

## *With a fearful disease I have been struck*

*With a fearful disease I have been struck  
Each moment this illness grows;  
The diagnosis of every doctor has failed  
I have not the remedial dose.*

*This disease has so hastily spread, that the fear of death haunts me;  
No matter whatever remedy I try, the ailment progresses constantly.*

*Then came a Yogi, with knowledge great  
With the remedy of That Divine Name;  
He diagnosed my illness as egoity  
Which the germs of pride sustain.*

*Steadily grows this dreadful disease, watered by attachment and emotion;  
This fever shall settle, only through the path of surrender and devotion.*

*Having revealed this medicine Supreme  
That Yogi silent became –  
Now these tears flow unceasingly, Lord  
Where shall I find Thy Ambrosial Name?*

Translated from Param Pujya Ma's  
original prayer in Hindi given below

### **एक भयंकर रोग हुआ**

एक भयंकर रोग हुआ, हर क्षण बढ़ता जाये।  
सब वैदन् मैं पूछ चुकी, कोई औषध न पाये॥

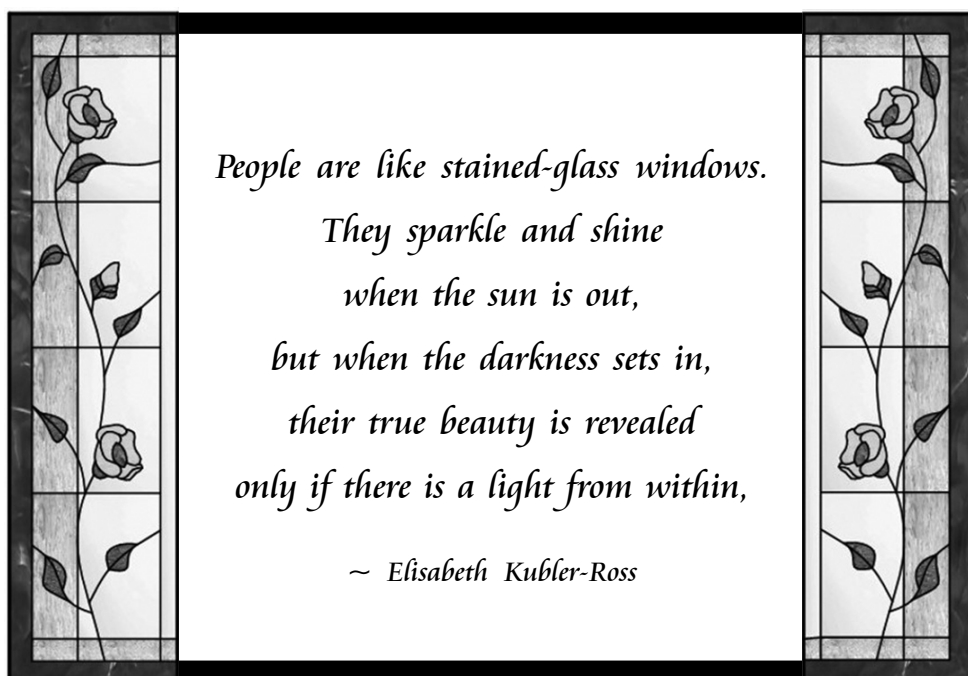
महा रोग इतना बढ़ा,  
मृत्यु चिन्ता खाये।  
जितना ही उपाय किया,  
उतना बढ़ता जाये॥

इक योगी ऐसा मिला, नाम तो दिया बताये।  
'अहंकार' यह रोग है, गुमान कीटाणु बढ़ाये॥

दिन दिन बढ़ता जात है,  
आसक्ति जल पाये।  
भक्ति राम चरण में हो,  
रोग शान्त हो जाये॥

योगी मौनी हो गया, यह औषध बताये।  
अश्रु विमोचन न रुके, कहाँ यह औषध पाये॥





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# The World Beckons...



The wise man who is endowed with knowledge and whose intellect is supported by an indomitable yearning for the Truth will be focussed and ever concentrated on knowing the Truth at a different plane. His interest in the gross world of the senses will be only to the extent to which he can find assistance in the fulfilment of his goal... to unite with His Divine Beloved. For such a one, gross objects lose their importance and significance, but, from another point of view, they become much more important for him, because they are required for his sadhana or spiritual practice and progress.

In her elucidation of the Kathopanishad, Param Pujya Ma dwells on the difference in attitude of the ignorant man and the wise discerning man in their pursuit of sense objects.

पराचः कामाननुयन्ति बालास्ते मृत्योर्यन्ति विततस्य पाशम् ।  
अथ धीरा अमृतत्वं विदित्वा ध्रुवमध्रुवेष्विह न प्रार्थयन्ते ।।

**Childish and ignorant people follow their sense organs and pursue external pleasures, and thereby fall into the widespread trap laid by Death. The wise do not desire anything in this transient world, having realized what is immortal in this mortal world.**

Kathopanishad II.1.11

The ignorant man is ever seeking and trying to possess, or is full of desires for the gross objects. He is enamoured and attracted by the objects of the sense organs and is ever pursuing them. To pursue the external desires is to be attracted towards the gross world. The internal desires, which are beyond the sense organs, would have been the opposite of gross desires. Internal desires would not be the desires of the external manifest gross world at all. It cannot pertain to anything outside, that lies in the domain of the sense organs.

## What do the childish ignorant people actually do?

The childish ignorant people get attached and are ever desirous of the gross, perishable objects. These objects are going to perish along with the sense organs ultimately. (The man himself is going to perish).

1. An ignorant man may be one who has no knowledge of the true facts behind the realities of life.
2. An ignorant man may have an imperfect knowledge of the facts of the gross universe.
3. An ignorant man may have the knowledge but is extremely helpless in putting it into his practical gross life because of his own superimpositions in the way of his mind-stuff and imperfect evaluations.
4. An ignorant man may have the knowledge and can put the knowledge into practice but will not do so because of his deep-rooted fears or attachments which cannot be made obvious, as the normal superimpositions cannot be brought into the conscious level.

Asmita is the subtlest form of the ego of the individual who has accepted the facts of the universe and the facts of the mind-stuff; is the enjoyer of *anand* and yet the 'I' is there. Even this has an element of ignorance in it.

5. An ignorant man is one whose shallow knowledge leads him to blind alleys which act as insurmountable impediments even in the path of knowledge.
6. The most ignorant man is the one who proclaims to know the truth behind the transitory world of various manifestations and also the immortal, eternal truth of the *Atma* and yet abides in the mortal. Such people enter the world of extreme darkness (refer to *shloka* 9 of the ***Ish Upanishad***).

The ignorant people do not follow the path of *shreya* and are ever gullible and constantly attracted towards the objects of the sense organs that are perishable and mortal. If the individual along with the sense organs is ever identifying himself with the gross perishable, he wastes his life in the pursuit of the non-eternal. Since he never identifies himself with the immortal, he does not become immortal.

## What happens to an ignorant man?

A human being will become what the object of his identification is. He will unconsciously take over many of its traits. These attachments with the material gross and the resultant negative *vrittis* or thought processes that emerge, which tend to give more importance to the objects than the human beings, act as a trap of death which entice and allure human beings into performing inhumane acts. The individual gets attached to money, and inculcates the basic qualities of money in himself.

1. He wants to buy everyone around him.

2. He wants to rule and dictate terms to everyone.
3. He becomes a matter of fact businessman even in his own family.
4. He speaks the language that money would have spoken if it could speak.
5. Consequently he becomes more insecure, as the money can be lost, its value can be changed, it can be stolen, the business can fail, laws can change and the person himself can become incapacitated and may not be able to earn more money.

