@ Natwar my Beloved Lord

O Natwar my Beloved Lord,
You dance on my innermost chord!
And render me helpless, insufficient, blue,
Many lives have I wandered in search of You.

I know not songs in praise of Thee
Tunes I cannot compose;
But my torn pierced heart can only seek
Your image wherever it goes.

Eternally... each moment I take Thy name This chanting has never ceased; Take what is Yours... make Thy claim O Ram, this desire's increased.

One day, I know that morning shall dawn When You will be caught in Your game You will see my heart distressed and forlorn, And Your Grace will absorb my pain.

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

नटवर मोरे साँवरिया

नटवर मोरे साँवरिया, मैं तो हो गई बाँवरिया। जन्म जन्म से भटकी हूँ, आ सुध तो लो मोरे साँवरिया।।

गीत न जानूँ लय न जानूँ, राग कोई आता नहीं। यह न कहना व्यथित हृदय पिया, तेरे लिये तड़पाता नहीं।।

हर पल बैठी सुन हे राम मैं, राम राम कहूँ राम राम।। और कछु न जानूँ राम, हर पल कहूँ मैं राम राम।।

मेरी व्यथा सुन सुन के राम मेरे, तू भी तो घबरायेगा।। इक दिन ऐसा आयेगा, तेरा हृदय भर जायेगा।।

(अर्पणा प्रार्थना शास्त्र १, न. २२८ - २७.१२.१९५९)



"Let me do all the good I can, to all the people I can, as often as I can, for I shall not pass this way again."

~ John Wesley

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Note: Views represented in this journal reflect the understanding of individual contributors. Most articles are based on 'Satsangs' given by Param Pujya Ma in answer to seekers' questions.

'Packing One's bags!'

ARHA BHANDARI



"You have 7 hours to live... what is it that you must do urgently and make full use of these 7 hours?" A well-wisher made this statement before me... not many days ago... and it set me thinking.

A crowd of confused thoughts besieged me... clamouring for attention. There was a deep pit of emptiness within which was aflutter with thousands of nervous butterflies... much like the feeling that embraces us just before we enter an exam hall... unprepared.

I suddenly became aware of

- All the unfinished 'business' I had stowed away in my 'to do later' bin...
- That 'Will' which still lay unfinished and unattended to...
- Those promises I had made to several friends and family which remained unfulfilled...
- Those myriad expectations of my near and dear ones which I had hitherto disregarded, thinking that they were not that important!
- Even those many pilgrimages I had promised myself, but had been unable to accomplish so far!

A deep sense of having failed my responsibilities towards my Beloved Mother and Guru overtook me... I suddenly began to crave 'just a little more time' to complete all my unfinished tasks!



Suddenly, the wise counsel of my Divine Mother and Guru shone like a light in my innermost core... and I remembered Her saying... "Every external deed is guided by the firm hand of destiny... it is the inner action which is in our control. Do what you know to be best, but leave the fruits in the hands of the Divine. However, at every step and every moment, watch your mind... be witness to your thoughts... curb your opinions, judgements and prejudices... for these, jointly, are surely creating your future destiny."

... And here I was... lamenting the external, and ignoring the internal! Raman Maharishi bid us to be as vigilant regarding our thoughts, as a man who sits at the mouth of a snake pit, and hits the snake hard as soon as it rears its head from the pit. So also, must we be vigilant regarding our random negative thoughts towards which we are normally extremely indulgent. We must vanquish them as soon as they rear their head and continue to do so until they have all been quelled and only those thoughts remain which are inclined towards the Supreme.

How indulgent we are towards our own negativity... whereas we judge another's thoughts and tendencies with great harshness. Why did the other dare to even look at us irreverently? Why did the other gossip about me... or anyone else for that matter? Our own opinions get created in a moment, but we are never sensitive to the other's problems or situations. In doing so, we allow several hundreds of 'snakes' to raise their heads and vitiate our future destiny with their venom... little realizing that in doing so, we are our greatest enemies.

In such a scenario, what if death overtakes us suddenly and without notice? What we shall take with us would only be this 'bundle' of venomous thoughts, ideas and opinions... a seemingly light bundle, but so heavy that it has the potential to destroy many future lives.

It is said of Alexander the Great that he ordered that when his coffin was being taken to the burial ground, his empty hands should be visible outside the coffin, to send out a vital message to the world that even a mighty conqueror like him, could, indeed, carry back none of the wealth gained from his conquests. Thus goes the story...

When Alexander the Great, after conquering kingdoms, was returning to his country, he fell so ill that his illness led him to his deathbed. He gathered his generals around him and told them, "I will depart from this world soon, I have three wishes, please carry them out without fail."

