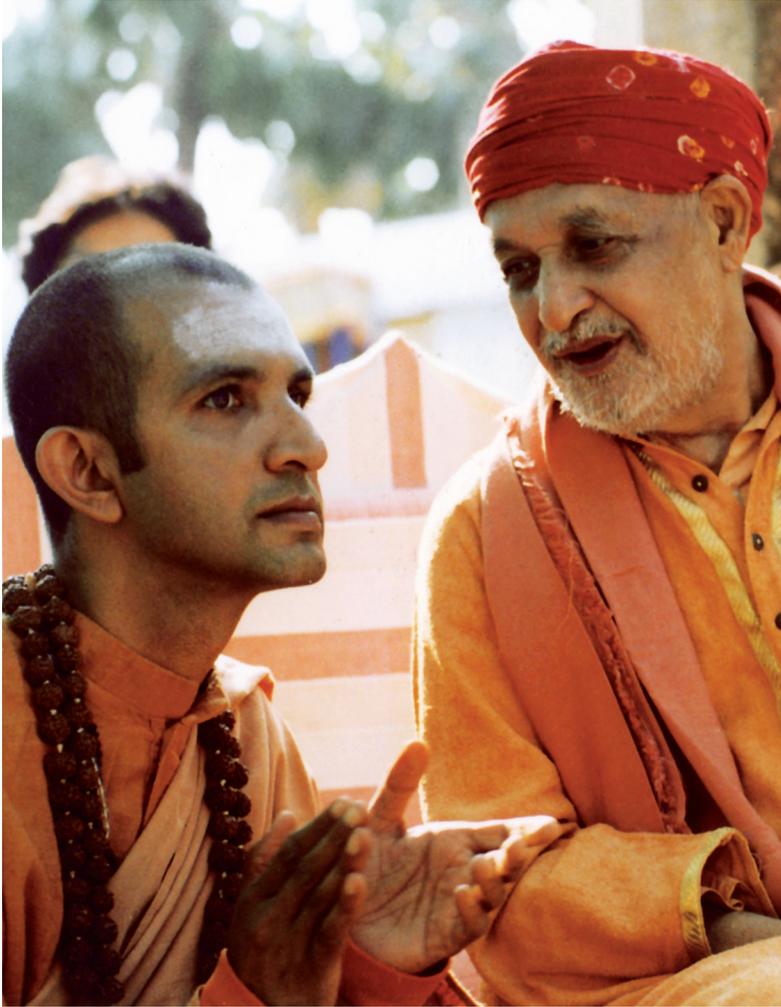
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Bhakti

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



The guru-disciple relationship is based on bhakti. When there is bhakti, there is a totality of concentration. When there is bhakti, there is sacrifice and dedication. ■

Guru Poornima 2022

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Today is the day of Guru Poornima. Let us go back to the year 1963. The foundation stone of Bihar School of Yoga was laid and construction was happening. At that time, our guru, Sri Swamiji, lived at Anand Bhavan, which today the world knows as Paduka Darshan, Sannyasa Peeth. On the day of 13th July, when he was absorbed in his meditation, in his own words he says:

I felt myself transported physically to Rishikesh. I saw myself standing beside the river Ganga and in the middle of the river there was a boat. On that boat my guru, Swami Sivanandaji, was standing, facing the other shore. When the boat reached midway, my guru turned, looked at me and raised his hands in blessings. At that time, I knew that my guru had left his body. While this thought was going on in my head, the water from the fly-wheel of the boat drenched my physical body, and I came out of that vision. I saw my body drenched in water and I knew that my guru had blessed me. He had left his body and he had blessed me, he had anointed me.

The next day on 14th, I departed for Rishikesh to offer my pranams to his samadhi. As I was offering my pranams, I heard a voice which said, 'Continue working according to the plan that we have made.' I realized at that moment that I had to fulfil the mandate of my guru to propagate yoga from door to door and shore to shore, as that was his instruction. Yoga was never my vocation, but the mandate I had to fulfil. My vocation was sannyasa.

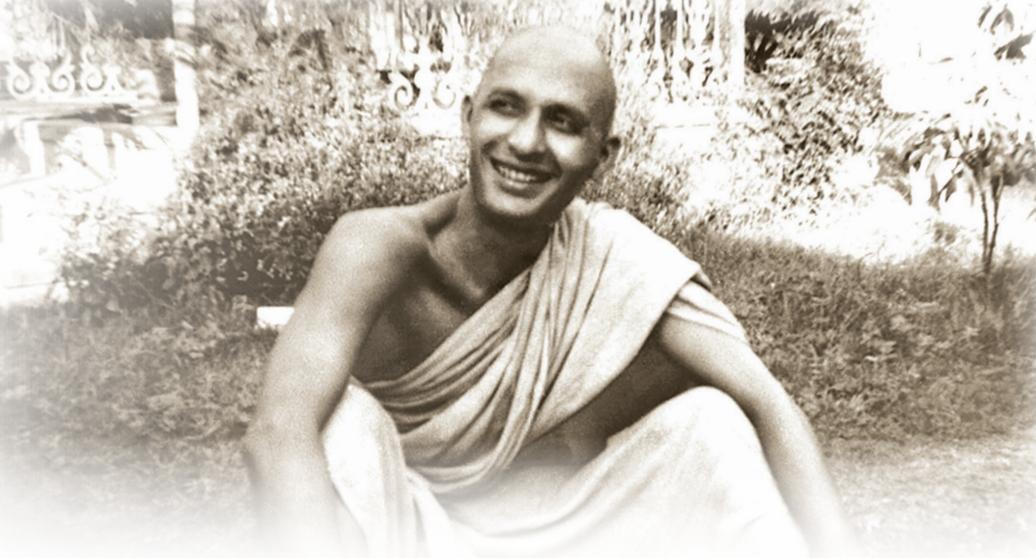
Sri Swamiji came back to Munger and a few days later the Guru Poornima celebrations were held in the premises of Bihar



School of Yoga. The message which he gave to everybody on behalf of his master, Swami Sivanandaji, was the following:

The only thing that stands in the way of your spiritual realization, is your own mind, the ego, or call it by any name you like. It is precisely in order to see that this obstacle is removed, and one gets to the ultimate goal of human life, that one goes to the preceptor or guru. Guru transforms the limited mind, for he knows the method as to how to transform and transcend. Suppose a man who is desirous of leading a spiritual life goes to a guru and asks for his advice and guidance, and the guru tells him, 'Be good. Lead a virtuous life. Serve selflessly. Love all. Share with others what you have. Purify the mind and meditate with a one-pointed mind.' If the man does not seriously strive to follow the guru's advice, what benefit will he derive? Absolutely nothing. He will be in no way better than what he was.

It seems that one does not want to practise anything, but there is only the expectation of the result. This life on earth is a halting place on the way to the achievement of the goal of life which is perfection in life. Earthly life is transitory for it has been seen that everything that is born dies. Death is not the end of life, since without a continuation of life, the values of the deeds and experiences of this life would be rendered nugatory.



There were births and deaths in the past, there will be births and deaths in the future too, until self-awareness and self-realization is attained. Remember that you have come alone to this world, and also you will pass away alone from this world. No one will help you except what you have done here in this life. Your deeds will search you out and follow you, as calves follow their mothers, even in the midst of a great herd. Waste not precious time, but utilize every moment for the noblest of causes. Finish your journey quickly by practising right sadhana with the guidance of guru or preceptor. Great shall be your glory and glorious shall be your success. May peace be with you on your spiritual path.

This Guru Poornima is dedicated to our Paramguru, Swami Sivananda Saraswati, whose teaching was shared by Swami Satyananda Saraswati with all of us. It is the luminosity of Swami Sivanandaji which made Swami Satyanandaji effulgent. It is the same luminosity which we receive with our commitment, sincerity, dedication, faith, trust and with our loyalty. Let us move away from the avarice, greed, jealousy and hatred. Let us not be disloyal to our guru or his teachings. Let us make the sankalpa to walk the path, and to continue to walk. No matter how many times we fall, let us get up again and keep on walking. ■

गुरु-मुख बनो

स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती

शिष्य सो रहा था
गुरु ने उसे जगा दिया
गुरु का शब्द शिष्य के हिय में पैठा
तो दिव्य दृष्टि उजागर हो गई
तब से नींद नहीं आ रही है
आँखें दिन रात खुली रहती हैं
नित्य सुबह गुरु के चरणामृत से नहाता है
तो उसके सन्ताप और पाप
क्षणमात्र में धुल जाते हैं
उसने गुरु के चरणों की रज को
माथे पर धारण कर लिया है
उसे सुमति आ गई है
प्रेम का प्याला पीकर वह बौरा गया है
उसे कुछ भी नहीं सुहाता

चेला ऊँचे महल पर चढ़कर
शून्य के मण्डप पर बैठा है
वहाँ सूरज, चाँद, तारे, बिजली और आग
किसी की भी पहुँच नहीं
चलते रहने वाला वहाँ पहुँचेगा
थकने वाला बैठ जायेगा
बिना 'गुरु-मुख' शब्द के नहीं चल सकेगा
घिसट-घिसट कर कोई वहाँ नहीं पहुँचेगा
रोते-धोते कोई वहाँ नहीं पहुँचेगा
सच्चा और अच्छा चेला वहाँ पहुँच जायेगा
कच्चा और लुच्चा नीचे ठेला जायेगा
समझे कुछ, क्या?



Two Questions

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

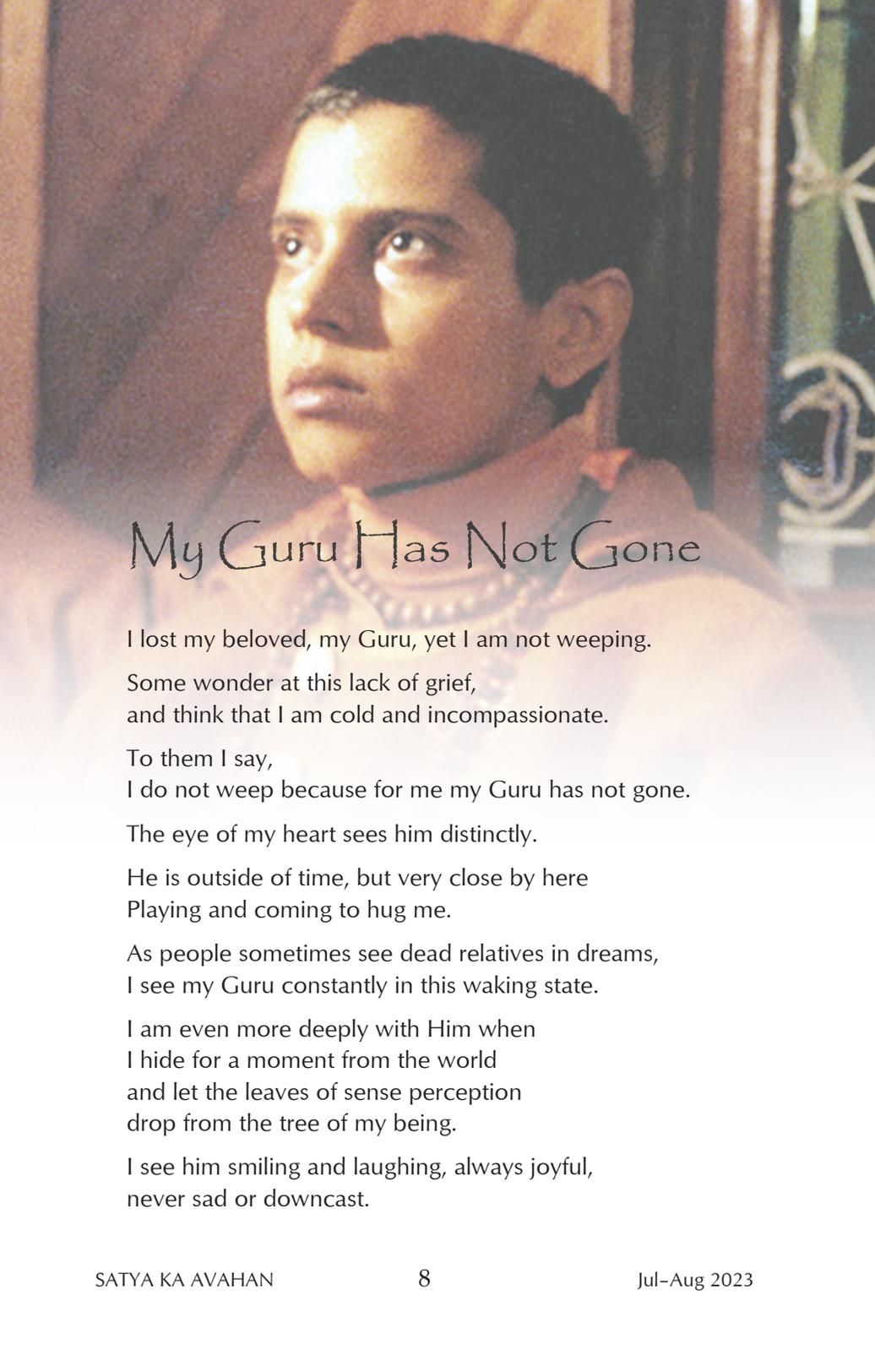


Is it tiresome to be a guru?