Since money itself is insecure, a man can never find security in money. The more a person has, the more insecure he feels. This inflated sense of insecurity is not because one does not have or cannot generate money, it is because you have it and you want more. Money has an intrinsic capacity to buy even people, in the way of servants, though rarely your own relations or children. The money attracts monied friends though they leave you when your money leaves you. And yet whilst the attraction lasts, the man concerned does not bother about the humane qualities.

### **What does a man with humane qualities do?**

No gross object has humane qualities and cannot generate humane qualities in the individual who is attached to them. It is the amount of value you attach to the human beings that is going to generate more or less of humane qualities in you. The quality and the quantum of value one attaches to the other individual, in the positive way, is going to inculcate or draw out the divine qualities of one's person.

1. If we love people we will generate beautiful thoughts ourselves, perform beautiful deeds, use loving words and ourselves become lovely people.
2. If we dislike people, we will think ugly, speak ugly and perform ugly deeds.
3. If we pursue inanimate objects, we become indifferent towards people and thus become object-like without any humane qualities.

### **What does अनुयन्ति (anuyanti) mean?**

अनुयन्ति (anuyanti) means to follow without any considerations; to go after, to imitate the qualities, to attend or accompany, to follow as an inferior or a subordinate; to follow as a person lower in value or importance.

### **What does a man who pursues pleasure do?**

When a man pursues the objects of his pleasures and becomes a slave of his pleasures, he is ever busy seeking the path and object of pleasure. He



creates a cobweb of desire in which he attracts the object of his desire, enjoys the object so long as it gives him pleasure, and then throws it out. He allures, entices and cajoles human beings into his web, uses them and then throws them away like any other inanimate objects of the world.

This emotional acceptance and rejection are called *raag* (राग) and *dvesh* (द्वेष), which are in essence the two essential or rudimentary principles on which the snares of death are based and so the ultimate salvation or the cycle of birth and death is based.

*Raag* and *dvesh* are the cause of all our actions, thoughts and words. Even our attitudes, qualities, pursuits, concepts and inhibitions are based on our likes and dislikes. If our likes and dislikes, along with their consequential reactions were not there, the world would be a beautiful place because we would have no emotional reactions as such (so to say).

These *raag* and *dvesh* are the cause of all the stuff that lies in the mind at all the levels, i.e. the conscious, unconscious and subconscious states. The creators and sustainers of the ego-self and the 'I' are *raag* and *dvesh*. *Raag* and *dvesh* go hand in hand. Where there is one, the other will be lurking somewhere around in a manifest or an unmanifest form.

When we go after the objects of our likes that are pleasure giving, our sense of propriety and priorities get lost and we start rejecting human beings much more and our rejection rate increases incredibly. This acts as a death trap.

When we become indifferent towards others and reject them, we are dead for them because we do not want them to have any claims over us. Attachment with gross objects will normally mean the rejection of all those who want to share or take away the objects of our attachment. We do not want to share our likeable objects with people and would rather be dead for them where their needs are concerned. But, if we needed them, our attitude would be quite different.

The individual who is wise and follows the path of wisdom and immortality, is never enamoured of the gross objects. He gives much more importance to human beings and thereby develops all the humane qualities to such supreme heights that they become transcendental divine.

### **When does the snare of death become widespread?**

1. When human beings become less important than the objects we possess.
2. When other human beings have no meaning for us as human beings.

3. When other beings are required merely for exploitation.
4. When other beings are like inanimate objects.
5. When the reactions towards other peoples' demands on one's humane qualities are negative, rejected or ignored.
6. When the claims of other beings are categorically dismissed in our own personal favour, even though their claims be legitimate.
7. When the duties towards our natural relations are given up on account of material or other liabilities or preferences.
8. When the duties are given up because of pleasure or inconveniences.



A man is a gregarious animal and is ever seeking human recognition. He wants people but under certain conditions:

1. He does not have to commit himself.
2. He does not have to get emotionally involved.
3. He has no duties to bind him.
4. He can do whatever he likes without any interference from anyone.
5. He does not allow anyone to have any claims over him.
6. He wants everyone to do their best for him, without any personal obligations.

Yet, being a gregarious animal, he starts moving amongst like-minded people who enjoy each other's wealth and success and refuse to share anyone's pain or adversities. All dead people, live together.

### **What does the one endowed with impregnable wisdom do?**

The *dhir* or the one who is endowed with impregnable wisdom, knows of the destructibility of the gross seen world. He also realizes several aspects of life:

1. Immortal is something other than the gross.
2. The universe is perishable.
3. Body, mind and intellect unit is not eternal.
4. The spirit behind the thoughts, words and deeds of an individual acts as a seed which causes and sustains the cycle of birth and death.
5. That the spirit can be evil or negative or quite the opposite of it i.e. positive or divine. (The devil or the angel).
6. True happiness lies in the spirit of things and not in gross attainments and objects. Negative spirit gives birth to negative attitudes and subsequent qualities. A positive spirit gives rise to wholesome and well-synchronized, healthy attitudes towards one's fellow beings, which result in divine qualities.

7. The wise man knows that the essence behind a human being is his human qualities which become his non-depletable and undefeatable internal strength.

The internal strength enables a *sadhak* to have faith in the *Atma* as the substratum of all and realizes this absolute fact in life.

This basic strength is based on the essential facts of not giving importance to objects and sharing them with others, thereby rising above one's dependence on mere gross objects and becoming free of the untold slavery and ultimate misery these attachments cause. When one becomes free from the inanimate objects, one becomes animate oneself – more human and humane.



## The Resolution

SEEMA BURMAN – THE SPEAKING TREE

CONTRIBUTED BY MR. SURINDER PHULL



***An important component of Buddha's Eightfold path, is 'Right mindfulness... or right resolve... the decision of the jiva to walk in the direction of the Eternal Spirit. This little anecdote qualifies the importance of Resolutions that practicalize right resolve...***

After a seven-day spiritual discourse, the orator announced over the mike that he would not leave till every one promised to take up one resolution for a year. This would be his '*guru dakshina*'. Giving three options he said, one could either start the day by –

1. Going to a place of worship.
2. Fasting every Monday, or
3. Chanting sixteen *malas* of the *diksha mantra*.

Then they could leave for work after breakfast. Every one selected their resolve and stood up to say what they had decided upon, except one. A stout, middle aged shopkeeper refused to take any pledge, saying that all options were difficult for him as he wanted breakfast immediately after bathing and then walk to his shop



close by. “Where do you eat your breakfast?” asked the *guru*; “On the balcony, overlooking the *peepal* tree, under which the cobbler sits and people discuss news” he replied. Eyes twinkling, the *guru* said, “As my *dakshina* please have the *darshana* of the cobbler before you start eating breakfast. Do not eat before seeing him.” The man agreed.

Rushing home, he asked the cobbler to feel comfortable and never change his site. The cobbler assured him that since his grandfather’s days they had always been sitting at this prime location. Days rolled into months and as the year was ending, the shopkeeper heard that the *guru* would be visiting their village for another *katha*. Excited that he had been successful in his resolve, he rushed to the balcony... but the cobbler was missing!

The cobbler had gone into the fields to relieve himself but had tripped over an old, discarded iron trunk. The trunk stared at him in the bushes and cursing it he opened it to find it full of gold. Unable to believe his luck, the cobbler dug a pit under a tree and concealed the trunk. The shopkeeper, unable to trace the cobbler, shouted from afar, “*Guruji*, I have seen him!” ... and walked off to have his breakfast. Nervous that he had been seen, and fearing that the shopkeeper would call the police, the cobbler ran after the shopkeeper shouting, “Stop! stop!” The shopkeeper was shocked when the cobbler fell at his feet crying, “Don’t go to the police station! We will divide the entire gold among ourselves!”