The king asked his general to abide by these last wishes:

- 1) The king of Macedonia said, "My physicians alone must carry my coffin."
- 2) "I desire that when my coffin is being carried to the grave, the path leading to the graveyard be filled with the wealth that I collected," the king said.
- 3) "My third and last wish is that both my hands be kept hanging out of my coffin," Alexander said.

The generals agreed to abide by their king's last wishes and asked him the reason for doing so. Alexander said, "I want the world know the three lessons I have learnt... I want my physicians to carry my coffin because people should realize that no doctor on this earth can really cure anybody. They are helpless in front of That Divine Power and before the inevitability of death."



Describing his second wish, the king said: "I spent all my life earning riches but cannot take anything with me. Let people know that wealth is nothing but dust... therefore let it be trampled upon by those who carry my coffin."

Thirdly, "I wish people to know that I came empty handed into this world and I will go empty-handed."

Does this not set us thinking... if even the mightiest of conquerors and kings could not avoid death, nor carry their 'riches' with them into the next realm, why do we spend our entire lifetime in accruing that which we cannot take with us when it is time to depart? Why do we continue to pack bags full of stuff that is not ours to carry away?

Yet, we call ourselves intelligent and react belligerently if we are told that we are foolish! Why can we not then begin to equip ourselves today so that we can indeed carry with us the fragrance of a life full of love, gratitude, humility, integrity, selfless service and all the divine qualities that Lord Krishna has eulogized in the 16th chapter of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita?

We must surely engage in external deeds with alacrity and full identification in order to dispense the responsibilities allotted to us... but our attention must ever be focussed on our internal thought processes which continually flow unbridled and unrestrained!

Ma would often say, "Begin to pack your bags right now... you never

know when your seat to the next realm is booked... preparations have to begin now and continue till the very end."

The journey of life rarely gives us warnings. Often, accidents happen, illnesses occur, and death overtakes us. The Gita says that the thought that is uppermost in the mind of the dying person, determines his next birth and destiny. The Gita therefore also emphasizes that the Lord's Name, That greatest Purifier of all, must be upon our lips and must dominate our thoughts at that critical moment.

"He who remembers Me in his last moments whilst leaving the body, attains My very Essence... OF THIS THERE IS NO DOUBT." (Chapter 8, shloka 5)

How can we ensure this?

Ma has given us a beautiful answer in her elucidation of the Gita:

"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.

Lovingly Ma explained, "Little one, 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."



Finding Arpana

PART I OF 'MY ARPANA JOURNEY' BY ANNE ROBINSON



In 1979, Param Pujya Ma and Arpana were largely unknown, there was no internet or Google – nor was there any referral system I was aware of! So when I was at a crossroads in my life, uncertain of which direction to take – coming to Arpana was not even an option! It seemed impossible that I would find my way to Param Pujya Ma, her knowledge and the family she created on the far side of the globe.

Many happenings in our lives seem to be 'impossible' – and one of these happenings is the uncanny series of 'coincidences' or 'synchronicity of events' which resulted in my coming to Arpana.

I grew up in India, a child of American missionaries, and was educated in Woodstock School in Mussoorie. There, I formed strong friendships with: Manju Dayal (including her 5 brothers and sisters), Ruth Duewel and Barbara Byg. After leaving school, we all separated and Ruth, Barby and I returned to America.

At a crossroads in my life, after earning a college degree and at the end of my marriage, I debated earning a law degree, but realized I did not want a life mired in controversy and conflict. I visited my friend, Ruth Duewel, whom I had not seen for years, and while I was there, Barbara Byg called up. She was married and living in New Delhi and she gave me her address and phone number "in case I visited India" – which I had no plans to do!

While deliberating on the rest of my life, I had started reading about alternative lifestyles and came across the writings of Rajneesh (later called Osho) in Pune, India. I was fascinated by his writings and determined to visit him to see for myself if he was enlightened! But I also wanted to see India again, the place of my childhood. Of course, Pune was near Bombay, about 1000 miles from New Delhi, so I doubted I would be able to see Barby, but at least I would be in India.

I prepared for my India trip. I sold my car for just enough to cover my roundtrip ticket to Bombay. I moved out of my apartment to stay with a friend for a few days. I sent all my excess belongings to my sister to store. I had sent to New York for a visa by post and expected it in a week. Imagine my impatience when it took over three weeks. But finally, I was ready and went to the Boston Airport to catch my flight.

But I was in for a surprise. The Control Tower of the Bombay International Airport had caught fire the day before! My options were to wait a few days or I could go to New Delhi and catch a domestic flight to Bombay. I didn't hesitate – I would go to Delhi and see Barby and then go to see Osho.

It was wonderful to see Barby in Delhi – a special treat to see my school friend after I had lost track of her for years! Then Barby insisted I see

Manju Dayal before I went to Bombay. Manju lived in a small community with Param Pujya Ma, about a 3 hour drive outside Delhi. Later, Manju told me that their telephone (everyone had landlines in 1979) did not work 50% of the time and usually



Friends from Woodstock. Barby and me on the left and Manju Dayal far right

Manju herself was out working on an Arpana project in Karnal, but when we called that day, it was Manju who picked up the telephone which was working!