It is tiresome for many, but not for me, because I do not feel that I am a guru. My relationship with everybody I come across is in the form of friend, guide and philosopher. This is a very relaxing relationship which gives me joy and contentment, so that when I die, I can write on a piece of paper that I died in peace.

What is the highest guidance a guru can give?

Love, to show you the inner path and explain the realities. ■



My Guru Has Not Gone

I lost my beloved, my Guru, yet I am not weeping.

Some wonder at this lack of grief,
and think that I am cold and uncompassionate.

To them I say,
I do not weep because for me my Guru has not gone.

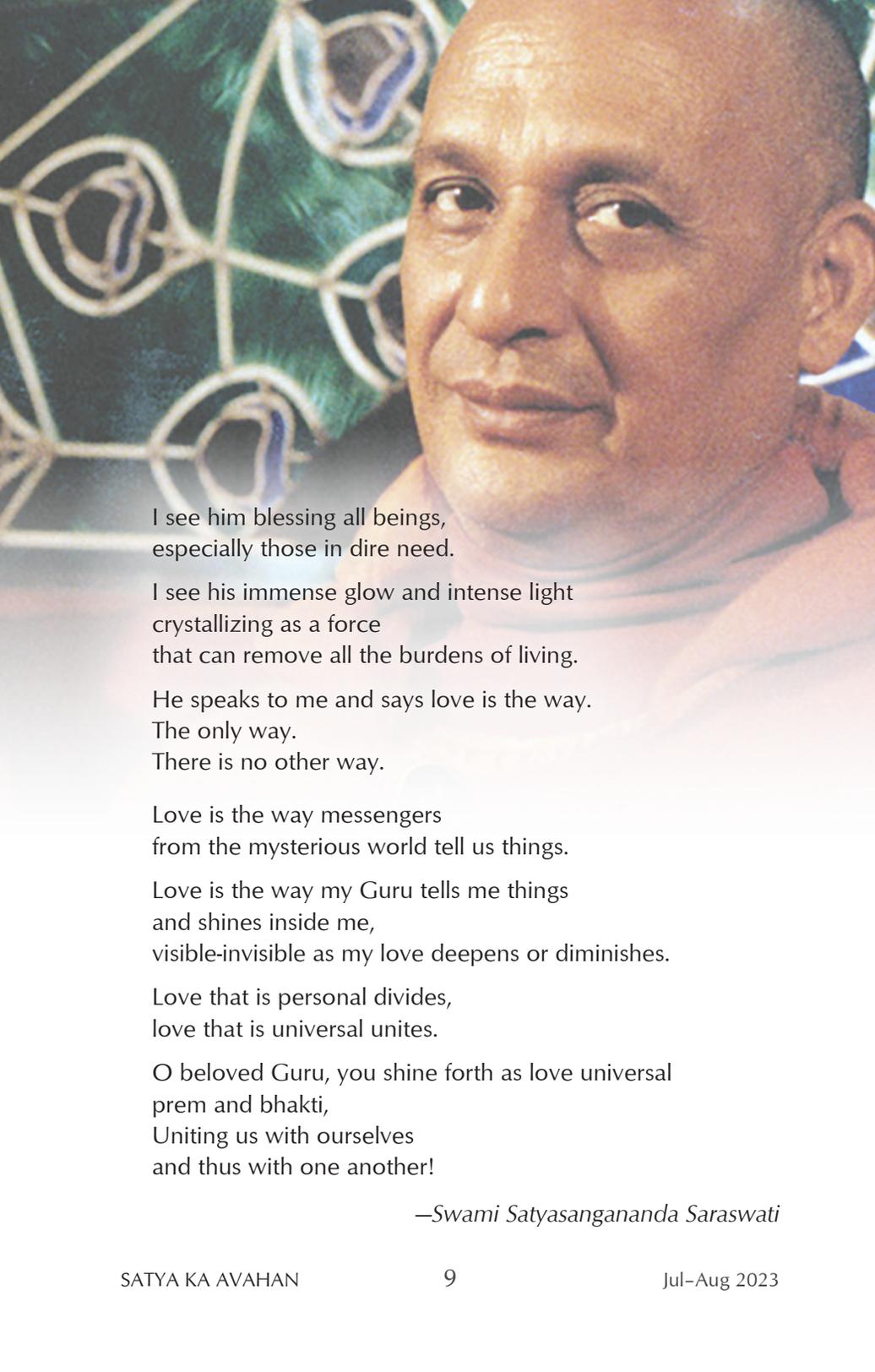
The eye of my heart sees him distinctly.

He is outside of time, but very close by here
Playing and coming to hug me.

As people sometimes see dead relatives in dreams,
I see my Guru constantly in this waking state.

I am even more deeply with Him when
I hide for a moment from the world
and let the leaves of sense perception
drop from the tree of my being.

I see him smiling and laughing, always joyful,
never sad or downcast.



I see him blessing all beings,
especially those in dire need.

I see his immense glow and intense light
crystallizing as a force
that can remove all the burdens of living.

He speaks to me and says love is the way.
The only way.
There is no other way.

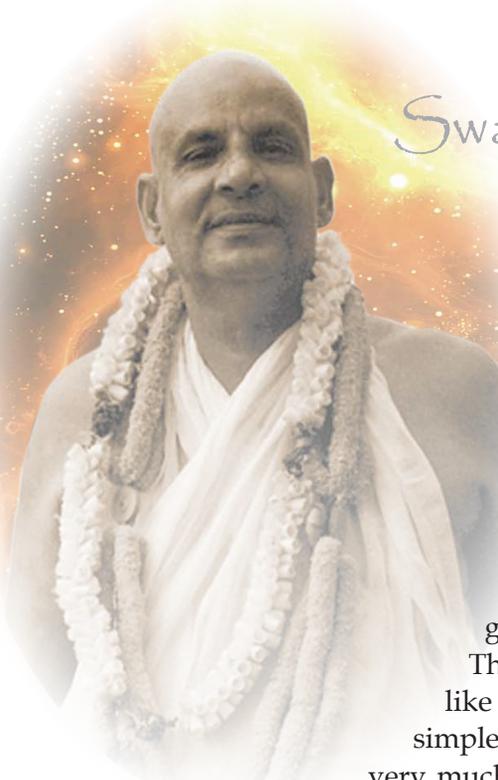
Love is the way messengers
from the mysterious world tell us things.

Love is the way my Guru tells me things
and shines inside me,
visible-invisible as my love deepens or diminishes.

Love that is personal divides,
love that is universal unites.

O beloved Guru, you shine forth as love universal
prem and bhakti,
Uniting us with ourselves
and thus with one another!

—Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati

A portrait of Swami Sivananda, an elderly man with a shaved head, wearing a white shawl and a thick garland of white flowers. He is set against a glowing, golden-orange background with a starburst effect behind his head.

Swami Sivananda

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

In this century, a few self-realized people were born on this earth. These self-realized, enlightened people influenced not only India and Hindus, but the whole world. The most wonderful thing is they never left India, but they influenced all religions, nations and people.

They were also not miracle men, like magicians. They were very simple people. They did not speak very much. They did not do anything for their own publicity. One of them was Swami Sivananda. Others were Ramana Maharishi, Swami Ramdas, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the lady saint, Ma Anandamayi, and Sri Aurobindo.

These were enlightened people. They lived on this earth with us but they did not belong to this earth; their inner consciousness was always in total union with the cosmos. That cosmos they called 'God'. This God is not the God of a particular religion. This God means 'that who is all'. Not the God who is 'there', but the God who is everywhere. The God who is all and the God who is the only being. For them there was no second thing.

Ramakrishna was unlettered. Ramana Maharishi only knew a little bit. Sri Aurobindo was highly intellectual and educated and Swami Sivananda was very well educated. He was a surgeon, a doctor of medicine. Ramdas was also educated and Anandamayi Ma was a simple girl.

These were the realized, enlightened people during our times. Unfortunately, no one is living now. The last person, in this great tradition was Anandamayi Ma who departed two years ago and we are waiting for someone to come. At this moment there seems to be a vacuum.

We see all around us great men, great gurus, great masters and teachers, very good religious people, very good intellectuals, but enlightenment is something else. Enlightenment is becoming one with the One. In enlightenment you do not see duality and Swami Sivananda was in this tradition.

I only consider this to be my greatest fortune to have lived with him for twelve years. I lived with him for those twelve years fully aware that he was not an ordinary person. I did not consider him a teacher. I did not consider him a guru. I did not consider him a master. I did not consider him to be a man who could just bless me. I considered him 'God' because he was the first person who could influence me or catch me.

I am born into a Hindu family. My parents were religious in their own way but I never believed in God. For me creation was an accident and my birth a biological accident. I read the Bible, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Koran but I thought it was not good because I thought in the realm of logic there is no place for God.

I had no faith at all and I had come to a conclusion that I was living in a world of anarchy. At the same time, when I came to him everything changed like a miracle. He did not teach me anything. He only told me to work: to type a book, print a book, clean this, clean that, go to the bank and do this, go to the office and do that, go to the market and do that. The only thing which he taught me was five minutes of kriya yoga. Five minutes, you know how big it is? And that too when I was leaving the ashram for becoming a wandering monk. When he taught me kriya yoga I knew that I already knew it. Beyond this he did not teach me anything.

I lived in his ashram for twelve years from the age of nineteen to the age of thirty-one and I worked for him day and

night without wishing anything for myself, without having the knowledge that I am helping him. Now I think, 'Why did I work so much?' Many times temptations came in my way, but just like a storm blows the clouds, the temptations were blown out.

Meeting him for the first time in the year 1943 was a moment I can never forget. I wanted to tell him that I did not believe in God, but I forgot everything. I told him, 'I want to stay with you.' He said, 'Yes, work hard, purify your mind, all the questions you have will be answered.' Beyond that there was no moment of direct instruction and voluntarily I took upon myself the work of the ashram.

It will not be possible for me to tell you what the ashram was and what I did. From wild land I developed a big ashram. There were only four or five young swamis in the year 1920 to 1921, but I added ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, because I believed that everybody has a certain capacity and there are many people who want to renounce but they do not know it. So, anybody who came to stay in the ashram I would tell him, 'Stay here permanently.'

In Munger I do that to anybody who comes I say, 'Stay here.' There I did the same thing. I know many people have the quality of a sannyasin, but they don't know it. If they are not given the opportunity of experiencing themselves, they will never know. If you ever go to Sivananda Ashram in Rishikesh, you will find that my sweat is also there.

In 1963, the year I was in Munger, I woke up inside in the middle of the night. It was not a dream. It was not a vision. It was happening, but inside and I knew that Swamiji was gone from the body. From that time up to this day, many times, I have a very clear meeting with him. I do not know how to do it but it happens.