The story apart, making resolutions can be useful as the process helps one to become mentally strong. It also enhances our ability to adapt, to be flexible, and to be good to our own self. The key to making and keeping a resolution is to aim for an accessible goal that fits into our daily schedule.

Surrender to the Divine sustains us and helps to support our various decisions and resolutions. One gets immense strength to carry out resolutions... especially when one asks God to help one do so. Such surrender strengthens our belief that He is the actual Doer while we are just instruments. By surrendering ourselves to the Supreme, we become humble and restore full trust in the Divine Will and His Grace to sustain us in our spiritual life.

Combined with our *Ichcha Shakti* and God’s *Daivi Shakti*, no resolution can be a failure. Krishna says emphatically, “Even if a sinner worships me with exclusive devotion he should be considered righteous ...for he has made the proper resolve...”(Gita 9.30)

Such a spiritual resolution surely becomes a turning point in one’s life. And resolutions can be made on any day of the year! ❖

## *When we Meet again...*



Dr. Sheila Mehra, a renowned anesthesiologist of Delhi, and a long standing friend and supporter of Arpana, battled courageously and patiently against the cancer that was growing inside her. Ever tolerant and courageous, she brought a dignity to the passing away of the human body...

Habituated to deep thinking and reading, she retained an immense equilibrium even though she knew as a doctor, that her disease was growing within her... Her two daughters Dr. Lena Gupta and Rima Malhotra did all that was humanly possible to keep her comfortable despite the immense discomfort. Her sons in law, Dr. Rahul Gupta and Rajiv Malhotra stood by incessantly...

However, the frail body was eager to don a healthier and robust frame...and the soul finally found release.

At the Prayer Meeting which celebrated her life, her son in law, Dr. Rahul Gupta, poignantly voiced her innermost thoughts in the following poetic flow...

*Death is nothing at all... I have only slipped into the next room*

*I am I... and you are you... whatever we were to each other, that we are still.*

*Call me by my old familiar name, speak to me in the easy way you always used*

*Put no difference into your tone, wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow...*

*Laugh as we always laughed, at the little jokes we always enjoyed together*

*Play, smile, think of me, pray for me...*

*Let my name be ever the household word that it always was*

*Let it be spoken without effort... without the ghost of a shadow in it!*

*Life means all that it ever meant, it is the same that it ever was*

*There is absolute unbroken continuity... what is death but a negligible accident?*

*Why should I be out of mind ... because I am out of sight?*

*I am waiting for an interval, somewhere very near, just around the corner...*

*All is well! Nothing is past... nothing is lost...*

*One brief moment and all will be as it was before!*

*How we shall laugh at the trouble of parting ... when we meet again!*

**Yes dearest Sheila Aunty, surely we will all meet again... in the 'next room!' Thank you for the invaluable perception of life after life that we received through you...**

# Life after Life...



देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।  
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ।।

Srimad Bhagavad Gita 2/13

*Bhagwan* elaborates on the Eternal *Atma* and the transient body:

**Just as an embodied soul passes from childhood to youth and old age, similarly it attains a new body (after death). The wise are not deluded by this.**

***Param Pujya Ma* elaborates:**

Just as you abide in your present body, having left childhood behind and entering into adulthood, soon your youth will pass into old age and then into death. You had similar bodies in previous lives and this sequence will continue. Your following lives will meet the same fate:

1. Each time, you will be born in a different family.
2. You will have a different form and name.
3. You will have different relatives.
4. Your situation will be different.
5. Your race may be changed.
6. Your intellect and education will be different.
7. Your status in life will be different.
8. Then you will call that new body 'mine' and its kin will become your relations.

Therefore, the Lord stipulates:

- a) Make every endeavour to make the world a nicer place to live in... you will again come to live here!

- b) Establish *dharma* in the world so that your birth takes place in a family that upholds *dharma*.
- c) Perform your duty so that your rebirth occurs in an atmosphere where duty is predominant.

1. They who understand this secret of living do not grieve over the death of the body. They transcend the fear of death and are detached from the body.
2. They who know of the transience of the body and the uncertainty of life, are neither sorrowful about death nor excessively joyous about birth.
3. They are not unduly attached to personal relationships. They are not gripped by *moha*.

- a) The *Atma* is immortal and indestructible.
- b) It is eternal.
- c) The body consciousness is due to the blemishless *Atma* that abides in it.
- d) This relationship between the life giving *Atma* and the inert body is timeless.
- e) The body is merely a gross image which appears to possess the life giving qualities of the *Atma* that abides in it. All the activities of the body are due to the *Atma*.
- f) Attachment to this inert body is foolishness for it is bound to leave you.

O *Sadhak*,

1. You take such immense pride in this flesh whose very definition is death.
2. You seek to establish it in the world and in doing so, you commit so many sins!
3. This body is not loyal to you – you should understand that you are not the body.
4. It is merely a temporary vehicle of the *Atma* – therefore any effort to establish it, is sheer waste of time.

Know yourself for what you really are, or else you will live as a stranger to yourself and die as a stranger. When one dies, one dies alone. Your own Self is your sole companion, life after life. Therefore, for your own good, to ensure your happiness life after life, live a dutiful life replete with divine qualities. That will ensure not only your own wellbeing, but will also be of universal benefit. The establishment of the qualities of the Supreme is your foremost duty. Perform it diligently.

The Lord reiterates, the *dhir purusha*, or one who possesses a healthy, unblemished and stable mind, knows of the essence of the *Atma* and its relationship with the body and is not anguished nor sorrowful at death. Such a one abides in complete peace. ❖

*After the great fortress of Kandahar fell to Mughal might, Emperor Akbar, when sought out for celebration, was espied sitting forlorn on the ramparts, at sunset. When asked what he was thinking at that moment of final victory, he said, 'My heart, is filled with sorrow at my lack of preparedness, for the last journey...'*

## *In preparation for the Final Journey...*

*A bucket list!*

ABHA BHANDARI



This little anecdote about Akbar's realization was told to me by my dear friend, Robin Gupta. It left me thinking of a fact of life that Ma so often alerted us to... that Death is the most inevitable Truth. Ironically, we rarely think of, let alone understand and prepare for that Truth. No one asks how to prepare for Death. And yet, its arrival is the only certainty in this uncertain world. When will that moment come? Who knows? Yet, when it comes, will we embrace it with open arms... knowing that we have done all we had to... knowing that there is nothing more to attain... or achieve?

As Param Pujya Ma once expressed:

*"...Why not transcend death before this body becomes inert?*

*Why not break these shackles of birth and death and embrace Infinite Bliss...?*

*Why shall I fear the dualities of joy and sorrow, old age or disease...*

*These are my torchbearers that lead me to my Supreme Abode*

*Why shall I be afraid of these?..."*

Translated from the original prayer in Hindi

It is an irony that even when we talk of attainment or achievements, one thinks only of the transient world. The human mind indulges in 'apara', worldly things, and does not prepare for the 'para', the eternal journey, which is the reality of existence. When will that last moment come? Ever so often, the mind relegates this

question to the back burner, thinking, ‘there are many years to think about this... first things first!’ Yet, can we ensure that death will not meet us the very next moment?? This is not a pessimistic thought... it is realistic. Therefore our preparedness has to be HERE and NOW! As Ma used to say so often, “Keep your baggage ready... for the last journey may come sooner than you think!”