Manju was coming to Delhi the next day and would be leaving the day after. She insisted she would bring me to Arpana Trust where she lived. I learned later that Manju did not have the use of a vehicle at that time, but knew that Dr and Dr Mrs. Raj Gupta had planned to visit Arpana, for the first time, to celebrate Chhote Ma's birthday. They immediately agreed to bring Reva Bhandari, Manju and her friend from America to Madhuban, as well. So four members of the Gupta family, Manju, Reva and I all piled into their Ambassador for a wonderful journey of friendship and laughter – to my unknown destiny!

The day I arrived at Arpana, two events were being celebrated:

- 1. the birthday of Chhote Ma and
- 2. Urvashi Day which commemorates the first flow of spontaneous verse from Param Pujya Ma her divine elucidation of the Scriptures!

In my life, this date also commemorated a third event – my arrival at Arpana!

Synchronicity of Events that Brought Me to Arpana

When I pondered on how my journey led to Arpana, I realized that, but for a number of coincidences or synchronicities, it would never have been possible.

- · When I happened to visit one of my 3 best friends from school (who I had not seen in years), I connected with a second of these best friends and got her contact information for her home in Delhi.
- · Six weeks later, I decided to visit Rajneesh in India, but my visa was delayed for unknown reasons for over three weeks. The Control Tower at the Bombay International Airport caught on fire the day I was to leave, so my flight was diverted to New Delhi.
- · I visited my friend in Delhi and, when we telephoned our other good friend, it was Manju herself who picked up the phone and invited me to Arpana.

Call it a series of coincidences, call it the synchronicity of the Universe, call it my destiny, call it the Will of the Lord – the fact is that, instead of my plan to land in Bombay and make my way to Pune, I landed in New Delhi and was 'channeled' all the way to Arpana!

At Arpana I found an astounding Fount of Knowledge in Param Puiva Ma, who answered anv questions I asked. The more I learned of her spontaneous flow of spiritual knowledge, elucidating the Scriptures, the more my point of view broadened as endeavoured to see



the universe as the manifestation of God/Atma.

I live in awe that this opportunity was given to me – that I was brought into the family circle of a Being of the highest order, given access to knowledge which is hidden or unclear to most of the world and given practical directions to bring this knowledge into my life.

Ma's being, her words and her example have proved to be the culmination of my hopes for spiritual knowledge. I was given the opportunity of studying 'Urvashi', Ma's spontaneous elucidations of the Scriptures of many religions.



Getting caught up in community activities at Arpana!
I am on the far right next to Deepak Dayal.
Manju, Reva and Vijay Dayal feature in the middle.

In addition, Ma emphasized that we had to practice humane qualities in our lives if we wanted to understand spirituality further: thus, she set up Arpana Hospital, Rural Development Services and Education for slum children. I was offered the chance of serving in these programs to develop humane qualities within as well as spread Ma's Love and Compassion to many.

I am aware I have not put all this knowledge into practice and there is so much more I need to understand and assimilate. I cannot adequately express my gratitude for what I have been given and the blessings that have transformed my life from confusion, anguish and a sense of bleak futility to a life with love, joy and purpose.

Golden Principles

You may be spiritual or you may not believe in God... but the four principles of metaphysics apply to all from the moment one is born until our last breath!

The First Principle states: "Whomsoever you encounter is the right one." This means that no one comes into our life by chance. Everyone who is around us, anyone with whom we interact, represents something, whether to teach us something or to help us improve a current situation.

The Second Principle states: "Whatever happened is the only thing that could have happened." Nothing, absolutely nothing, of that which we experienced could have been any other way. Not even in the least important detail. There is no "if only I had done that differently, then it would have been different." NO... what happened is the only thing that could have taken place... and must have taken place for us to learn and evolve in order to move forward. Every single situation in life which we encounter is absolutely perfect, even when it defies our understanding and our ego.

The Third Principle states: "Each moment in which something begins is the right moment." Everything begins at exactly the right moment, neither earlier nor later. This is because we are subconsciously ready for the new experience or challenge.

The Fourth Principle states: "What is over is over." It is very simple. When something comes to an end, it helps us evolve. Hence, enriched by the recent experience, it is better to let go and move on.

If these words strike a chord, it is because you meet the requirements and understand that not one single snowflake falls accidentally in the wrong place!

So do the best you can and always remain happy! �

Love Letters to Her Lord...



~ A Blueprint of the Aspirant's Path

In continuation

From Param Pujya Ma's beautiful flow of thoughts to Her Lord, upon reading His injunctions to Her in the Srimad Bhagavad Gita

Am I truly on the path of Spiritual living? Are my actions furthering my spiritual journey? Is every action I perform evaluated carefully... or do I merely 'react' to every situation and circumstance?