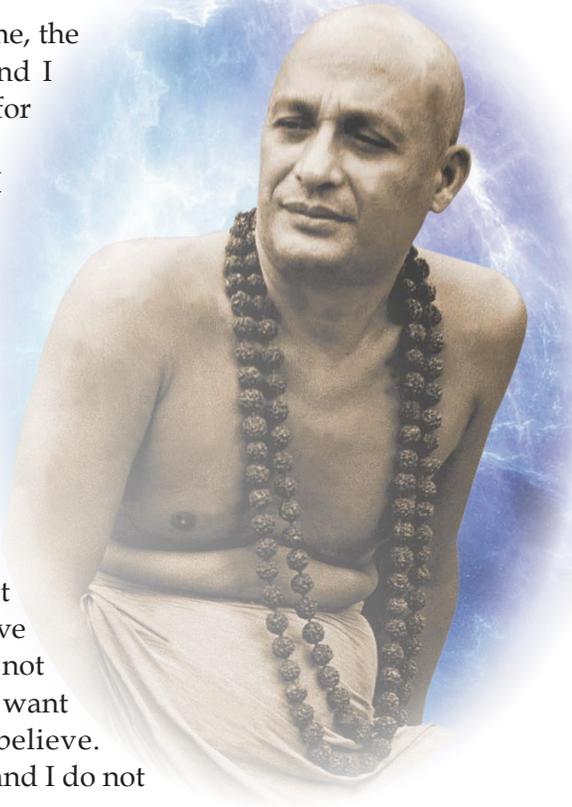
I am not a person who is depressed. I do not understand depression. I have no frustration, but sometimes I want to give up this teaching and preaching people, and just sit down somewhere. I like to sit in one place for days together; I don't

like to go out. At that time, the contact becomes clear and I have to work, because for me he is the only God.

I won't say that I believe in God because philosophical belief is no belief. Three billion people who live in the world believe in God. So, these billions of people who believe in God, I don't have any consideration for them, because they have been taught. They have not discovered God; they have not understood it. I do not want to be on that road. I want to discover and then believe. Some people have faith and I do not want to have it.

I must discover and then believe, because if there is any such thing as God, he should be visible to everybody. Anybody should see Him at any time because it is said, 'God is the nearest, God is your own self.' Then, if He is the nearest why don't you see Him? Why don't you feel Him?

That is exactly the way that I think I got from him, Swami Sivananda. I don't try to feel him because I don't want to hypnotize myself. He should reveal himself to me and he reveals. He reveals whenever he likes. ■



गुरु परम्परा

स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती

जिस प्रकार सम्पूर्ण विश्व में लोग सन्त-महात्माओं की स्मृति में विशेष दिवस मनाते हैं उसी प्रकार भारत में गुरु पूर्णिमा के दिन गुरु दिवस मनाया जाता है। पूर्णिमा की रात्रि में पूर्ण चन्द्र चमकता है। यह अनुभूति की सर्वोच्च अवस्था का द्योतक है जब घोर अन्धकार में ज्ञान का प्रकाश चमकता है। अतः गुरु वे हैं जो अन्धेरी रात में पूर्ण चन्द्र की तरह चमकते हैं। इसलिये वर्ष में एक बार आषाढ़ पूर्णिमा के दिन, हम एकत्र होकर गुरु पूर्णिमा का उत्सव मनाते हैं तथा अपना सर्वस्व गुरु को समर्पित करते हैं।

हम गुरु पूर्णिमा दो उद्देश्यों से मनाते हैं। प्रथम, हम स्वयं को अपनी आध्यात्मिक परम्परा का स्मरण दिलाते हैं। द्वितीय, हम उन उच्चतर शक्तियों से सम्पर्क स्थापित करने का प्रयास करते हैं जो आध्यात्मिक विकास में हमारा मार्गदर्शन करती हैं। गुरु वे हैं जिन्होंने अपनी चेतना को पूर्णतया रूपान्तरित कर दिया है। वे भौतिक रूप से इस संसार में रहते हैं, किन्तु उनकी आत्मा सदैव देश और काल के परे, उच्चतम आयामों में विचरण करती रहती है। अपने विकास-चक्र को पूरा कर लेने के कारण उनके लिये कुछ भी करना शेष नहीं रह जाता। तथापि वे मानवता की चेतना के स्तर को ऊँचा उठाने के लिये कार्य करते रहते हैं।

गुरु परम्परा आधुनिक नहीं, अत्यन्त प्राचीन है। मनुष्य की उत्पत्ति के पूर्व भी प्रकृति के रूप में गुरु का अस्तित्व था जो ऋतुओं, वनस्पतियों और पशु-पक्षियों का मार्गदर्शन करती थी। प्रागैतिहासिक एवं पाषाण युग के लोगों के गुरु थे; जो पशु-बलि देते थे, अमूर्त देवी-देवताओं में विश्वास करते थे तथा जादू-टोना, सिद्धि और अभिचार सीखना चाहते थे, उनके भी गुरु थे। गुरु की परम्परा सिर्फ भारत तक ही सीमित नहीं है। एटलान्टिक सभ्यता में गुरु की संख्या अब तक की किसी भी सभ्यता से अधिक थी। दक्षिण अमेरिका, यूरोप, मिस्र, मेसोपोटामिया, तिब्बत, चीन और जापान में गुरु होते थे। गुरु परम्परा सार्वभौमिक रही है, किन्तु अनेक युद्धों एवं सामयिक विध्वंसों के चलते यह धीरे-धीरे समस्त संसार में विनष्ट हो गयी। भारत को छोड़कर कोई देश इसे सुरक्षित न रख सका।



इसलिए अब हम सिर्फ भारत में ही गुरु पूर्णिमा मनाते हैं, किन्तु यदि आप प्राचीन दक्षिण अमेरिका की सभ्यता का अध्ययन करेंगे तो आप पायेंगे कि वे भी गुरु पूर्णिमा मनाते थे। हजारों वर्ष पूर्व समस्त संसार में गुरु पूर्णिमा अवश्य मनाई जाती होगी।

गुरु-शिष्य का सम्बन्ध निश्चित रूप से मानवीय विकास के सर्वाधिक महत्वपूर्ण पहलुओं में से एक है। यह सम्बन्ध समस्त सम्प्रदायों, संगठनों और संस्थाओं का आधार है, चाहे वे आध्यात्मिक हों या कोई और। जब हम भूतकाल की समृद्ध संस्कृतियों तथा वर्तमान संस्कृतियों के बारे में विचार करते हैं तो पाते हैं कि वे भी इसी महत्वपूर्ण सम्बन्ध पर आधारित रही हैं। कला और विज्ञान की समस्त परम्पराएँ, पीढ़ी-दर-पीढ़ी गुरु से शिष्य को, शिक्षक से छात्र को तथा पिता से पुत्र को हस्तान्तरित होती रही हैं।

गुरु-शिष्य सम्बन्ध मानव अस्तित्व के महत्तर आयामों, श्रेष्ठतर क्षमताओं से सम्बद्ध है। इसके बिना हम बाह्य जगत् की विभिन्नताओं में निराशाजनक रूप से खो जायेंगे। गुरुओं एवं शिक्षकों की रक्षात्मक कृपा ही उस आन्तरिक स्रोत की ओर हमारा मार्गदर्शन करती है, जहाँ से हमारी समस्त उच्चतर शक्तियाँ निःसृत होती हैं। यही कारण है कि महान् शिक्षकों को श्रेष्ठतर संस्कृतियों की आधारशिला माना गया है। उनके ज्ञान और प्रेरणा के बिना न तो परम्पराएँ टिक सकेंगी और न संस्कृतियाँ जीवित रह सकेंगी।

भारत में प्राचीनकाल से आज तक हम गुरुओं और ऋषियों को अपनी सांस्कृतिक परम्परा की शक्ति और प्रकाश मानते रहे हैं। उन्होंने जो कुछ सिखाया तथा वेदों, उपनिषदों और तन्त्रों में जो भी लिखा, वह सारहीन दर्शन नहीं, बल्कि जीवन का एक पूर्ण विज्ञान है। उन्होंने लोगों को संयम, आत्मनियन्त्रण, अन्तर्दृष्टि एवं आत्मज्ञान द्वारा जीवन की पूर्णता प्राप्त करने हेतु प्रेरित किया। इन गुणों का सम्पूर्ण समाज पर शक्तिशाली प्रभाव पड़ता है। यदि सभी लोग इसे अपना लें तो आप कल्पना कर सकते हैं कि ऐसी संस्कृति कितनी उन्नत हो जायेगी। हम अवश्य ही अपने को एक आदर्श लोक में पायेंगे।

हमारे ऋषि-मुनियों के मन में ऐसी ही समृद्ध संस्कृति के निर्माण की कल्पना थी। हजारों वर्षों के प्रयोग के बाद उन्होंने एक ऐसी पद्धति का विकास किया, जिसके द्वारा प्रत्येक व्यक्ति अपने व्यक्तित्व का पुनर्निर्माण कर सकता है तथा अपने अन्तर्ज्ञान के द्वार खोल सकता है। यह योग विज्ञान की पद्धति है। जिस प्रकार कुम्हार अपने मिट्टी के बर्तनों को मजबूत बनाने के लिये उन्हें आग में पकाता है, उसी प्रकार योग असुरक्षित एवं अतिसंवेदनशील मन को सशक्त बनाता है। यह उसे पूर्ण सबल बनाता है, और इस प्रकार जीवन के उथल-पुथल एवं झंझावतों का सामना करने के लिये तैयार करता है।

हमारे गुरुओं को यह मालूम था कि अति प्राचीन काल में सम्पूर्ण विश्व में एक समृद्ध संस्कृति फैली हुई थी। वे भी एक विकसित, सुसंस्कृत मानव समाज के निर्माण की कल्पना किया करते थे। किन्तु विपरीत राजनैतिक परिस्थितियों के कारण वे तत्कालीन समाज में योग का प्रचार-प्रसार न कर सके। अतः वे एकान्त वन में, अलग-थलग पड़े रहे। किन्तु उन्होंने योग विज्ञान की पद्धति को उस उपयुक्त समय के लिये सुरक्षित रखा जब मानव जाति उसे ग्रहण करने के लिये तैयार होगी।

बीसवीं शताब्दी तक यह परिस्थिति बनी रही। इस शताब्दी के प्रारम्भ होते ही राजसत्ता राजाओं-महाराजाओं के हाथों से सामान्य व्यक्तियों के हाथों में हस्तान्तरित होने लगी। लोगों को राज्य और समाज के कार्यों में सहभागी होने की अधिक स्वतन्त्रता तथा अवसर मिलने लगे। इसके साथ ही वे अपने जीवन से सम्बन्धित अधिकाधिक उत्तरदायित्वों को सम्भालने लगे। औद्योगिक क्रान्ति और धन के वितरण के कारण लोगों में जीवन के प्रति अधिक भौतिकवादी दृष्टिकोण विकसित हुआ। किन्तु आज यह प्रवाह तेजी

से विपरीत दिशा में जाने लगा है। अधिकाधिक लोग भौतिकवादी जीवन से तंग होने लगे हैं। वे अपनी समस्याओं के समाधान तथा अधिक उन्नत जीवन पद्धति के लिये योग की ओर देखने लगे हैं।

आज लोग योग के लिये तैयार हो गये हैं तथा यौगिक संस्कृति की पुनर्स्थापना का समय आ गया है। आत्मानुभूति से युक्त अनेक महापुरुष आज लोगों के बीच भ्रमण कर रहे हैं तथा सम्पूर्ण विश्व में योगाश्रमों एवं योग केन्द्रों की स्थापना करके योग को सर्वसुलभ बनाने का प्रयास कर रहे हैं।

इस प्रकार आज हम एक महान् यौगिक पुनर्जागरण के प्रारम्भ का दर्शन कर रहे हैं। हम मानव जाति की विकास-यात्रा में एक लम्बी अग्रवर्ती छलाँग की तैयारी कर रहे हैं। शीघ्र ही लोग सर्वत्र योग का अभ्यास करने लगेंगे, और जो अभ्यास नहीं भी करेंगे वे इसके बारे में कुछ-न-कुछ अवश्य जानेंगे। निकट भविष्य में ही गुरुपूर्णिमा एक अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय त्योहार बन जायेगा। पुरुष, स्त्री और बच्चे स्वयं को गुरु एवं भावी यौगिक संस्कृति के प्रति समर्पित करने हेतु सर्वत्र एकत्र हुआ करेंगे। ■



Divine Patterns

Sannyasi Sivadhara

There is an inherent impetus embedded within the seed of every special *yatra* or journey which exists independently of the 'intention' of the travellers. This seed bears within it not just the core of its impetus but also carries the blueprint of the route, the vehicle, the u-turns, detours and the caravanserais along the way. The traveller undertaking the journey is just one tiny component of the greater Plan that is conceived in the Divine Universal Mind.