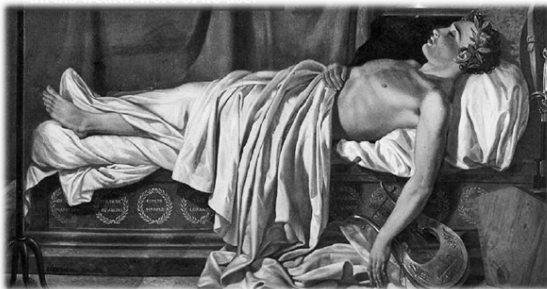
As in all journeys, we need to recognize the destination of this journey of life. If we have no notion of our destination, we will travel aimlessly, load ourselves with encumbrances and fatigue ourselves with choosing futile routes to nowhere. All through life, we accumulate baggage which we can never carry nor retain with us when this journey ends.

We may all have heard of that instructive story of Alexander the Great who voiced 3 wishes on his death bed...

“My first desire is that my physicians alone must carry my coffin.” After a pause, he continued, “Secondly, I desire that when my coffin is being carried to the grave, the path leading to the graveyard be strewn with gold, silver and precious stones which I have collected in my treasury.” He took a minute’s rest and continued, “My third and last wish is that both my hands be kept dangling out of my coffin.”

The people who had gathered there wondered at the king’s strange wishes. But no one dared bring the question to their lips. Alexander’s favorite general kissed his hand and pressed them to his heart. “O king, we assure you that your wishes will all be fulfilled. But tell us why do you make such strange wishes?”

At this, Alexander took a deep breath and said: “I would like the world to know of the three lessons I have just learnt. I want my physicians to carry my coffin because people should realize that no doctor can ensure an eternal cure. They are powerless and cannot save a person from the clutches of death. So let not people take life for granted.



The second wish of strewing gold, silver and other riches on the way to the graveyard is to tell people that not even a fraction of gold will come with me. I spent all my life earning riches but cannot take anything with me. Let people realize that it is a sheer waste of time to chase wealth.

And about my third wish of having my hands dangling out of the coffin, I wish people to know that I came empty handed into this world and empty handed I go out of this world.”

**Alexander’s last words:** *“Bury my body, do not build any monument, keep my hands outside so that the world knows that the person who won the world had nothing in his hands when death overtook him“.*

## *A Joyous Preparation*

We need to remember that death is a normal, natural, expected part of life. It is nature’s process of clearing out the old to make way for the new...

Let us ponder for some brief moments each day, the possibility that this day might be our last. Let us ask ourselves: ‘Is there anything I need to say or do, if today is my final day?’ The point isn’t to dwell on death per se... but to take its reality seriously in order to live more fully. Pondering our own inevitable death will help us to embrace life through the realization that we do not have all the time in the world. It will also ignite the knowledge that we need to urgently prepare for this most important journey of all! Once we are ‘packed and ready’...no anxieties will remain. We will greet every moment of life with a welcoming smile, and we will be able to live with a greater zest and vigour than we have ever been accustomed to!

I was present when my paternal grandmother travelled a long distance to Ma (who was then in the south of India), and said to her, “I know my end is nigh... but I am afraid. I have loved my whole family with all my heart, but my heart is full of remorse;

...for harsh things I have said to others at different times...

...for my weakness in not being able to do what was right by all...

...for some negative relationships I may have nurtured through my life span...

...for favouring some over others...

At this stage of life, when I am unable to do anything physically, what shall I do to prepare myself for death?”

Ma embraced her and smilingly assured her “Don’t worry! When death comes to take you, you will be at peace...”

Thereafter I, along with my parents and some other members of my family, were witness to the most beautiful philosophy of *karma*, gratitude, forgiveness, love, and detachment which Ma clarified and imparted to my grandmother... a



knowledge of life which each one of us must become conscious of each moment as we transact this 'play of life'...

...And surely, when the end came, she was completely at peace!

Through that episode, I learnt that the most important words of life are: "I love you... Thank you... I forgive you... or I seek your forgiveness..."

These simple but profound statements have the power to repair rifts in relationships, make clear what is felt but often left unspoken, and draw us closer to our loved ones. Let us not wait until we are on our deathbed to speak these important words to those dear to us. Say them each day. That way we will not come to the end of a day, much less the end of our life, with the remorse of important words left unspoken or relationships left unrepaired.

Even more important than words, are our actions... our thoughts... our motives.

In the Bhagavad Gita, the Lord says, **"He who remembers Me in his last moments whilst leaving the body, attains My very Essence. Of this there is no doubt."**

Ma used to smilingly explain 'If a man has not remembered the Lord throughout his life, it is most unlikely that he will do so at the time of his death! It is only one who is habituated to living in the REAL and in the Eternal who will have such thoughts uppermost in his mind at the time of his demise!'

Elucidating this *shloka* in the Srimadbhagavad Gita, Ma explained:

'Leaving the body' does not apply only to death. Freedom from the body idea, absence of the intellect which is partisan to the body, steadfastness in the state of an *Atmavaan* – all these states connote the severing of one's attachment with the body.

However, before attaining such a state:

1. That individual must have ceaselessly worshipped the Lord.
2. That individual must have lived in the presence of the Supreme constantly.
3. He must have offered all his actions to his Lord.
4. He would have spent a lifetime practising selfless deeds.
5. All his life he would have practised severing his attachment with his body, mind and intellect.



6. He would have already attained equanimity.

7. His practice would have been persevering and ceaseless,

- only then could he be established in that Supreme State.
- only then could he be absorbed into the Lord's Essence.
- only then could he be one with the Lord Himself.

He who remembers in his last moments that he is the *Atma* and not the body, how can such a one consider the death of the body to be the end of his life? Even as he watches the decline of the body, established as he is in his Essential Self, he will remain detached and unaffected.

Therefore, to live in this constant reminder of the *Atma*, to therefore be detached and unaffected, is the essence of preparation for our last journey.

**Let us start early.**

- If we begin preparing when we are young and healthy and death is, presumably, a long way off...
- If we can live in the knowledge that life itself is ephemeral...
- If we can use prayer as 'a way of life', it will be easier to recline in That Divine Embrace when we pass from this body into the hereafter!
- The sooner we make a 'bucket list' of things we want to do, places we want to go to, experiences we want to have, in the time God has given to us ...and work at checking things off the list...

Enjoy ourselves along the way... Realize that having a 'bucket list' and working to get items checked off provides a subtle reminder that one day, maybe sooner, maybe later, ours will be 'kicked!'

Regularly remembering our mortality can help us love and treasure life even more!

So let us identify and work towards our 'bucket list' of

- Learning to pray better
- Gratitude... Learning to acknowledge the many blessings we have
- Becoming a person who can laugh frequently at oneself and with life
- Having no hesitation in forgiving or in seeking forgiveness...
- Endeavouring to incur no emotional debts... loving all in full measure
- Contributing more and more thought, action and time in our lives to the Divine...the Real...the meaningful.

The Kath Upanishad, is a revealing dialogue between Nachiketa, an aspirant of the Truth and Yamraj, the Lord of death. In her elucidation of this Upanishad, Pujya Ma explains the transition between the individual caught in the web of sense

gratification, and the *Mumukshu*, who aspires to transcend this worldly plane of joy and sorrow and reach the *Mahaan Atma*, from whence there is no return.

The Kath Upanishad states “ **The man who has the right knowledge and has the wisdom to apply it in his practical life, has full control over his thoughts, is pure and attains the highest state from where there is no return.**” Shloka 1.3.8

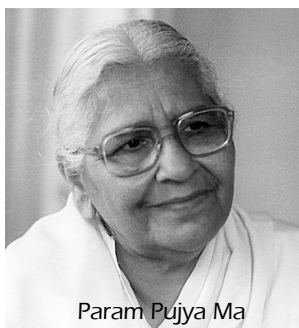
Param Pujya Ma explains the state of such a ‘wise’ one who has his sense organs under his control and is not under the control of external objects.