The Gita proclaims that 'All actions in this world, except those performed in the spirit of Yagya, lead to bondage.' Then which are those actions which liberate... and which are akin to the natural spirit of a human being? It is said that 'Adhyatam' which we commonly understand to be 'spiritual living' is the natural state or nature of the Divine. It is through abidance in the spirit of Adhyatam that we are actually dwelling in our natural state. As nature makes Herself available to All... without any

distinction of caste, creed, religion, need, status or state, so also must we, who were originally carved in the Divine image.

Param Pujya Ma calls to us and says, 'Every morning put your goal firmly before you and offer your entire day to Him. This body, mind, intellect, ego, all are for Him and must be offered to Him. Your actions, energies and thoughts must all be for Him! My Ram resides within me... then how can I look towards anyone else? Wherever I turn my eyes, I perceive only Him. This body is His temple... how can it do anything but act in the spirit of Yagya? All deeds are His and I must be His servitor, obeying only His orders.'

What simpler way to live?

Abha Bhandari



Chapter 3

यज्ञार्थात् कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः। तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मृक्तसंगः समाचर।।९।।

Bhagwan now says:

All actions in this world, except those performed in the spirit of Yagya, lead to bondage. Hence, O Arjuna! Be free of attachment and engage in actions that promote Tapas and Yagya.

Shloka 9

Only if one keeps one's goal before oneself and then engages oneself in living, dying, eating, drinking and performing all such actions, can one gain access to the Path. Listen! Once I have given myself to Him, then let Him decide what He wants to give me. Whatsoever He gives, is acceptable to me. My Ram resides within me... then how can I look towards anyone else? Wherever I turn my eyes, I perceive only Him. This body is His temple... how can it do anything but act in the spirit of *Yagya*? All deeds are His and I am His servitor, obeying only His orders.

Even otherwise, all that you do pertains to some goal. Wealth, recognition, wife, son, home, comforts... you act towards the satiation of such goals. Miss! The Lord is now bidding you to change your goal... change your point of view... the rest will follow automatically. Every morning put your goal

firmly before you and offer your entire day to Him. This body, mind, intellect. ego, all are for Him and offered to Him. Your actions, energies and thoughts are all for Him. In any case, your every moment is being offered death... vou are iourneying towards complete annihilation... then why not become ashes at His feet? Why offer yourself instead to those few pounds, coins, name and fame etc.? Why are you thus wasting your life? Come, let us go instead tο Ram's threshold. You are a



sentient being... why are you destroying yourself every moment for these insentient, transient objects? These very objects are the cause of your downfall. Wake up... and stay awake!

You first yearn for material objects... then you wonder if your pursuit will find fruition or not... you wonder what is in your destiny... then you think 'I do, or will do!' This is your disease. Turn away from these transient objects and merge in That Eternal One. Why do you persist in pursuing death?

Remember, 'what a man has done, a man can do!' Take courage from the *Rishis* of yore, who renounced the world to attain the Supreme. They cared not for wealth, home etc. You also must change your goal. Have faith in Ram and annihilate your 'self' at His feet. Let only Him remain, and all else be void in your conscious or subconscious world. If you cannot offer this life to Him, then offer it to Ganga! Then death is better! Do you know, except this Goal, all other goals and actions bind us to this world. Why are you wasting this life? Live only to serve that Supreme Goal. Journey through this world devoid of attachments... make the attainment of that Supreme Goal your only *karma*.

"O Shyam! Why are you tossing this feeble child of Yours hither and thither like a ball? You tell me such stories which I cannot emulate. You know also that I cannot do what You command, as of now. This curtain of ignorance that lies over my intellect has been placed there by You... no... it is You! You do not allow me to view the Truth. I know that You are also my strength. You are my ability. Come Lord! You are that thief which lures me as objects of the world. Now I know, truly, that these impediments too gain inspiration from You. Your memory often besets me on the path, 'That devious One shall stall my journey in this manner or in that manner!' If all this is You Lord, then You are also the Stealer of my heart! Lord... You have



given me all this knowledge... and I have understood it... yet why does this knowledge not embed itself completely in my mind? This mind and intellect both accept what You have said... then why does my heart delay its

acceptance? I have understood that all is You. You are the Creator, the Inspiration and also the Created... then why does my faith not become firm and limitless? Become my Guru and come to me Lord. I cannot go to find You any more because I know that I can understand That Truth **only when You will...** not merely when I search! So, I am seated at Thy feet. Call me when You will. You are seated in my heart watching me making a fool of myself... so why shall I seek You without? You are within me. Where shall I seek Thee Gopal? Whom shall I trust? I do not have the strength or ability. I get waylaid. O Deva! I am asking Thee for the way to Thy path. Let this body do as You will, but let me find rest here at Thy feet. Let me speak only to Thee, let me be absorbed in Thee – All that remains is You, the stealer of my heart, and I... O Beloved! Do not forsake me."