A recent *tirtha yatra* or pilgrimage brought this awareness into sharp focus and filled me with deep respect, love and adoration for the Divine which is within and encompasses all of creation. It was the unfolding of a subtle magical experience that revealed itself in gradual layers, one miniscule magical moment at a time. My fledgling faith has been nourished and grown immeasurably stronger by the experience of these divine patterns, which propel Guru's vision and mission ever onward.

On Sunday, 28th May 2023, I mentioned to Swamiji that perhaps it would be good to offer pranams at Swami Sivanandaji's birthplace during Sri Swamiji's Centenary year, especially before Guru Poornima and Swamiji's Satyam Charitra program, a re-telling of the lives and work of our masters, Sivanandaji and Satyanandaji. Swamiji said, "1st June is Swami Sivanandaji's Sannyasa Diwas. Be there on 1st June." That was it!

I had never been to Pattamadai and did not have a clue as to where to begin, yet it was becoming increasingly clear that the *yatra* had already been planned and would show itself as I went along. Everything fell into place in a matter of few hours. I even received a message that night from Sri Lalitha Mahila Samajam in Tirueengoimalai, the yoginis'



ashram, to go there first and someone would accompany me to Pattamadai.

Travelling by air from Patna to Bangalore and onwards to Tiruchirapalli, I drove to the yoginis' ashram which is about an hour away. After freshening up, I went to meet Mathaji who was waiting for me with an amazing collection of old black and white photographs from the 1960s. She showed me one which was taken during a Gita Yajna conducted in 1964 by Swami Advayanandaji and herself to commemorate one year of Swami Sivanandaji's Samadhi. The entire *Bhagavad Gita* was chanted, oblations were offered into the havan fire at the end of each of the seven hundred verses as a mark of respect and thanksgiving for the gift of Swami Sivanandaji's life and work, whose inspiration guides millions all over the world to this day!

We set off around 10 am and with only a short stop en route, we arrived in Pattamadai around 4 pm. The driver remembered the way to the little *agraharam*, the Brahmin enclave, from a trip he had made there about ten years ago. Before we knew it, there we were! At the very doorstep of the home



in which Swami Sivanandaji was born on 8th September 1887. The small houses on the narrow street looked ageless and Swami Sivanandaji's home was immaculate. Though it was locked, there was a small board on the door with the telephone numbers of the office bearers of the Divine Life Society, Pattamadai. I made a call to the

president, Mr M.L. Sharma, who promptly answered only to say that he was out of town but not to worry. He asked us to wait and someone would come with the keys within five minutes. Sure enough, in no time at all we saw a swami walking towards us. He was Swami Ashramananda, who looks after the Sivananda Mutt close by. He happily opened the doors of the house and invited us in.

As soon as we entered, I had goose bumps . . . was I imagining it or was it really the Mahamantra I could hear? Swami Ashramanandaji smiled and said that a recording of the



Mahamantra plays continuously in the house, except during power cuts! A typical Brahmin home in an agraharam is long and narrow with a corridor running through the entire length of the house from the street to the back which, in this particular home, opens onto the Tamraparni river. The small rooms are set in a row, like compartments in a railway carriage. A tiny niche-like space that opened out from the side of the third room we entered was the very place where Swami Sivanandaji was born.



It was neatly tiled with a little ledge holding a picture of him, lamps were lit on either side and all the necessary pooja items were there as well. The entire space seemed to vibrate with a gentle, pure and unmistakably strong energy of love and compassion. We sat down quietly for some time and closed our eyes. When we bowed down to offer our pranaams, it felt like we were at our great-grandfather's feet and he was smiling down at us. The peace was palpable, Mahamantra playing softly and we reluctantly walked out of the house. Just before coming out of the main door, the power went off and the Mahamantra temporarily stopped playing!

Swami Ashramananda took us to the Swami Sivananda Mutt at the end of the street. After offering our pranaams at the shrine to Swami Sivanandaji, we set off towards our next stop. Arrangements for our stay had already been made at the Swami Sivananda Centenary Charitable Hospital in town. The hospital campus is just off the main road, full of beautiful old trees and well-maintained, low buildings. The swami in-charge was very gracious and welcomed us.



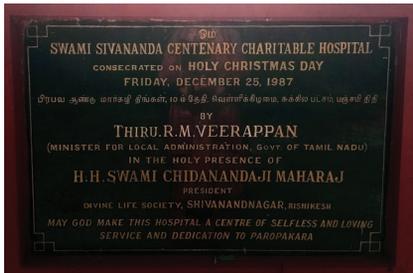
When he heard that the purpose of the visit was to pay our respects at Swami Sivanandaji’s birthplace on the occasion of his Sannyasa Diwas, he was surprised. This is one particular occasion when usually there is no special celebration but a few weeks ago, he received a phone

call from a North Indian devotee requesting that Paduka Pooja be conducted at Swami Sivanandaji’s shrine followed by a community lunch to be offered at the hospital on 1st June!

As we walked around the serene grounds of the hospital, we were told about how Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj had the inspiration to start a centre of selfless medical service after a visit to Pattamadai. Another goose bump moment followed when I saw the inscription on the foundation stone. It said that the Swami Sivananda Centenary Charitable Hospital was consecrated in the presence of Swami Chidanandaji on the Holy Day of Christmas in 1987 with a prayer, ‘May God make this place a centre of selfless and loving service and dedication to *paropakara*’. According to the Gregorian calendar, Sri Swamiji’s birthday falls on Christmas!

We had a simple nourishing dinner and settled down for the night, planning to return to Swami Sivanadaji’s house soon after day break. Rising early, when we stepped out

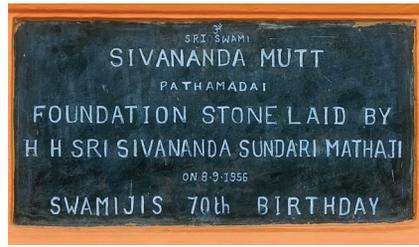
of our room we met the resident medical officer. She suggested that we help ourselves to some flowers from the many shrubs and trees in the grounds of the hospital. Gladly taking up her kind offer, we gathered



fragrant jasmine, camellia, hibiscus and oleanders along with a few bilva leaves.

Reaching the mutt around 6 am, we found Swami Ashram-ananda waiting for us. Quickly making our way to the house, we got busy cleaning the shrine and prepared the diyas. We placed the flowers and bilva leaves around Swami Sivanandaji's picture, also offering the four mangoes Ambaji had specially brought with her from the ashram in Tirueengoimalai as *naivedyam*. I said a silent prayer to our beloved great-grandfather guru for blessings upon his grandson, Swamiji. Sitting down inside the little room, we spent a quiet time in prayer and japa. It felt like time stood still, a sense of deep peace and power pervaded the entire space, within as well as all around. After some time, we offered a small pooja and arati, our hearts full of gratitude for the privilege of being there on this special day.

On 1st June 1924, Swami Vishwananda Saraswati had initiated Dr Kuppaswami Iyer into a life of sannyasa in Rishikesh and 'Swami Sivananda Saraswati' took birth that day. With him began the beautiful tradition to which we are honoured to belong, a tradition of service dedicated to living the divine life and inspiring everyone to walk along that luminous path. On 1st June of the Centenary Year of Swami Satyanandaji's birth, the 99th year of Swami Sivananda's sannyasa was complete and the Centenary of Swami Sivananda's Sannyasa began. The mind stops, the head bows and the heart overflows with wonder and amazement as eternal divine patterns unfold in the fullness of Time, bringing to fruition the mission for which they exist!



We silently got up and came out of the little room. We thanked Swami Ashramananda for all his help and returned to the hospital campus where we had a light breakfast. Much as we would have liked to stay on for the Paduka Pooja and lunch, we had a long drive ahead of us. Expressing gratitude for their generous hospitality, we bid goodbye to our hosts. They extended a warm invitation to Swamiji, requesting that he visit them in the near future or at least on 1st June next year.

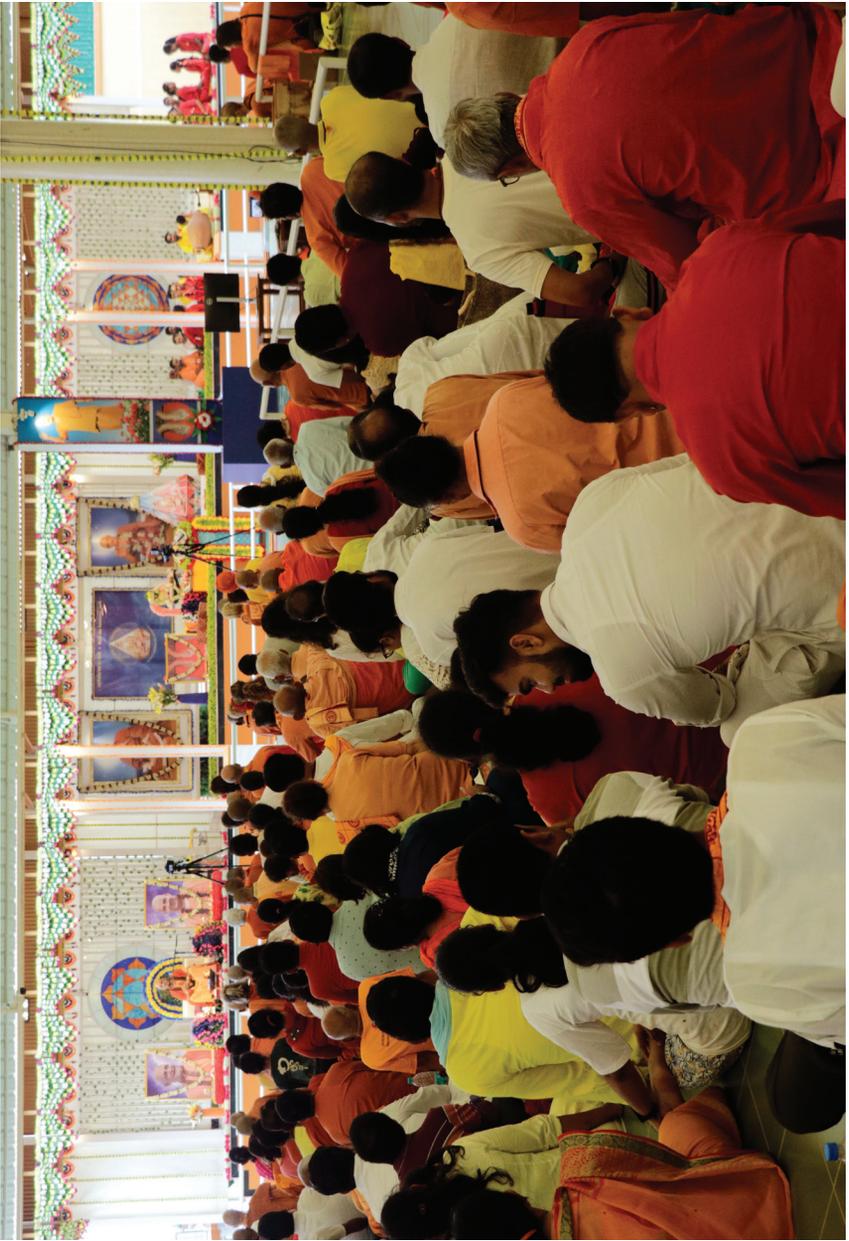
One last stop before we left Tirunelveli was at the home of someone who had kindly arranged for special Tirunelveli halva. It was to be offered at the Rudrabhishek on the 5th of June as part of the Guru Bhakti Yoga we observe every month in Munger. Meticulously packed individual parcels of the halva had just been delivered to their home and we were in time to collect it.