- He is not touched by his likes and dislikes which motivate him into actions.
- He has a mind which is beyond desires.
- He is indifferent to fame or insult.
- He is unaffected by likeable situations nor does he have any fear of unpleasant situations.
- His intellect, the charioteer, will never take his chariot anywhere for personal gains or establishment.
- He is devoid of egoistic tendencies and has no claims over anyone.
- He is happy with whatever he gets for the service he renders to others, without any expectations.
- He may be condemned, rejected, praised or defamed... whatever he gets, he accepts as a gift from the Lord.
- He has nothing to achieve for himself; he has attained all that he had to in the world and is full of gratitude.
- He attaches no meaning to his body.
- He is not the doer of actions... nor is he dependent on anyone, since he is completely free of expectations.
- He is beyond dualities.

Yamraj says that anyone whose charioteer is wisdom, whose mind along with the sense organs are well under control, will inevitably find his journey to the Supreme Transcendental feet of Vishnu easy and shall reach his destination.

- Such a one is merely a witness of all that is happening in the world.
- He has transcended the world and the world has no meaning for him.
- Even his body has no meaning for him... it is only important as a chariot or a transport.
- His mind is ever engrossed in the intellectual and the spiritual and is the servant of the Lord.

At this stage, knowledge, actions, thoughts, the world and personal fame, all lose their importance... and the *jiva* is at rest! ❖



Param Pujya Ma

# Arpana

## Newsletter

ARPANA TRUST, Madhuban,  
Karnal, Haryana, India  
March 2016

### Home News

#### Remembering 'Ratti Uncle'

A Memorial Gathering for our beloved Mr. Rattan Mohan Sabharwal was celebrated on 21<sup>st</sup> Nov. 2015, at Arpana, Madhuban. The late Executive Director of Arpana, was pivotal in the rise of Arpana service activities for the underprivileged, especially Arpana Hospital, developmental and health services in villages and education in slums.

But he is most loved and remembered as 'Ratti Uncle', an extraordinary human being who always identified with the other, doing what he could for each one. His love for his Sadguru, Param Pujya Ma, was absolute and he credited her with all the accomplishments of his life.

*We thank our dear Dr. Ela Anand, Niriti Vaid and Vedika Anand for their enormous effort in producing this most befitting tribute to Ratti Uncle.*



#### Arpana Celebrating Christmas

Carolers and nuns from St. Theresa's Convent, Karnal, visited Arpana at Christmas time to sing carols with the family, with their own 'Santa Claus' distributing sweets and joy.

Christmas Day was enhanced when 10 of Mandeep Singh's Convent students sang Christmas carols with the Arpana family, parents and guests, beautifully conveying the wonder of Divinity coming into our lives.

#### Arpana at the World Book Fair

Arpana participated in the World Book Fair held at Pragati Maidan from 9-17<sup>th</sup> Jan 2016. Param Pujya Ma's words, in the form of little booklets, book marks and wall hangings were eagerly picked up, as were the Unity pictures which represent the one Essence of all religions. The Bhagavad Gita, which serves as a commandment in our daily life, as elucidated by Pujya Ma, remained the most in demand.

## Delhi Events

### Scholarships by Sonalika Social Development Society

The Sonalika Group organized a Christmas celebration at Shangrila Hotel to felicitate the 21 bright and hard working girls from Arpana's education programme to whom they have awarded scholarships. The first 10 girls were felicitated by Mr. Vijay Sampla, Central Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, while the rest of the girls were felicitated by Her Excellency Mrs. Bellinda Omino, Deputy High Commissioner, Kenya, and His Excellency Mr. Maxwell Ranga, Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe.



*Ms. Lopapriyadarshini from Sonalika Tractors presents scholarships to meritorious girls of Arpana's program*

Mr. A.S. Mittal, Vice Chairman Sonalika Group, presented a special appreciation certificate to Arpana Trust for its Education programme for the benefit of underprivileged children in the slum re-settlement colony at Molar Bund.

### Alumni Meet



*Ex Students*

An Alumni meet was organized on Dec. 24, 2015, reuniting 33 ex-students of Arpana in the presence of Mr. Harishwar Dayal, Arpana's Executive Director and NRI Mr. Naman Dayal, Arpana's son and a founder member of Arpana Canada.

Mr. Karan Singh, son of a daily wage worker, told his story. After completing the 12<sup>th</sup> grade at Arpana, he got a job as a peon with a computer institute. While working, he continued his computer education and graduation. Karan now runs his own media company – Active Media – and has 10 employees.

Ex student Surender, mentored by Arpana's Cultural Director, well known actress Sushma Seth, told of his journey from slum child to becoming an executive with National Geographic Channel. He also performs regularly in the theatre.

Other students also introduced themselves and happily shared their experiences.

**Arpana is very thankful to Caring Hand for Children, Essel Foundation and Aviva Pvt. Ltd. for supporting Arpana's education programme**

# Haryana Happenings

## International Disability Day

On Nov.29, 2015, achievements of Arpana's Programme for the Differently Abled were showcased in Kairwali Village. Covering 55 villages, 895 differently abled persons have formed 42 groups in which they are motivated and enabled to gain self esteem, skills, and earnings through their own businesses.



Mrs. Santosh Arya, Chief Guest, explained the facilities of Sarva Shiksha Arya (government school for the differently abled) in Gharaunda and inspired parents to gain its benefits for their differently abled children by sending them there.

Arpana's workers presented a play depicting how the differently abled were improving their lives. Arpana presented assistive devices and hand operated tricycles to 4 more persons. Prizes were distributed to 65 differently abled school going children, to encourage them to focus on education and enable them to have a happier life. Empowering games were organized for the differently abled, i.e. tug-of-war, ringtos, tricycle races, etc.

## Women Learn their Rights and Legal Position



On Jan. 15, 2016, Arpana organized a camp with the Women Police Cell, Karnal, which is working to empower women to know their rights and their legal position so they can oppose any crimes perpetrated against them.

The village women shared their experiences in the meeting. The Assistant Superintendent of Police, Geeta Gehlot, advised them not to be silent when atrocities are committed against them. They should either report to the police, or help each other. Mahila Police Station Incharge, Smt. Luxmi, advised immediate action in any incident of violation of women's rights. She also explained the various provisions of the Domestic Violence Act.

***Arpana is thankful to generous donors, including IDRF, CBM, Tides Foundation and Baij Nath Bhandari Public Charitable Trust who enable us to carry out these health and development programmes in Haryana.***

# Arpana Hospital

## Breast Cancer and Cervical Cancer Camp

Arpana's screening camps are for village women who otherwise do not receive this service. The 5-year relative survival rate of early detection of breast cancer in the localized stage, is 100%. A Screening Camp for Cervical and Breast Cancer was organized at Arpana Hospital on December 4-5, 2015. The patients in the camp were screened and treated by Dr. Ela Anand, FRCOG (Gynaecologist), Dr Vivek Ahuja, MBBS, MS (Surgeon) and Dr. Kavita Rani, MBBS, MS in Gynae, (Gynaecologist).



104 patients from 30 villages attended this two day camp. There were 6 Mammography tests, 32 Pap smears, 2 FNAC, 25 Lab tests and 29 Ultrasounds.

***Arpana is grateful to Krishen and Geeta Mehta for their support through Asia Initiatives which sponsored this service.***

## Eye Camps

- 2,557 children were checked in Paediatric Eye Screening Camps in December 2015 and January 2016.
- 204 patients were checked in Diabetic Retinopathy Camps in January 2016.
- 237 patients were checked in Glaucoma Camps in January 2016.