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः। अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामध्कु।।१०।।

Now Bhagwan elucidates His point with the example of the Creator – *Prajapati*:

The Creator, at the beginning of Creation, wrought man along with the spirit of yagya and said; "By this yagya may you prosper and multiply! May this yagya fulfil you and your coveted desires."

Shloka 10

This is being explained from the point of view of the Creator... from the point of view of Brahma. It is said here, "May you gain prosperity through yagya, and may you attain all the desires of your mind through yagya!" Always perform deeds that adhere to the Truth and let those deeds become your offering into the 'sacrificial fire'. Deeds of Yagya give peace and satiation and engender nobility.

Now reflect... what is duty? What must one do? Act in accordance with the Scriptures... work at what is achievable... work for the culmination of one's goal, keeping one's focus firmly affixed on that goal. That is duty. That which cannot be done is not one's duty – to do that which one can do, is one's duty – that which comes naturally to oneself is duty. So, progress in the performance of duty and towards fulfilling what That Lord ordains. Proceed towards your Goal and attain it.

Sanskaras, universal or individual, are the same. The individual 'body' or the universal body – both are the same. Whatever is happening externally, is happening internally also. Karmas are the catalysts of this 'carcass' production. We take birth ostensibly for the completion of our desires... desire leads to the creation of raag and dvesh (attraction and repulsion) ... these lead to more sanskaras... and these sanskarik seeds bear fruit yet again in the form of more individual 'bodies'. All this is happening in accordance with the Universal Law of Creation. It is all happening in accordance with the constitution of the body and the world.

देवान् भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः । परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ । । १९ । ।

Bhagwan tells Arjuna that Prajapati said:

Nourish the *Devas* through this *yagya* and may those Gods nourish you. Thus, through mutual satiation, both shall attain the highest good.

Shloka 11

"Parasparam Bhavayantah" – Satiating each other... Here it means, 'thinking merely of the other'. Therefore, equipped with the attitude of selflessness (nishkaam), cease to desire objects. With this state of mind,

desire for this world, wealth, fame... all these will drop away. If you offer an oblation of your ego in its totality, the Gods will be propitiated. The *Devatas* are a different form of *Prakriti*. All are because That One is. He is there as sap in the tree and in all other plants. '*Devatas*' is another name for the sense elements also. From this point of view, every deed performed by each of the sense organs have an inherent and inimitable divinity in them. Remember that Ram is the Instigator of all. It is because of Him that we can hear (with the support of the ear and brain). Observe That Conscious Force which silently lends Its power. The five sense organs are the five deities. Actually, they are only One – but they all specialize in different aspects.

Each one offers 'oblation' into the fire of yagya in accordance with one's inner values and convictions. In accordance with these, each one hears, speaks, desires etc. Yet, each one is enlivened by the Supreme Who is like that water which irrigates the sweet mango as well as the sour lime or the bitter Neem. If desire ceases, that 'Devata' is automatically eliminated. When every 'Devata' is thus eliminated, then one attains That Supreme Dev. That Eternal Dev can never cease to be. He is ever the recipient of your 'yagya karmas'. "O Ram! Pray take us, who are upon this path of Shreya, to our goal of Moksha or liberation. Only You can destroy these desires and this greed. Make me offer an oblation of my desires – how can I reach Thee without Thy positive support? Come help me O Lord! These ears, eyes, this mind... all yearn to tread the path of Shreya... remain beside me Lord." If I must see, let me see only That Beloved... let me hear only Him... let me desire only Him.

I can attain Ram only with the help of these 'Devatas'. Swami Ramsukhdas says 'Parasparam Bhavayantah' – thinking of the other and pleasing the



other – naturally *Nishkaam bhava* and the attainment of perfection can only be when one is not attached. When one lives only for Him, knowing all is He. Therefore use this life for Him. Every moment must be the sanctified oblation to put into the fire of worship of Him.

This has about the same meaning as:

यं यं वापि स्मरन् भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तदुभावभावितः ...

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ...

We attain that which we desire. "O Compassionate One! It is You Who grants us what we desire... Devotion, wealth, the world – It is You Who gives all these. The lacuna lies in our desire, in our destiny. You are seated in my heart; You, Who are the witness to my innermost desire... and You fulfil that desire. That is why You do not like my begging thus! What I am speaks so loudly that you cannot hear what I say! Therefore, I repeat, the lacuna lies in my desire. You give us all in accordance with our innermost yearning." Listen O mind! Your external façade is useless. He knows all. If you name Him your all deep within yourself, He will Himself come in the same form as you seek Him.