The journey back took about six hours and as we drove into the ashram, we realized that it was Guru Pradosh, the 13th day of the dark fortnight which also happened to be a Thursday, and a special Shiva and Nandi pooja and abhishek was about to start. It is believed that during pradosh, the Shiva tattwa inhabits the space between the horns of Nandi and returns to the Shivalingam afterwards. Whenever pradosh falls on a Thursday, it is called Guru Pradosh - an auspicious coming



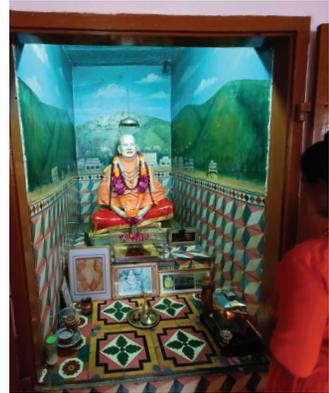






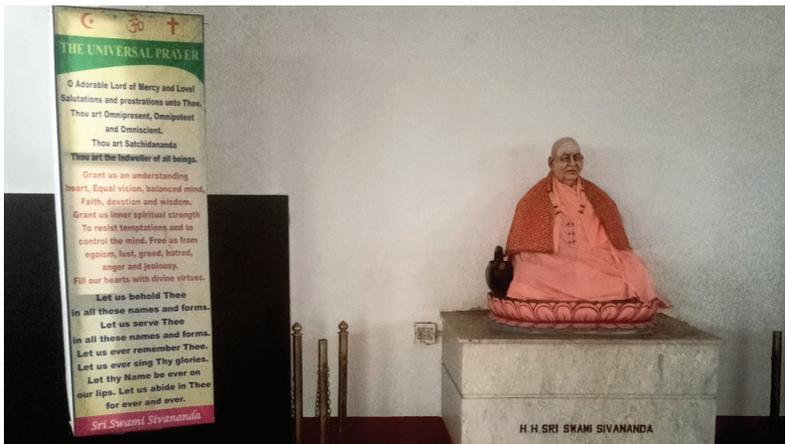


together of the Shiva and Guru tattwas. Yet another moment of synchronicity and an opportunity to give thanks to Lord Shiva as well as to our guru tradition which started with Swami Sivanandaji, an incarnation of the Lord himself. What a perfect conclusion to this incredible pilgrimage!



Mathaji was eager to hear all about our short though very eventful trip. Her subtle guidance had made our trip into a pilgrimage of a very special kind and the deep bond of affection between her and Swamiji was palpable. She bid me goodbye with her love and blessings for Swamiji, thanking him for the Satyananda Centenary Prasad he had sent. The candle was already lit on a small table in her room . . .

Sivam and Satyam truly make everything Sundaram! May we endeavour to live their teachings in thought, word and deed. This is the best way to honour and thank them for the gift of Light they have brought into the lives of millions! Having the grace and guidance of Swamiji who inspires us to walk this Luminous Path is their blessing upon us. *Jai Gurudeva!*



The Lighthouse

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

At different levels man goes for relationships, either paternal, maternal, fraternal, material or marital because we all do need them. In the same way, there comes a moment in man's life where he needs some other kind of relationship. When you were a baby you needed a mother. When you grew young you needed a friend. When you grew old you needed a child and when you wanted a family you needed a husband. What for? To fulfil certain emotions that were natural to you at that time.

There comes a moment in man's life where he needs a spiritual relationship, a relationship which is not merely based on psycho-biological emotions. Every relationship has one object and end, satisfaction and fulfilment. When you seek the relationship of guru and disciple, you are seeking for some satisfaction and fulfilment, but the basis of satisfaction and fulfilment is not material, it is spiritual.

One can have any attitude towards one's guru. Guru as God, guru as a master or guru as a friend, guide and philosopher. Whatever one's attitude to one's guru may be, one has to remember one thing for certain: the guru cannot be the end for fulfilment.

He is a lighthouse. A lighthouse is necessary for the ships that are entering into the port at night. The real light is within us. It is not possible to see the light even though you say it. Therefore, an external guru is necessary, whom you can see, feel, hear and obey.

The guru-disciple relationship is constructed for man's spiritual entity or spiritual life. The guru must consider his disciple as a pilgrim, and the disciple must consider his guru as the light post.

There have been many gurus and many disciples who have been very exemplary. Although the guru takes care of



his disciples, he has no personal attachment for them. In the same way, the disciple has very great and absolute devotion to guru, but this is not in the form of personal attachment. It is very difficult to understand how you can have devotion without personal attachment, but he who is a disciple and he who is a guru can understand it. ■

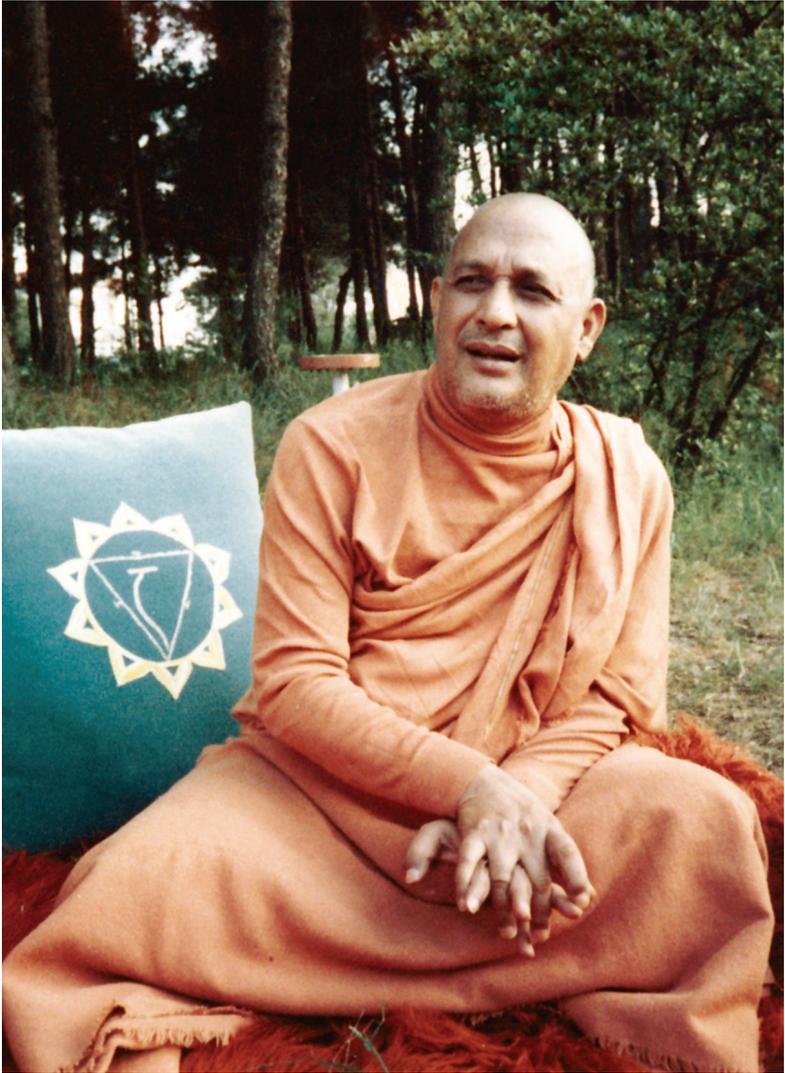
Guru and Bhakti

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Illumination depends on the quality of the disciple. Guru can awaken the experience just by touch in certain disciples. For some disciples he can help work out their gross karma. For some disciples he can just give guidance and wait to see what happens. As there are many types of disciples, the guru has to deal with them differently. When a disciple has surrendered his ego completely, guru can awaken the experience first by thinking. However, this is a deficient quality in disciples. Ego is a great barrier between guru and disciple. This ego stops one from surrendering. Therefore, the guru has to use other methods.

Disciples and gurus too do not know what relationship they should have with each other. Do you think about me as you think about your father? Or do you think about me as you think about your son? Or do you think about me as your lover? Or do you think about me as something beyond this? The disciple only knows few emotions. Fraternal emotion, paternal emotion or something like this. There is another type of emotion between guru and disciple. That emotion is called devotion. It is called bhakti, it is very difficult to understand. Once you understand what devotion is then you can lead yourself to think properly. Just as you understand what is passion, what is love and what is affection, you can understand devotion and practise it.

Very few people know how to experience devotion. When you have devotion for your guru you can transcend this mind instantaneously. Just as you transcend your mind when you have emotion for somebody whom you love very much. All other relationships are based on body, mind, senses and emotion, but the relationship between a guru and the disciple is not based on any of these. You can start with it, but you must transcend this.



When we see God in the birds and the garden, the trees and flowers, is that bhakti?

Bhakti is dissolving your mind. Dissolving your mind in something where there is no ego and no attachment. When your mind is merged in the beauty of nature and you do not exist any more, that is bhakti. When you lose your ego in music,

that is bhakti. One thing you must remember; bhakti does not proceed through concentration. In bhakti there is no intent of concentration. Bhakti starts with intense attachment for something. Suppose you have intense attachment for me. You always think about me. You do not have to try to think about me but you will think about me. This spontaneous awareness is called bhakti. For the time being you are attached to a body. I am the basis. After some time when you merge yourself, I am not there. You convert me into an experience within you. If you are not able to convert me into an experience within you, bhakti might fail you. Therefore, a disciple has to begin with the external form of God or Guru and then raise his devotion and then suddenly transcend the external factors.

If bhakti is something that a person is born with, like the colour of the skin, can it be developed through practices?

Bhakti is inherent, inborn. Passion is the lower form of bhakti. Lust is the lower form of bhakti. Violence, hatred is the lower form of bhakti. Attachment is the medium form of bhakti. The same energy manifests in a sattwic, rajasic and tamasic direction. If I lose my nearest and dearest, it disturbs me very much. That disturbance is on account of the bhakti present in me. If the same flow of energy can be directed to a higher object, it is called bhakti. The lower side is called attachment. The higher side is called devotion.

Devotion can be experienced within the mind and in action also. You can go on thinking about your beloved all the time or you can work for him. A mother does not need to repeat the name of her son all the time, but she cooks for him and she lives for him. She goes to the market and does the shopping for him. She goes to the office and comes back to him. That is also called devotion. You should think about God because it gives you peace of mind but you must convert this devotion into active performance to work for the whole of humanity. This is called practical bhakti. This bhakti improves the quality of this existence and will give you a better existence later. ■

No More Questions

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



I want to assure you that all your questions can be answered by yourself. The master is within you. Sit down as a disciple underneath the tree of wisdom which is within you and close your eyes. Put all your questions in the file and lock them in the cupboard for the time being. Develop your consciousness, widen your horizons and awaken your intuition.