***Arpana's gratitude is extended to CBM for support for eye services for many years.***

*We, at Arpana, depend on your support for our programs*

**Arpana Trust and Arpana Research & Charities Trust are both approved under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act, 1961, giving 50% tax relief for donors in India.**

**FCRA Registration No. for Arpana Trust is 172310001**

**FCRA Registration No. for Arpana Research & Charities Trust is 172310002**

Send your contribution for dissemination of humane values & medical and community welfare services in Delhi to:

**Arpana Trust, Madhuban, Karnal, Haryana 132 037**

Send your contributions for health & development services in Haryana & Himachal to:

**Arpana Research & Charities Trust, Madhuban, Karnal, Haryana 132 037**

**Arpana Hospital: 91-184-2380801, Info & Resources Office: 91-184-2390905**

emails: [at@arpana.org](mailto:at@arpana.org) and [arct@arpana.org](mailto:arct@arpana.org)

Please let us know by email or telephone, whenever you transfer funds to Arpana.

**Mrs. Aruna Dayal, Director Development. Mobile 91-9873015108, 91-9034015109**

Websites: [www.arpana.org](http://www.arpana.org)

[www.arpanaservices.org](http://www.arpanaservices.org)

# *A Sacred Lineage*



**O Glorious Guru! Thanksgiving to Thee, Who has revealed this Knowledge to me!**

The Divine Lineage of Supreme Knowledge is revealed herein, where the disciple of Truth glorifies his Guru with his humble surrender at the feet of the One Who has imparted this knowledge to him. It is clarified here, that the knowledge of Brahm had been transmitted by Brahma Himself and thereafter through a superior chain of Guru – Shishya tradition... and therefore the true disciple who receives it, acknowledges that it is a gift of his Divine Guru... and free from defects arising from human imperfections.

अथर्वणे यां प्रवदेत ब्रह्मा-थर्वा तां पुरोवाचाङ्गिरे ब्रह्मविद्या ।  
स भारद्वाजाय सत्यवहाय प्राह भारद्वाजोऽङ्गिरसे परावरा ॥२॥

The knowledge that Brahma had given to Atharva, was first shared by Atharva with Angira; who in turn told it to Satyavaha of Bhardwaj (lineage) who, in succession, taught that knowledge to Angiras.

Mundak Upanishad, Shloka 2

## **Elucidation by Param Pujya Ma**

They speak here of the tradition of Guru and Disciple  
And how Divine knowledge was transmitted  
How from That Supreme Brahm,  
To Brahma this knowledge was transmitted.

Brahm Who was Self Existent,  
Who was Knowledge Itself Himself  
Who was the Unmanifest, Unseen Essence,  
The Creator of this Creation Himself...



He Who was devoid of any attributes,  
Donned attributes Himself  
Devoid of Name and Form, That Eternal Essence,  
Created this entire Creation Himself.

Transcending all attributes, That Silent One,  
Appeared as 'Ishwar' the Divine Lord of all Himself,  
Equipped with latencies, That One,  
Appeared as Brahma Himself.

He, the Essence of Knowledge,  
Now became the Creator of all;  
That Supreme Consciousness, Truth Itself,  
Became the Sustainer of all.

That Support of all, the Nourisher of all,  
Manifested Himself as the Sustainer  
'Twas He who first represented the Sacred Name,  
And filled That Name with practical devotion.

Atharva was the son of Brahm,  
Brahm imparted his entire knowledge to Atharva  
So it is said herein,  
So it is stated by the *Rishis* of yore...

Atharva in succession, gave this knowledge to Angira  
Who in turn gave it to Satyavaha  
And Satyavaha, the son of Bhardwaj,  
Gave this knowledge to Angiras!

They speak here of the Supreme Knowledge of Truth,  
They clarify the tradition  
Why, and where and how this knowledge was transmitted  
...they clarify this position.

Brahma came as the Self Manifested, and gave his 'mantle' to Atharva,  
Atharva, was born of Brahma's resolve, and thus was immaculately conceived...  
Angira was the disciple of Atharva, and Satyavaha in turn was Angira's pupil...  
Angira, in accordance with the Atharva Ved, was a repository of Eternal Knowledge.



From him flowed forth many a *mantra* of the Vedas  
Shail was his disciple too  
Having taken birth in the lineage of Bhrigu,  
That 'Knower of Brahm' possessed knowledge true...



It was he who wrought many a treatise, rooted in the Rigveda  
He was the Fount of many a *mantra*, and the Source of many a Truth of the Veda...  
The Great *Rishi* Shaunak attained this Brahmic knowledge  
The *Rishis* of the Mundak Upanishad to Shaunak imparted this knowledge.

The Great Shaunak in humility  
Accepted that this knowledge was not his...  
That it was received by him he acknowledged...  
With head bowed in modest stance.

Witness his unassuming humility, at his Master's feet he laid the acclaim...  
That this knowledge flowed forth from himself, Shaunak never sought to claim .  
Every great Soul acknowledges truly, that his knowledge is attained from his *Guru*  
This is not a novel stance, this the tradition of disciples true.

Nor was this a new occurrence  
'Twas adopted by the *Rishis* of earlier standing  
They did not claim credit for a single experience  
Or laid their name on any understanding...

They all acknowledged 'twas a gift of the *Guru*  
That their experience was the *Guru's* grace  
That all the knowledge the *Shastras* contained  
Came as an Eternal gift from Brahm's divine grace!

Every *shastra* they had read  
Was their *Guru*... they acknowledged their gain  
And once bowed at their '*Guru's*' feet  
Their head never rose in ego again.

Only the *Guru's* name was retained  
Never did they endeavour to establish their own name  
Whatsoever experience whosoever gained  
Was accredited to their *Guru's* fame.

This is not like modern times when the *Guru* is forgotten  
When all that is attained through God's Grace is claimed as self begotten!  
That which should have been decimated, that very ego is strengthened by the day!  
That is why the Eternal Truth can never be attained by the aspirant of today.

They warn you here O *Sadhak*... never claim this knowledge as your own  
Yours is to decimate the self, so never 'possess' this knowledge as your own.  
This is the Reality also, your family tradition contains this knowledge  
Carefully witness this truth, your family name betokens this knowledge...

When you step onto the path of Spiritual endeavour  
Your family ties get left behind  
Your relationship with your body-associates  
No longer restrict or bind.

The Universal family you enter thence  
Is the family of the Lord  
O *Sadhak*, you must now recognize  
The Traditions of this 'family' of God.

This is what they are clarifying here  
As the example of earlier aspirants has affirmed...  
He who sublimates self at those Divine feet  
Has attained the *Guru's* grace 'tis confirmed.

Again, yet again, they elucidate  
The qualities required of an aspirant true  
To attain the beneficence of the Scriptural texts  
What that *sadhak* must do...

Dwell not on worldly inference  
Dwell not on literal connotation  
Dwell on the deliberation that lies within the words  
Not on illusionary connotations...

They speak here of *Guru-disciple* traditions  
They speak of who can attain knowledge...  
They stipulate that only that one can experience the Supreme  
Who is devoid of Ego.

When you consider that you 'know'  
And that the knowledge you have gained is 'yours'  
Then you must know that the darkness of ignorance  
Has not yet left your shores.

What those *Rishis* of yore gained through meditative excellence  
They could have claimed the knowledge gained as 'theirs'  
That their *Guru* merely showed the way  
And the 'success' was solely theirs!



Yet, they never laid such claims...  
They acknowledged all as a 'gift' of the *Guru*  
Repeatedly they laid their forehead at the *Guru's* feet  
And never once tried to supercede their *Guru*.

'They had attained all through their *tapas* and endeavour  
No *Rishi* had guided them in their gain...  
They received all through their intellectual acumen'  
Yet, never once did they lay such a claim.

This is the tradition of the *Gurus* of yore  
The Grace of the *Guru* is thus received  
This is indeed the Grace of Brahm...  
Supreme Grace by the disciple received.