"O Lord! Let there be a burning desire for Thee. Let me want Thee and nothing but Thee! Presently, there is a desire for the world. O Dev! Take me to Thy feet from this day onwards. May my desire mutate and let me yearn for naught but Thee. May every taste for this world or its external façade fade away. May only You remain, and I. May I remain ever wrapped around Thy feet. Will this ever become my only 'want' and Your service my only pleasure?"



इष्टान् भोगान् हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः। तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भूंक्ते स्तेन एव सः।।१२।।

The Gods satiated by Yagya will, without a doubt, give you your desired objects of enjoyment. He who partakes of those gifts without giving anything in return to the Gods, is a thief.

Shloka 12

"How can I know how many *Devatas* there are my Lord! I know Thee and only Thee. I want Thee and only Thee. I have forged a relationship only with Thee. All my aspirations, my desires, actions, this body, mind and my entire world are surrendered at Thy feet. May my entirety melt like snow and become one with Thee. I have just one desire... to sit at Thy feet always and offer my all as an oblation to Thee. Neither my mind, my time, nor my energy matter to me. I seek only Thee. When all is Thine and I surrender myself to Thee, how can anything matter to me? Whatever transpires, may it be so... as long as You give me the strength to remain at Thy feet. May this mind never wander anywhere else. May it ever dance at Thy command."



Do you hear? You cause your ruination. own offer You 'oblations' tainted with attachment... and the Devatas accept these oblations and satiate you likewise. Tied by bonds of raag and

dvesh, you forget even the *Devatas*. What is more, you forget even That Supreme One even whilst partaking of all His gifts/enjoyments. This is theft. If you partake of sense enjoyments only for the fulfillment of your sense organs, you are indeed 'fallen' – you are a robber and your punishment will be similar. You rob the Gods of their rights. Your attachment and self motivated 'oblations' will surely lead to your undoing. They will bind you still further to the cycle of birth and death. Whosoever believes these 'Gods' to be Supreme, and deems them to be 'all in all', that one does not know the Truth.

All is He (the Supreme Overlord) and all has been created by Him. Destiny too has been decided by Him. To consider all that you have received to be 'yours', is in itself a theft. To deny That One and to make endeavours to establish the Ego – to believe that this world is yours and not His, is in itself a robbery.

Remember, when a lock has to be opened, the key has to be turned one way to open it, and to the opposite direction to lock it. Turn your 'key' towards the world and you will attain the world. Turn it towards the Self – the Inner Self, and you will attain That. It is impossible to know That One without the correct perspective. Listen! Salvage yourself! Forget the world. It is impossible to cover the whole world. Cover your 'feet' – all is covered.

Listen Miss! It is only the point of view that needs changing. Think... 'how can I be useful to him' – instead of 'how can he be useful to me!' The ego expands ignorance and meum. This is our greatest enemy. Of what avail this service to the ego all the time? The body, mind, wealth, intellect – even this ego, all are His. Lay them at His service. Give yourself to each one... share yourself. You are from Him, of Him... therefore give yourself to Him. (This is Yagya.)

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्विकेल्बिषैः। भुञ्जते ते त्वघं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात्।।९३।।

Those elevated souls who partake of the remnants of sacrificial offerings (yagyashesh), transcend all sins. Those who cook for themselves alone, partake of sin.

Shloka 13

"Lord! You Yourself say that 'he who cooks and eats for himself, who breathes, drinks and lives for himself, is a sinner.' Lord! Now I know. Therefore I pray to Thee, grant me Thy refuge. All is for Thee – it matters not if I live or die – my thoughts, cogitations, mind and intellect, all are for Thee. Let me not think of anyone else for even a single moment in the 24 hours of the day. Let only that much of me remain whereby I may name Thee my all, and taste Thy Nectar. Then as a complete oblation, let this 'I' also be offered into Thy Self. I yearn to be one with Thee... of what consequence is this path or even these scriptures? Call me to Thee Lord... or You come to me! Mergence with Thee is the sole aim of this life. You say it is a sin to do ANYTHING for oneself... I shall live only for Thee. This is the only merit I crave.



Come and grant me Thy strength and the ability – explain this Truth to me. If Thy Compassion is the light giving torch on my path, I shall be able to traverse this path with ease. Come Ram! Grant me Thy Grace. From this day onwards, I shall seek naught for 'me'. I have not been able to eliminate this 'I' through my own strength or sadhana. Instead, I have fed this ego constantly. Grant Thy Grace! Stop my worship of ego... my constant dwelling and thinking of this ego. Let me worship only Thee. Let me do only that which Thou dost bid me do. Use me as You like Ram. I am Yours. Let me but sit at Your feet and lead me wherever You desire.