Just as we are giving replies to your questions, you will find that the replies to your questions are within you, or maybe you won't have any more questions. ■

गुरु पूर्णिमा सन्देश

स्वामी निरंजनानन्द सरस्वती

आज गुरु पूर्णिमा के शुभ दिन हमलोगों ने सद्गुरु गायत्री मंत्र के साथ हवन सम्पन्न किया है। इस सद्गुरु गायत्री मंत्र का जप नियमित रूप से अपने जीवन में करने का एक प्रयास होना चाहिए। चाहे सप्ताह में एक बार हो या दो बार या प्रतिदिन हो, जिस संख्या में आप करना चाहें, उतना अवश्य कीजिये क्योंकि यह गुरु तत्त्व का मंत्र है –

ॐ शिवानन्दाय विद्महे सत्यानन्दाय धीमहि
तन्नो सद्गुरुः प्रचोदयात् ।

हमारे यहाँ भगवान शिव प्रथम गुरु माने जाते हैं और उन्हीं के जितने स्वरूप होते हैं, वे सद्गुरु माने जाते हैं और वे किस ओर का मार्ग प्रशस्त करते हैं? सत्य का मार्ग। सत्य के मार्ग पर चलने से क्या होता है? व्यक्ति का जीवन सुंदर बनता है। इसलिए शिवम् और सत्यम् मंत्र हैं, ऊर्जा के प्रतीक हैं। शिव का स्वभाव होता है सत्य का और सत्य का स्वभाव होता है शिव का। ये दोनों एक-दूसरे के पूरक माने जाते हैं और दोनों के योग से जीवन की परिणति होती है एक सुंदर तत्त्व में। इन्हीं को ईश्वर की तीन उपाधियाँ माना गया है – सत्यम्, शिवम् और सुंदरम्, और जो इस मार्ग पर चलता है वह गुरु तत्त्व का अपने जीवन में अनुभव करता है।

भगवान ने आदिकाल में मनुष्य से कहा था कि जब-जब धर्म की हानि होगी, तब-तब मैं धर्म को पुनः स्थापित करने आऊँगा, साधु-महात्माओं के हृदय में आनंद की लहरों को लाऊँगा –

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥4.7॥
परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मं संस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥4.8॥

ईश्वर का यह कितना सुंदर, आत्मा-स्पर्शी वचन है! अपने इस वचन के अनुसार प्रभु आते भी हैं। किस रूप में आते हैं यह तो बाद में पता चलता है,

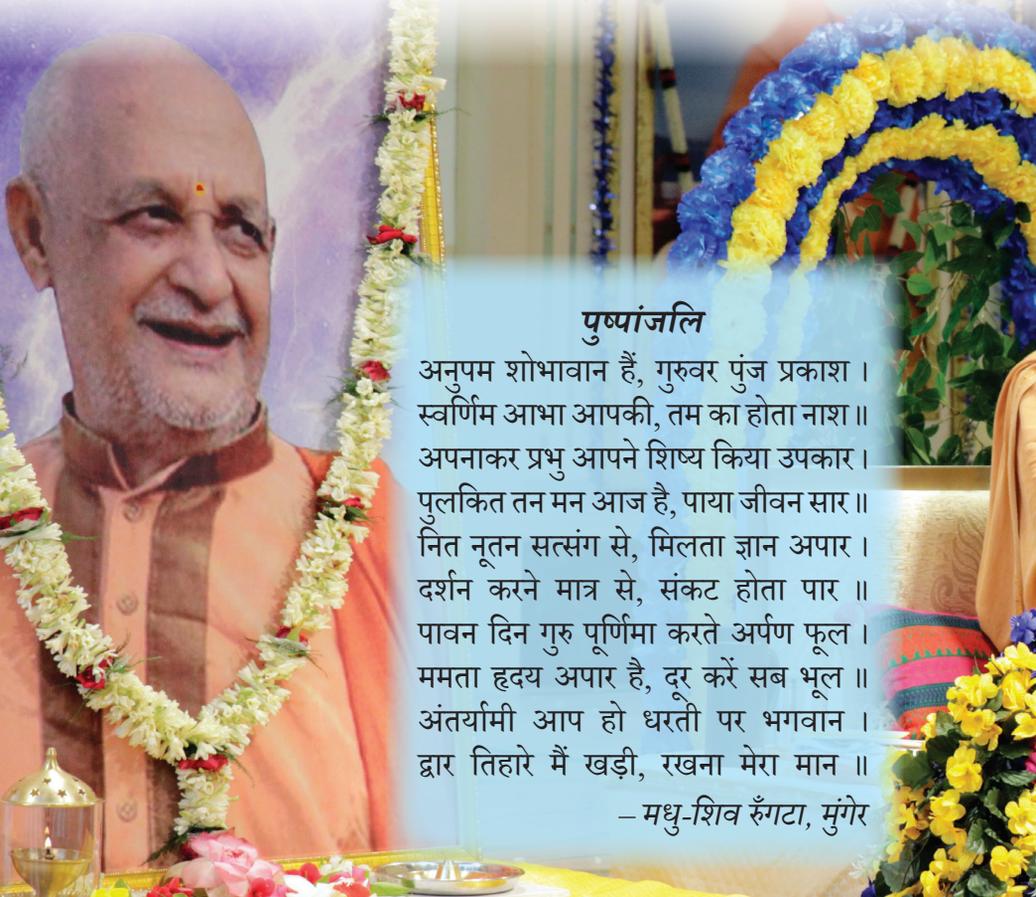


लेकिन उनका आना निश्चित रूप से होता है। जब उनकी प्रतिभा स्वयंभू रूप में प्रकट होती है, तो अवतार कहलाते हैं, जैसे परशुराम, राम, कृष्ण, एकादश रुद्र या हनुमान थे। ये सब अवतार कहलाते हैं। जब उनका ज्ञान प्रकट होता है, तो वे गुरु के रूप में अवतरित होते हैं और उसी को फिर समाज गुरु के रूप में सम्मानित करता है। हमारे इतिहास में वेद व्यास और शुकदेव जैसे ऋषि-मुनि हुये हैं, अनेक संत-महात्माओं ने जन्म लिया है और एक शिक्षा को स्थापित किया है, जो गुरु के मुख से निकला ज्ञान ही है। गुरु मुख से जो ज्ञान निकलता है उससे मनुष्य अपने दुःख-संतापों पर विजय प्राप्त करता है।

हमारे गुरुजी कहते थे कि ईश्वर एक ऐसा तत्त्व है, जो मनुष्य से कभी दूर नहीं होता। वह श्वास से भी करीब है, विचारों से भी करीब है, किन्तु हम उसका अनुभव नहीं कर पाते हैं और गुरु आकर ज्ञान-तत्त्व के द्वारा इसी अनुभव को जागृत करते हैं। और गुरु की जो शिक्षा होती है, वह प्रासंगिक होती है। किस प्रसंग में वह दी जा रही है, इसको देखना चाहिए। धर्म तो बहुत व्यापक है, लेकिन महात्मा बुद्ध ने किस विषय पर, किस विचार पर जोर दिया? भगवान महावीर ने किस विषय पर, किस चिंतन पर जोर दिया जिसको आज समाज समझता है, अपनाता है और पालन करता है। इस प्रकार कभी किसी अवस्था में दर्शन की स्थापना होती है तो कभी किसी अवस्था में एक विधि की स्थापना होती है, विद्या की स्थापना होती है। कभी किसी अवस्था में, किसी काल में एक साधना की स्थापना होती है। जब इस संसार में महर्षि दत्तात्रेय थे, तो सबको मंत्र देते थे। उनका मंत्रों के वितरण का स्वभाव था। जो भी उनके पास आता था, उससे कहते, 'तुम मंत्र करो, तुम मंत्र करो', और इस प्रकार उन्होंने

एक समाज में एक चिंतन या विचारधारा को नहीं, बल्कि एक साधना-पद्धति को वितरित किया। वे कहते थे, 'तर्क करके करोगे क्या, समझ में तो आएगा कुछ नहीं।' अगर एक दस साल के बच्चे का बहस आइन्स्टाइन के साथ हो, तो उससे कोई लाभ होगा क्या? इसलिए साधु, सिद्ध, तपस्वी या ब्रह्मवेत्ता से हम बौद्धिक स्तर पर क्या सीखेंगे? कुछ नहीं सीख सकते हैं, क्योंकि हमारी चेतना, हमारी पकड़, हमारी बुद्धि उस स्तर की है ही नहीं, जिस स्तर पर वे उस तत्त्व का अनुभव कर रहे हैं।

उस तत्त्व को समझने के लिए हमें भी उसी ऊँचाई पर पहुँचने का प्रयास करना है। यह तब संभव होता है जब शिष्यत्व के सभी गुण व्यक्ति के जीवन में जागृत रहते हैं। हरेक व्यक्ति के जीवन में शिष्यत्व के गुण जागृत नहीं होते, एकाध व्यक्ति ही ऐसे होते हैं। घर-परिवार में भी अगर चार बच्चे हैं, तो एक बच्चा थोड़ा अधिक स्नेही और प्रिय होता है, क्योंकि उसमें कुछ अधिक अच्छाई है, जो आपको उसकी ओर आकर्षित करता है। उसी प्रकार से शिष्यत्व भी एक अवस्था है जो गुरु के अनुकूल होती है।



पुष्पांजलि

अनुपम शोभावान हैं, गुरुवर पुंज प्रकाश ।
 स्वर्णिम आभा आपकी, तम का होता नाश ॥
 अपनाकर प्रभु आपने शिष्य किया उपकार ।
 पुलकित तन मन आज है, पाया जीवन सार ॥
 नित नूतन सत्संग से, मिलता ज्ञान अपार ।
 दर्शन करने मात्र से, संकट होता पार ॥
 पावन दिन गुरु पूर्णिमा करते अर्पण फूल ।
 ममता हृदय अपार है, दूर करें सब भूल ॥
 अंतर्धामी आप हो धरती पर भगवान ।
 द्वार तिहारे मैं खड़ी, रखना मेरा मान ॥

— मधु-शिव रूंगटा, मुंगेर

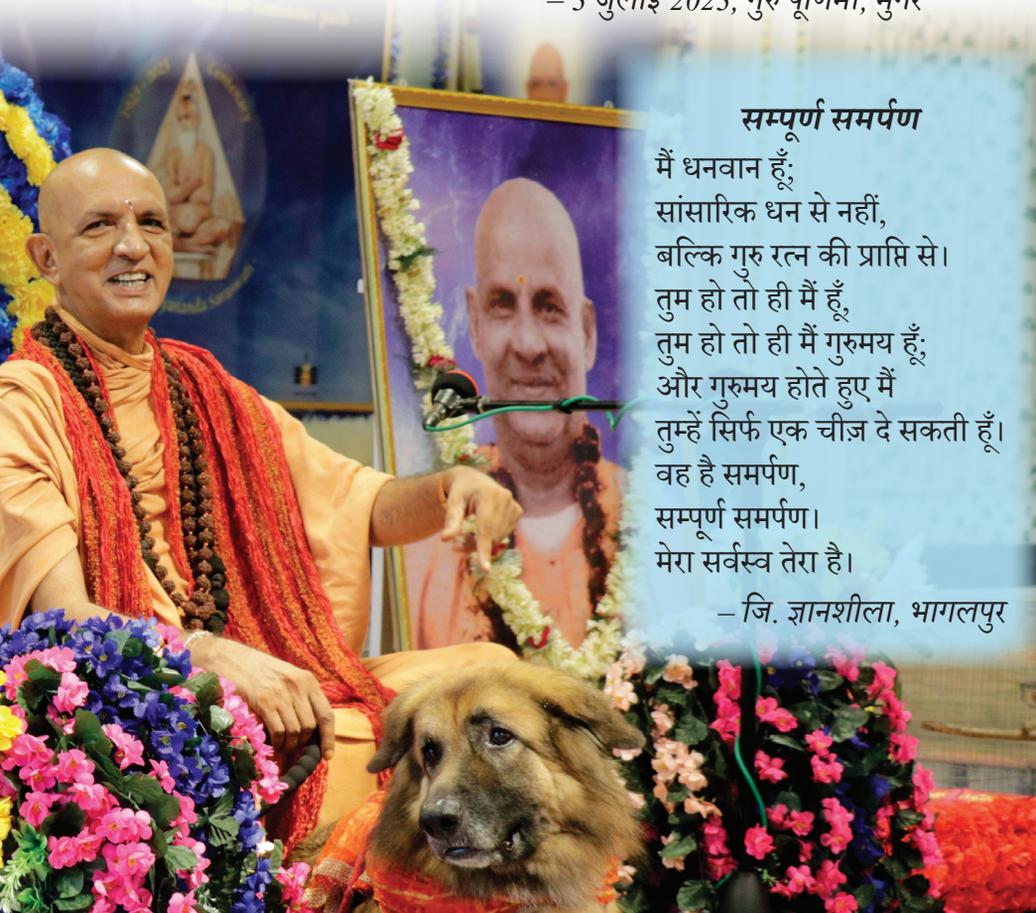
हर गुरु का ज्ञान का योगदान प्रासंगिक होता है, समयानुकूल होता है। स्वामी शिवानंद जी व्यावहारिक वेदांती थे, लेकिन उन्होंने जो समाज को दिया और देने के लिए अपने शिष्यों को प्रेरित किए, वह योग था, अद्वैत वेदान्त नहीं। इसलिए स्वामी शिवानंद जी और स्वामी सत्यानंद जी योगी के नाम से जाने जाते हैं और योग को हम उनके जीवन के साथ जोड़ते हैं। उन्होंने हमें जो दिया है, वह हमारे अनुकूल दिया है, हमारी सोच और बुद्धि के हिसाब से दिया है, उससे परे की चीज नहीं दी है। उससे ऊपर की चीज तो वे स्वयं अनुभव किया करते थे और जीते थे। उन लोगों का जीवन हमारे जीवन की तरह सीमित नहीं था, बल्कि व्यापक था, ब्रह्माण्डीय था। यह सद्गुरु गायत्री उन्हीं को समर्पित है। इसका आप अपने सुविधानुसार एक समय निश्चित कर लीजिये, एक दिन निश्चित कर लीजिये, एक संख्या निश्चित कर लीजिये और उस संख्या के अनुसार इस मंत्र का जप करें, जीवन में निश्चित रूप से कल्याण होगा।