As long as the *sadhak* ego-soaked claims, 'I have attained' the Supreme Presence...  
That very ego little realizes, that in saying so it loses Truth's Essence.  
It was the *Guru* who showed the path, and put his all at his mentor's feet...  
As a disciple he claimed no credit, and did all as his *Guru* did entreat.

In surrender he had gained all, in losing himself at his Master's feet  
In losing his very entity, he verily gained his all!  
No true *Guru* claimed as his own, any knowledge he had received...  
In this renunciation that '*Guru-disciple*' true glorified his *Guru*!

As a disciple, that *Guru* clarified that all was given to him by his Mentor  
That disciple also acknowledged... 'My *Guru* is the Supreme Godhead... Ram!  
My *Guru* is the Knower of Brahm, that One imparted all knowledge to me!  
It is only when His Grace was showered that I experienced the Truth within.'

No experience does That One claim  
Nor even a single word...  
Each word of that disciple a *mantra* becomes  
Which he attributes to his revered *Guru*.

When these *mantras* are received by the world,  
He reiterates, that knowledge his *Guru* has shown...  
No true disciple till this day claims...  
That any word spoken is his own!

O *Sadhika*... so it is said,  
This is the path of spiritual endeavour  
If the Highest Truth is to be attained  
Such is the worship required.



The Guru relates through example  
That all knowledge is the credit of the Mentor  
Therefore, eulogizing the Guru thus,  
He indicates surrender at the feet of the Master.



There is no difference between the Guru and Ram  
Guru and knowledge should be synonymous to you...  
There is no difference between the Master and the Supreme  
Nor 'tween the Guru and the Shishya true.

This is repeated again... yet again, that the disciple recognizes the bond  
Who is my Guru... he comes to know, when he realizes the Supreme tradition.  
Every word of the Guru he inscribes, whate'er the Guru says, he does  
No action is now his own, nor does he gather aught for himself.

This is the Essence of knowledge  
Thus, they illuminate the way,  
In the light of the pure knowledge that flows  
'Tween the Guru and Shishya, they point the way.

As the purifying Ganga surges, the knowledge of Brahma thus flowed  
'Through every Rishi I received a Guru', in humble surrender 'tis acknowledged.  
This is the divine tradition of knowledge, followed by all in your lineage  
Recognize this tradition O aspirant true, this is the path you aspire to walk.

Let your head never be raised high  
Ever affix the vermilion of credit 'pon your Guru  
For it is That Guru revered  
Who flows in the aspirant's heart as knowledge.

If you realize the quintessence of this Truth,  
You will attain Knowledge Supreme  
Attachment with the transient will be annihilated  
And you will attain the Supreme Essence.

This indeed is true knowledge,  
This is the method prescribed  
Through this method you can reach the 'Name'  
If you identify with the method described.

This is the mark of a saintly lineage, this is the lineage of a disciple  
Look where you stand today...this is YOUR lineage.

*Translated by Abha Bhandari from Param Puja Ma's elucidation of the Mundak Upanishad  
on 9.8.61 at Chakki Rest house, en route to Dalhousie... as recorded faithfully by Chhote Ma.*

# The Sovereign Lord

~ as Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer



ADAPTED FROM PARAM PUJYA MA'S ELUCIDATION OF THE JAPUJI SAHIB BY ARUNA DAYAL

एका माई जुगति विआई तिनि चले परवाणु ।  
इकु संसारी इकु भण्डारी इकु लाए दीबाणु ।  
जिव तिसु भावै तिवै चलावै जिव होवै फुरमाणु ।  
औहु वेखे ओना नदरि न आवै बहुता एहु विडाणु ।  
आदेसु तिसै आदेसु ।  
आदि अनीलु अनादि अनाहति जुगु जुगु एको वेसु ।।

पौड़ी ३०

*Maya, the power of delusion, becomes manifest in Nature, on becoming one with the Creator. From this union three famed and renowned disciples came forth.*

*There was the creator Brahma; there was the Master of all stores and resources, the sustainer, Vishnu; and the third, who dispenses justice in His court, Shiva. All three work His Will: the Cosmos functions as is ordained by the Supreme.*

*He the one Lord, who watches over all, but remains invisible and unseen. This in itself is a wondrous thing. Obeisance to Him, all homage to He who is the beginning and origin of Creation.*

*He who is sans colour and form: to the Supreme, who is without beginning, and is indestructible: He remains immutable and unchanging, through eternal cycles of time.*

Pujya Ma, brimming with devotional love, her words, ablaze with the Splendor of the Supreme, explores the Truth of the Sadguru's Word. Her exploration flows into our hearts in words luminous with the worshipful humility of a true devotee:

*Who knows of the transcendent Union of Maya and the Creator: how it unfolds:  
But there were manifest three Disciples Divine: who brought forth three worlds!  
One, the Creator and then He who sustains the universe, and the Silent Lord  
Who justice does dispense.*

*The Supreme One watches over all, yet remains Unseen  
How wondrous is His glory! Who can unravel His mysteries!  
I bow to Thee Lord, repeatedly... Thou art sans beginning or end, God  
Naught can hurt Thee, Indestructible and Immutable art Thee, Lord!*

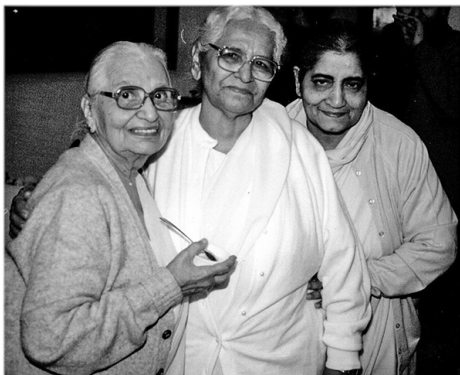
*Thou art One, the Perfect Truth, Thou art One Essence Eternal, Lord:  
One Eternal Truth, the One True Name, abiding Essence of Omkar  
The inner Sprit of all is Thee, the only Truth is Thee,  
Indivisible art Thee, Formless in eternity.*

*Without attribute, beyond definitions and words art Thee  
O Master of the Universe! Without stain or blemish, in Thy Divinity.  
Lord of all beings, and all forms,  
Beyond all form art Thee!*

**Param Pujya continues, in an ecstasy of praise to reiterate this Divine Truth, for our sake –**

The Supreme is the sovereign of all Creation, and is its source and origin: its Creator. He sustains the Universe and its dissolution is caused by Him – the dissolution is He.

All arises from the Lord and all merges in Him. There is no second being, for all, in its entirety, is the One Supreme indivisible Principle.



The tri-pronged energy of Nature is He and the Pure Essence of Creation is He and the infinite diversity of forms is He.

The Lord is the Sublime Substratum: the eternal life force manifest as the endless stream of created beings. The Light of the World is He, the Divine, alone is He.

*The seeker, Mrs. Vaswani with  
Pujya Ma and Chhote Ma*

He is the Lord of the World. He is the Center of consciousness. He is perfect, the Indivisible Self.

He ordains the laws and nurtures and governs all created beings.

He sustains creation and dispenses justice and grants man the fruit of his actions.

He is the primal cause of Being and Keeper of Nature's laws. He is the origin; He sustains the Cosmos and is the cause of the destruction of the Universe. All power is His.