Lord! From this day on, let me not 'partake' of You... May You 'partake' of me instead! O Ram! Rejuvenate me, that I may surrender

...to be continued

myself for Thy gratification. O Creator of this play of life! May I live only for Thy pleasure and may this body be for Thy usage. I have given it to Thee. Use it as You wish.

Grant Thy Mercy that I may stay at Thy feet. Listen Ram! This life is Thine – if I have given my all, how can anything remain mine? When every moment, every second, every breath, and all that is 'I' and 'mine' is Yours, then where can there be any question of Yagya Shesh or the 'remnants' of deeds of yagya? I know now that this entire world exists only till my death. Death is the furthest horizon, which shall mark the end of all enjoyments of the body and the world. Then of what consequence are these to me? I am a debtor of destiny. Sanskaras shall inevitably fructify. Let me dispense all my 'debts' soon – the rest is Yours in its entirety. These circumstances moulded by destiny are also created by You! Let me be a tool in Your hands to use as You will. May I gladly accept wherever You place me. May I act in accordance with Your scheme of the world. May I never transgress Your rules. May I bear all the joys and sorrows that You have in store for me with joy.

Lord! I wish only to live for You. Of what consequence is this world for me? You know all... You must control all. I am Thy servant – at Thy command."

The Temple of God

REPRODUCED FROM AN EARLIER ARTICLE BY SHEILA KAPUR



One's head automatically bows in reverence and obeisance at the very sight of a Holy Shrine or Mandir. Why? Is it a particular design of construction in brick and mortar that inspires one and moves the internal cords into a peaceful symphony? No. The Divine images comprising of mere stone, earth and plaster are capable of penetrating the depth of one's being as no ordinary statue in any museum would. A Temple is a soul-stirring phenomenon that reaches beyond the superficial layers of eye perception and digs deep into a far reaching hemisphere of emotional associations. Each entity representing a Higher Being, be it a God or Goddess, or a Prophet of any faith or discipline, wields a halo of Light, Power, Strength and a Higher Consciousness. This touches the innermost layers of man and absorbs him in its aura totally as no other ordinary mundane object could. One feels a rare affinity with one's Higher Self – The Atma; then likes to cling to the feeling for a while and not lose hold on it! Howsoever short be the registration, but the peace-giving element leaves its imprint and effect on the fast moving waters of the mind.



The spiritual impact on the devotee is inexpressibly enhanced when, on entering the temple precincts, he sees the Divine Image not only as an image of a human form, but his Adored Deity, who seems to live and breathe – who has a background of live stories and experiences that are sublimely inspiring. The devotee has been enamoured of Him day in and day out. His thoughts have rallied around him during sleep, dreams and wakeful hours. Now, here as he enters the temple, is a life-like image matching his daily imaginations. He being flesh and blood himself, is exhilarated and overwhelmed with the presence of his Beloved who seems to call out to him. His eyes are glued to this Divine Presence and his heart strings pulled, as if gravitationally. He stays benumbed. The spirit imbuing the Temple Deity is too strong to resist, too persuasive to turn away from.

A devotee's innocent heart is unpredictable. He walks into a Mandir casually and unintentionally, little visualizing how he can be overwhelmed by the Divine influence alien to the 'I' factor that has been ruling this body abode. Man has been egocentrically all-important, self-centered, closed to the world around and a worshipper of the self. No other body except his own matters much. Suddenly, on seeing the Divine Image in the temple, he is not only fascinated but he finds that in the image of his Beloved Lord is a culmination of his Ideals. All the tidal waves of his own sentiments flow towards His Divine Feet. Momentarily he is lost in the storm of his emotions but the peace of THAT MOMENT holds on to him for a long long time to come. He is sold out to his Lord and Master, as he was erstwhile to his own body-self identifications.

The starting point of a sadhak's Sadhana lies in "not me, but you, my Lord." The intensity of this resolve alone will lead to internal purification. The devotee bows in obeisance before the Highly Evolved, knowing his own deficiency and the Master's Efficiency. This huge gap has to be abridged somehow. The means are obedience of the Lord's Will as enunciated in the Scriptures. The body-mind-intellect robes, one's attachments and the Egoity have got to be cleansed through self-exposure. A leaning towards the spiritual will wash away all traces of materialism.

Now that the devotee is caught between surrendering his egoity and holding on to it, a tug of war will ensue. Ups and downs there will be in plenty but at least he will become an objective Witness to all that is happening within. Even when there is confusion, there will be no tension. This insight we owe to a Temple which is the sanctum conveying the Supreme Lord and His ordinances to us, which we must obey. The soil it is built on, the spirit that permeates the atmosphere around it, finds an entry to our mind, and effects changes within.