– 3 जुलाई 2023, गुरु पूर्णिमा, मुंगेर

सम्पूर्ण समर्पण

मैं धनवान हूँ;
सांसारिक धन से नहीं,
बल्कि गुरु रत्न की प्राप्ति से।
तुम हो तो ही मैं हूँ,
तुम हो तो ही मैं गुरुमय हूँ;
और गुरुमय होते हुए मैं
तुम्हें सिर्फ एक चीज़ दे सकती हूँ।
वह है समर्पण,
सम्पूर्ण समर्पण।
मेरा सर्वस्व तेरा है।

– जि. ज्ञानशीला, भागलपुर



Every guru is a light

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



I believe everyone is a seeker and should be free to find his own path and his own guru. I don't believe that there are good and bad gurus, in the same way there are no good and bad husbands or good and bad wives. When two individuals are not able to compromise with each other, how can you say which one is bad and which one is good?

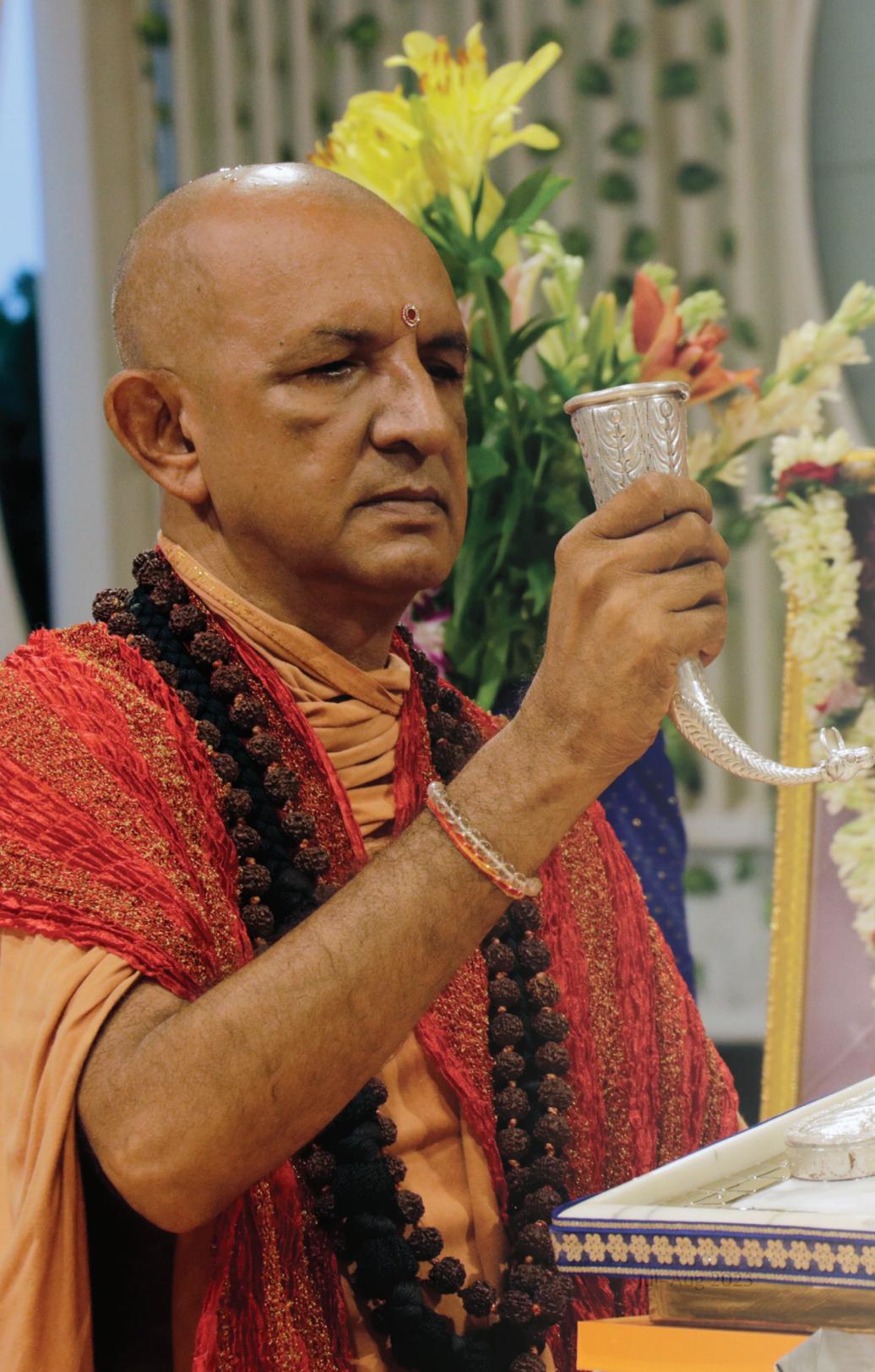
There is so much talk about certain gurus being frauds, destroying people's minds, ruining their lives. If you cannot

manage with your guru, it is your problem. There are no good gurus, no bad gurus, no saints and no charlatans. Even those people who wear the robe of guru in order to make a profit become responsible in due course. I have seen this happen many times.

The thing that all spiritually minded people should strictly and adamantly avoid is creating confusion in the minds of people, "This guru is great, that guru is nothing at all." Differences and gradations are always there in the systems of teachings and also in the case of gurus. At the same time, lapses can also occur in the lives of gurus, but that does not mean I should idolize my guru and condemn yours, either directly or indirectly. We have only to notice one thing: the positive contribution of a person in the life of a seeker. Even if you guide one or two hundred people, that is enough.

There is a small candle and there is a big light. You cannot compare them. The candle is not useless and the light does not illuminate everything. The candle works well in places where there is no light. So, gurus like us are the little candles on the dark footpath of human evolution, and we try to shed some light on a certain destination in the distance. Beyond that there is another candle, and beyond that another. So, in the name of our own guru or our own fame, it is not good to blow out the lights of others. That is what we must all remember at this particular point of the century.

I have been telling every swami and each and every disciple lately, "Don't condemn anyone. If you cannot speak well of him, just keep quiet." I am saying this in the interest of humanity. Otherwise there will be so many little fishes, so many sects, and so much strife, with everyone bellowing, beating, kicking and wailing. No, we must have a non-violent method by which we can collect the positive contributions of everybody for humanity. One person is teaching mantra, another is teaching meditation, a third is teaching pranayama, a fourth kriya, a fifth tantra. One day we will all come together with our different practices to a church of a different face. ■



The treasures we find are the treasures we are due
The searchers will help find the treasures with you

Dare to Dream, Dream to Dare
We have made it clear you are never alone
The screenwriter always has your hand

We have made it clear you are never alone
Singing or resting, walking or listening
And speaking with words that are not yours

You are never alone
Remember His Rays reach the darkness too
There is nowhere to go where there is just you

The alphabet soup knows every word before it is written
And even before it is said
There is no word not known to Him
Nor thought nor prayer

He's always there
We cannot come up with anything new
It's been done and said as we live and breathe

Action speaks louder than words
Let's Go
Serve together

—Yogasena



Sadguru Gayatri

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

The Sadguru Gayatri is composed of special, unique mantras: Shivam and Satyam.

*Om Sivanandaya vidmahe,
Satyanandaya dheemahi,
Tanno Sadguru prachodayat.*

The word *Sivananda* is composed of two words: *Shiva* and *Ananda*. *Shiva* means auspiciousness, goodness, constructive positivity; and *Ananda* is bliss. Bliss becomes the nature of a person who experiences the Shiva element in life. *Satya* is the eternal, universal form of knowledge. *Satyam* means truth and *Ananda* is bliss. One who experiences truth is always in bliss.



The goodness, the auspiciousness, the benevolence, the truth, the permanent, the imperishable are contained in the state of bliss. Bliss is complete joy and happiness, which means that there is nothing to bother the mind.

When these two natures converge and come together, they make life *Sundaram*, beautiful: Shivam, Satyam, Sundaram or Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. Satyam and Shivam complement each other. They are the fulfilment and completion of each other which creates the beauty of life. That beauty of life is joyous, blissful and peaceful.

So, decide to do three rounds of the mantra every day or nine times of the mantra, or once, twice or thrice a week. Choose a number of rounds and choose the days. Invoke the guru element in you and your lives will definitely be illuminated.

– 3 July 2023, *Guru Poornima, Paduka Darshan, Munger*

The Guru Poornima program was livestreamed and watched by devotees in over 40 countries.

Sankranti at Sannyasa Peeth

Swami Ratnashakti Saraswati

It is little wonder that the power of the sun, its heat, light and energy has mesmerized and attracted so many different cultures and people. When the sun appears over the horizon, daylight is created. When it disappears below the horizon, night falls and the world is plunged into darkness. Ancient cultures and civilizations saw the sun as a powerful and benevolent force that created and sustained life.

Surya, the lord of the Sun, appears in the *Rig Veda* as the creator of the material universe, the source of inexhaustible power and radiance and the sustainer of life. Surya rides in a chariot drawn by radiant, white-footed steeds and illuminates the earth. He stands with golden arms outstretched to the utmost ends of heaven, infusing energy into all creatures. Ushas, the dawn, is his wife. The power of Surya is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. Therefore, he is described as the eye of other deities, Mitra, Varuna and Agni. Mitra and Varuna are linked to *ṛta*, the cosmic principles of order and stability that sustain humankind. Agni is the intermediary between the material and spiritual dimensions, indicating that it is the power of Surya that fuels spiritual aspiration, ascertains the sincerity of the sadhana and determines the result.