As we chant the Lord's Name and sing His glories, we must remember this Truth as we invoke His presence within our hearts:

*This cosmic dance is Thy play: Thou dost direct us all  
Thou dost create and nurture all beings and Thou ordains the laws  
Through the cycles of Time, unchanged art Thee  
Yet Thou art all forms, in infinite variety.*

*O Purity itself, Formless art Thee,  
Arbiter of Justice for all our acts and deeds  
I have no words to sing Thy glories, O Nanak, blessed I am to praise Thee:  
Thou my sole Sovereign, my whole support is Thee.*

*I plead with Thee for Thy Mercy, because my anchor art Thee!  
Helpless am I, as I plead for Thy Clemency  
Grant me the light of wisdom, strip me of my ignorance,  
If Thou will ordain it, this self will gain the Refuge of Thy Feet.*

**Ma tells us how a true devotee places his self at the Lord's Feet, saying:**

'Lord, You pardon our sins, You provide succor in our suffering and You alone can relieve our burdens. However, as long as this egoity and selfhood persist, the anguish of mortality cannot be erased.

Therefore, O Lord, grant that this self, this egoity, this mind becomes wholly lost in Thee. May this body become Thy servant. May every pulsebeat, may the current of blood, its each particle become Thine. May I become the dust of Thy Feet.

O Nanak, do not turn away this hapless self: Lord accept my petition – this plea for Thy Grace.

Lord, we learn of Thy omniscience, of Thy Presence in each being. O grant me Nanak, the boon that enables to perceive Thy image in all beings. Lord, I place this prayer before Thee: grant it I pray, O Nanak, I beg thee O Compassionate One, O Refuge of the helpless, do not turn me away.'

**The seeker at Param Pujya Ma's Feet, placed her query** – ‘What is the fruit of our Karma, when the Lord Himself is the sustainer and gives us the fruit of our actions?’

**Param Pujya responded:** ‘The Lord created the Universe and Himself assumed all the infinite diversity of forms and beings. He then gave all freedom to mankind. It is as if He said ‘Do what you will.’ But man forgot his Maker as he exercised this freedom. Man became ungrateful, subject to anger and mental agitation. Man did not praise the Lord or offer gratitude for His gifts, His Bounty and His Grace. For all man received, he craved more. What he was denied, he demanded, why it was not given. Man crushed the good around him, and bowed before evil. Truth was silenced and falsehood thrived. Man shut his eyes to the light of the heavens, to the spiritual glory that is ever present.

His egoity and selfishness reigned supreme. This sense of ‘I’, of ego, is man’s biggest error, so we sit at the Lord’s Feet and pray –

*Do something O Lord, that I may Thy Presence feel:  
Wash this stain of selfhood, that I get a glimpse of Thee,  
Thou art without blemish my Lord: I am a blot on Thee:  
This stain could be effaced, by Thy clemency.*

*Come abide within me O Lord, Thou art all Light:  
Thy Mercy will redeem me: grant me that divine sight.  
This restless yearning heart, in Thy Presence will find peace.  
I am a slave to desire, impure am I, 'tis Thy Mercy that I seek.*

*Have compassion O Lord, fill my heart with devotion  
May love fill this vessel of Thine, to wash Thy Lotus Feet.  
My only prayer is for Thy Presence, within:  
This dark stain of ego, Thy Presence will efface.  
The conflict of duality: of hate and love, will not remain –  
The crowd of complaints and grievance will disappear, by Thy Grace!*

**Param Pujya Ma pleads on behalf of the seeker:**

The seeker, shackled by the claims of desire, and besieged by the conflict of dualities which clash within, prays:

‘O Lord, Thy compassions is universally praised. Just a glimpse of Thee, and the burden of this ego will be discarded and all hate and anger will be dispatched. This impure heart does deny Thee, and forgets that Thou art the Doer; that all is Thine, all is Thee. This self claims as its own, that which it can never claim or own. This ego lives in a world of falsehood. Weary of these lies, I pray that Truth alone prevails.



*All is Thee Lord, all is Thine... may I accept this fact Divine  
This truth will be in life enshrined,  
When I accept all deeds are wrought by Thee  
Then only will my mental activity subside and cease.*

*Thy Will all circumstance does dictate –  
Only Thou art and Thou remains.  
Thy court is ever in session, yet the folly of this mind,  
That prides in its dissension.*

*It constantly denies Thee, it constantly derides Thee:  
This mind strives to efface Thee Lord, through egoistic thought and deed.  
O Master mine, how I transgress! how I sin against Thee, my Lord:  
This selfhood arrogantly seeks sovereignty over Thee!*

*This 'I' is clever, scheming, proud and devious, O Lord  
In despair I call to Thee –  
For Thy Grace I plead  
If Thou dost extend a drop of Mercy, this mind's efforts will meet defeat.*

*Give a drop Lord, of the wine of Thy Name!  
Thy Glory will fill my mind, all selfhood will fade away...  
O Nanak, bless me with the refuge of Thy Name,  
The strife of this ego will be in vain.*



**Form IV (See Rule 8)**

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Harishwar Dayal  
Arpana Trust, Madhuban, Karnal, Haryana

# *Some Reflections in passing...*

PURNIMA

One day I had taken our dog, Ebony, for a walk. All of a sudden she spied two mongrels across the street. Yelping, she pulled at her chain, but fearing a fight, I did not let go. She pulled harder and I fell on the road. As I held on, she dragged me after her and my skin was very badly scraped. Even as I was getting a tetanus injection and being bandaged, I was aware of feeling no anger or emotion... and that was because I knew that the dog had behaved instinctively and could not be blamed.



I realized then that if it had been a person, I would have raved and ranted and accused him/her of deliberately causing hurt and so on. The injury would have been the same but my reaction would have been totally different. Why? Is it because we like to find faults and pin the responsibility on someone else?



My son found a little bird fallen near his bike... must have been just a day old because it could barely stand. He lined a box with grass and placed the bird in it along with some grain and water. But it would neither eat nor drink, and everyone said it would not survive. The next morning the food was untouched but the bird was still alive. Knowing we couldn't look after it, we took it to a bird hospital in town and left it in their care.



The next morning they brought it back, saying they couldn't look after such a tiny creature. With no option left, we found some forceps and pried open its beak to feed it, succeeding to some extent... repeating the process every few hours. I got so involved that I couldn't go anywhere, fearing that some harm would befall it.

The third night I had it in my room, and kept waking

every hour to check if it was alright. At 4 am I found it lying on its back, dead. I was so heartbroken that I couldn't stop myself from crying. I think it was the helplessness of the little bird and its complete dependence on us that made me feel I had failed somehow in its care. I felt so bereft that I was surprised at my own reaction.

This is how we form attachments, I realized. And we had only had the bird for three days! No wonder then that our ties to our children are so strong. We sow a seed, water it and wait for it to sprout. From that moment, we get attached to the outcome. Is this sense of 'proprietorship' then the basis of all sorrow?



I go for a walk daily... and see bright flowers blooming everywhere. Two days later I see them drooping slightly and wilting completely in less than a week. I see bare branches getting green with tiny leaves, growing lush, then the leaves turning brown and dry and finally falling. This cycle of birth, maturity, death is repeated ad infinitum in all of Nature... and yet we don't realize the ephemeral nature of life. We behave as if we are here forever. Yes, our life span may be longer than flowers and insects, but its decline and death just as inevitable.



We have older people in our family who are also going through this transition. People who were so active and productive in the prime of their life, who contributed so much to Arpana in so many ways, getting debilitated by disease and old age... and being reduced to mere shells of their former selves, some physically, some mentally. And there's nothing we can do about it... except provide love and care.

And **still** we remain so involved with our own little concerns, not believing for a moment that in the larger scheme of things, we are not important at all. If we look back and see, how many of the people who have gone do we remember... and how often? People who were such an integral part of our lives are only remembered now on birthdays and anniversaries!

***...and so it is that Ma's relevance in our lives has grown manifold. Her words continue to guide us, her life is a practical example for us to follow... if only we open our hearts to receive that Divine Grace!***





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