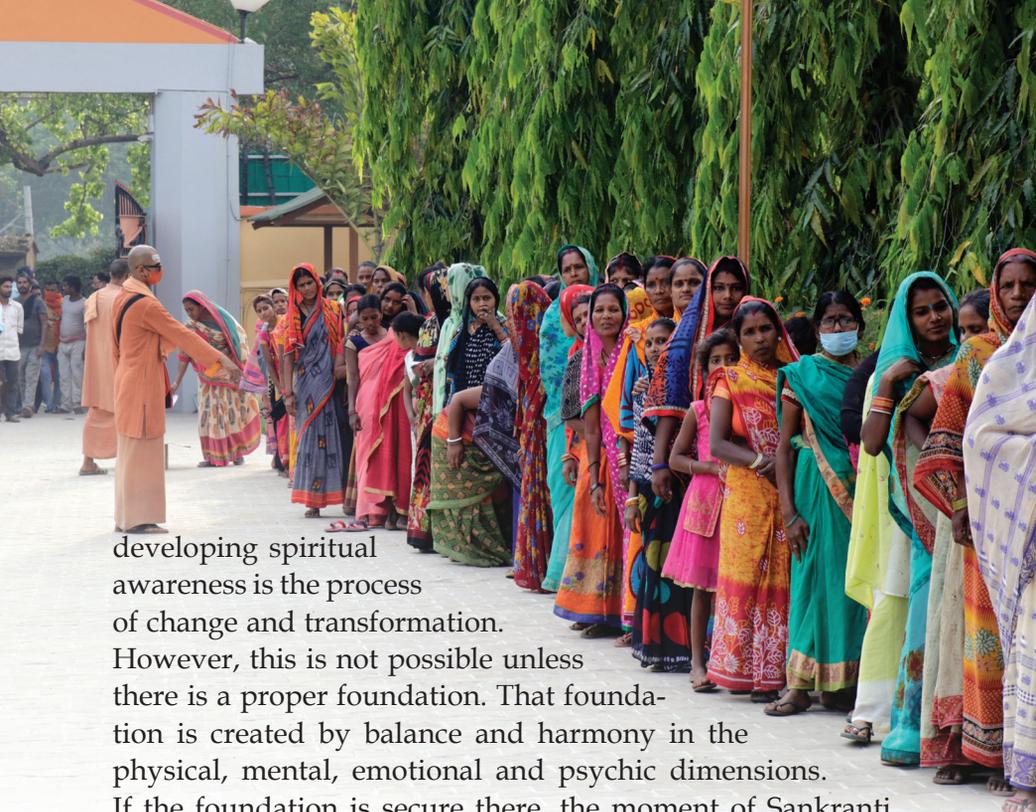
Surya is the creator without beginning or end, the lord of the worlds and the lord of the universes. He created the oceans, the continents and the fourteen worlds, and on the banks of the river Chandrasarit he created Prajapati and the different races of beings. After creation, the unmanifest Surya manifested his millions of rays and divided himself into twelve adityas, each possessing garlands of rays. As Surya moves through the constellations in each of the twelve months, it is

a different aditya who shines. These vedic solar months were grouped into six according to their nature and qualities. The sweet months are Madhu and Madhava correspond to spring. The bright Shukra and Suci months correspond to summer, the cloudy names of Nabhas and Nabhasya indicate monsoon, and the names Isha and Urja indicate the potency and fertility of the autumn harvest. Sahas and Sahasya indicate the harsh and forceful qualities of winter, while the names Tapas and Tapasya are a reminder of the optimum time for spiritual endeavour, meditation and a more austere life.

As the source of light, Surya was revered not just as a material force, but as the power of life, truth and wisdom in the material and also the spiritual dimensions. Surya relates not only to the physical organ of sight and the power and ability to see, but also to the awakening of *jnana*, spiritual perception, intuition and wisdom. In the darkness nothing is visible, but light reveals all.

Light removes the ignorance of the unknown and the unseen. From the spiritual perspective, darkness relates to the state of *avidya*, the primordial condition of ignorance that the individual *jiva* or soul assumes. Through the spiritual *sankalpa* and *sadhana* the effort is made to free oneself from the confines of *avidya* and connect with *vidya*, the knowledge and essence of spiritual reality underlying the material dimension and permeating all of creation.

During Sankranti, the sun transitions from one zodiac sign or *rashi* to another. The forces of continuity and order, as well as the power of change, transcendence and transition involved with leaving one condition or state and moving into another are active. Without constancy, order and stability there would be no life. Likewise, without the seasonal ebb and flow, without the natural rhythms of change and without transformation, there would be no evolution. Sankranti is that time of auspiciousness when these forces are experienced and invoked for spiritual development. The purpose of life is to manifest spiritual awareness and evolve. The process of



developing spiritual awareness is the process of change and transformation. However, this is not possible unless there is a proper foundation. That foundation is created by balance and harmony in the physical, mental, emotional and psychic dimensions. If the foundation is secure there, the moment of Sankranti presents the optimal conditions to propel the aspirant into a higher level of awareness and experience.

Sankranti relates intrinsically to nature and the environment, and the importance of maintaining balance and harmony. The transition of the seasons used to control what would be harvested and reaped from the planet. As hunter and gatherers, the human species took what the earth offered according to the seasons. During the agricultural period, humans learned how to increase what could be received from the earth, and how to store it for future use. Industrialization is what took place when humans learned how to rip the earth apart to get what we want. Environmental imbalance, chaos and destruction are the result. Destroying the natural balance due to greed and selfishness is anti-spiritual life. Sankranti is a time to reconnect with *prakriti* or the manifest creation and the ancient cycles of nature, to rediscover and rectify your relationship with the world around you.

Mesha Sankranti

Mesha Sankranti is also known as Maha Vishuva Sankranti. It occurs when the sun enters Mesha rashi, or the zodiac sign of Aries, which was April 15th. Anna daan to celebrate the rabi harvest, as well as items appropriate for the heat of the season are traditionally given during this Sankranti. At Sannyasa Peeth the group selected to receive on Mesha Sankranti were the Dom group, those who work in the cremation ghats and perform the seva required for the *antim sanskara* or last rites. They received anna daan items that included rice, channa dal, flour, mustard oil, salt and sugar. Grih daan was given in the form of kamandalu, thali, katori and glass, as well as a chattai.



Vrishabha Sankranti

This Sankranti takes place around 15th May when the sun enters Taurus. This year the people selected to receive were the *mocha* or cobbler, *naya* or barber, *dhobi* or washer man, *lohapatti* or ironsmith, *murtikar*, idol and statue maker, and *kumhar* or potter. May is the hottest month in India and items that give protection from the scorching heat of the sun are the most appropriate and auspicious, such as shoes, umbrellas, fans, sandalwood and water. This year items presented included a large plastic tub, for bathing and washing, vastra daan in the form of saree, kurta, pyjama and bed linen. Shoes for both males and





females of the family were given. All the items were packed in a Sannyasa Peeth backpack.

Mithuna Sankranti

Mithuna Sankranti takes place when the sun enters Gemini around the 16th June. On Mithuna Sankranti, the traditional and auspicious items of daan are *vastra* or cloth and vehicles.



The scriptures and Puranas also extol the importance of giving shoes and umbrellas. The group called to receive daan on Mithuna Sankranti were the special needs group of the Munger town. This year items presented were *vastra* daan in the form of saree, kurta, pyjama and bed linen, all packed in a Sannyasa Peeth backpack. Grih daan was given in form of *chattai* for the homes. Shoes and umbrellas for both males and females were also given. ■

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING DONATIONS

Donations to Sannyasa Peeth will be received only under the following 'Heads of Accounts':

1. **General Donation**

Funds will be utilized towards the following activities:

- Cultural education
- Sannyasa training
- Dissemination of spiritual knowledge
- Relief for the underprivileged – support to the poor and needy sections of society
- Medical relief – financial assistance to poor and needy patients.

2. **Corpus Donation**

Funds will be utilized towards capital investment. Interest income generated from **CORPUS (MOOLDHAN) FUND** will be utilized towards all the activities (spiritual as well as charitable) of the Trust

3. **CSR Donation**

Funds will be utilized towards CSR activities.

Therefore, devotees are requested to send donations to the above-mentioned account heads only.

Donations towards Sannyasa Peeth may be made through 'SB Collect Online Donation Facility' by directly accessing the web address: <https://www.onlinesbi.sbi/sbicollect/icollecthome.htm?corpID=2271958>.

Donations can also be sent through cheque/D.D./E.M.O. drawn in favour of:

Sannyasa Peeth

payable at Munger to Sannyasa Peeth, Paduka Darshan, PO Ganga Darshan, Fort Area, Munger 811201, Bihar.

A covering letter mentioning the purpose of donation, mailing address, phone number, email ID and PAN should accompany the same.

दान सम्बन्धी महत्त्वपूर्ण सूचना

संन्यास पीठ के लिए दान राशि केवल निम्नलिखित श्रेणियों के अन्तर्गत स्वीकार की जाएगी –

1. सामान्य दान

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- आध्यात्मिक ज्ञान का प्रचार
- समाज के गरीब और जरूरतमंद लोगों की सहायता
- गरीब मरीजों के लिए चिकित्सा सहायता

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3. सी.एस.आर. दान

जिसका उपयोग सी.एस.आर. गतिविधियों के लिए किया जाएगा।

इसलिए भक्तों से निवेदन है कि वे केवल उपर्युक्त श्रेणियों के अन्तर्गत अपनी दान राशि भेजें।

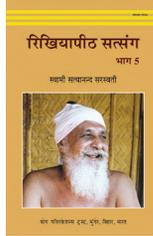
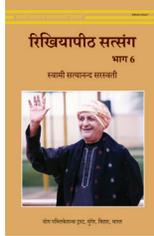
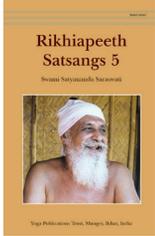
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आप चेक, डी.डी. अथवा ई.एम.ओ. द्वारा भी दान दे सकते हैं जो संन्यास पीठ के नाम से हो और मुंगेर में देय हो। राशि इस पते पर भेजें – संन्यास पीठ, पादुका दर्शन, पी.ओ. गंगा दर्शन, किला, मुंगेर 811201 दान राशि के साथ एक पत्र संलग्न रहे जिसमें आपके दान का प्रयोजन, डाक पता, फोन नम्बर, ई-मेल और PAN नम्बर स्पष्ट हों।



Yoga Publications Trust

Rikhiapeeth Satsang रिखियापीठ सत्संग



Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati came to the remote village of Rikhia (Jharkhand) in 1989 after entering a new phase of spiritual life. Here he performed intense austerities, exemplifying the highest principles of the sannyasa tradition. The fruit of his sadhana was distributed to the local villagers in the form of economic, social and spiritual prosperity. Rikhiapeeth Satsang are collections of talks given by Sri Swamiji in Rikhia.

Rikhiapeeth Satsang 5 is a collection of talks given by Sri Swamiji in November and December 1997, and *Rikhiapeeth Satsang 6* is a collection of talks from January to March 1998. In these satsang, he speaks on a variety of subjects including rural development, social and political systems, children's education, upliftment of the poor, emancipation of women, ancient and modern history, science, culture, spirituality, bhakti and different religious, social and sannyasa traditions.

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Sannyasa Peeth Events & Training 2023

Sannyasa Peeth Training

<i>Jul 2022–Jun 2024</i>	Sannyasa Training
<i>Jul 1–Dec 31</i>	Sannyasa Life Experience
<i>Jan 1 2024–Jun 30</i>	Sannyasa Life Experience

Events, Aradhanas and Satsangs

<i>Jul 1–3</i>	Guru Yajna + Guru Poornima Celebrations
<i>Jul 4–Sep 29</i>	Chaturmas Anushthan + Munger Shrivani Sadhana
<i>Aug 8–16</i>	Swami Girishananda
<i>Aug 17–20</i>	Swami Muktananda
<i>Aug 17–20</i>	Swami Samvidananda
<i>Aug 21–25</i>	Swami Madhawananda
<i>Sep 8–12</i>	Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna
<i>Oct 15–24</i>	Navaratri
<i>Nov 20–24</i>	Narayana Yajna
<i>Dec 13–27</i>	Sat Chandi Mahayajna & Yoga Poornima (Rikhia)
<i>Dec 31–Jan 1 2024</i>	New Year Program

Monthly Programs

<i>Every Sankranti</i>	Abhishek, Hawan, Daan and <i>Satyanarayan Katha</i>
<i>Sankranti dates:</i>	Jan 15, Feb 14, Mar 16, Apr 15, May 16, Jun 16, Jul 18, Aug 18, Sep 18, Oct 19, Nov 18, Dec 17