A Godhead or a Guru's presence serves the same purpose as a temple for a learner or follower of the path... For the Guru's body self embodies the Truth of the Lord's Will lived in daily life. He teaches us "not me but You, my Lord." Not that a total transformation can be expected overnight. The Intellect, conceptional differences and semi-liminal impressions from the past are bound to intervene time and again, causing us to fall repeatedly. Oscillations and vacillations of behaviour patterns may sway one like a pendulum. Yet, the impact on the mind of such a temple will be indelible.

The story of Shri Krishna and the Gopis is ever fresh and immortal. Any

tune from His flute was enough to make them self-oblivious. They ran in the direction of their Glorious Cowherd to be tended like his beloved calves in the forest of life. He took upon Himself the onus of putting each one on righteous lines by tuning in the strings of all emotional disruptions



and disharmonies. He was the only one who knew and understood how to channelize all their energies constructively. Only a selfless, Self Effulgent One could tackle and shoulder all their difficulties and problems single handedly. He was verily the Godhead in their temple of life, who filled their hearts with the glorious touch of devotional love.



Fortunate are those whose lives are touched by the presence of such Divinity; who are nurtured with the proximity of such a Spiritual Being – and who revel in the beauty of divine qualities enacted and revealed in every deed of Such One. The experience is much

like living on the banks of the Pure Ganga – dipping again and again into Her cool, refreshing depths and emerging each time with an inimitable feeling of being cleansed to the very core. This experience is relived at Arpana every moment; for we are indeed blessed to live in the proximity of Such a One.

Such a One reminds us that this clay habitation is a shrine wherein the Lord Himself abides! His Presence is obscured by coverings which must be erased with the devotional service of the Lord. All the service, prayer and surrender offered to Him in the temple without, is to realize His presence in the temples of the hearts of those around us.

When the Lord Himself is the Indweller of all hearts, then all differences dissolve into a beauteous unity... and Love is the only practiced Religion. All Deities merge into One Glorious Godhead within the devotee's heart. Yet all are equally revered and worshipped. Lord Krishna playing upon His flute of eternal knowledge; Lord Ram with His bow of righteousness and His arrows of unflinching Truth; Christ, the Embodiment of Forgiveness; Guru Nanak, the apostle of Compassion and Love; and Mohammad, the proselytizer of a Living Faith – are all worshipped with equal veneration in



the heart of a true devotee. A true temple is in fact such a temple of human accord where the Living values common to all faiths are continually celebrated and commemorated.

At Arpana, daily morning and evening prayer meetings have been held for several decades in the small but sublime temple which enshrines the divine images of the Lord in all His Forms. Living values, the essence and spirit of every religion are projected here. This is where the clarity and inspiration from the wisdom of the Scriptures is received. The Ashram members endeavour to imbibe and translate this knowledge into devotional service in their daily lives. Personal spiritual guidance is also given to seekers according to their needs.

My heart - Thy Temple

Where whall I go to search for Thee Lord Where shall I discover Thy Peace? Make this heart Thy temple... Thy Home Negate this mind that all impurity may cease.

Speak Divine One, why this Silence?
Lend speed to my spiritual endeavour
I shall call to You repeatedly till You come
And all my attachments sever.

You have stolen my heart with mischievous deceit
This body too You have annexed
But remember! Until You come before me
Sublime flutist You too shall be vexed.

* * *

Seeking the Supreme

Adapted from the Svetasvatara Upanishad by Aruna Dayai

This meditation on the first shloka of the first chapter of the Svetasvatara Upanishad has been adapted from Param Pujya Ma's devotional flow of Urvashi. The currents of Urvashi are potent with the yearning of the true seeker, whose goal is to know the Truth, as was the goal of those rishis, millennia ago, whose quest for the Supreme Truth is immortalized in the 113 shlokas across 6 chapters of the Svetasvatara Upanishad.



As Ma takes us on this pilgrimage, she tells us,

Scholars of the Vedas, seekers of Brahma, set forth in quest of the Truth. They engaged in debate and discussion to learn the highest Truth. Together they prayed to the Lord to reveal the Truth to them.

Having called to Him and enshrined Him within, Hearts full of devotion they set forth to meet Him, who is the First amongst men, overlord of the Universe, They embarked on the path of His name, towards His abode.

Those wise men were filled with the yearning to know the Truth, to learn of the primal cause. Their minds were fixed in Brahma. They were focused on their goal: their dialogue and debate centered exclusively on the Truth, for which they were searching. They were well versed in the Vedas, and yet the great Truth eluded them.

Revered Ma echoes in devotional verse, the queries which besieged their minds -

What is the origin of being? In whom is Creation maintained; What is that hidden foundation? By whom is this all sustained? Who decides the fate of all? Who defines destiny? What is that mighty power, the substratum of beings? Whose is the oversight that ensures that all occurs as is destined? How are we to know Him? How do we recognize the Supreme?

Who is it? Who is He? How can the highest Truth be perceived? The Sages gathered; seekers consumed with the question within, Learned in the Scriptures, but bereft of knowledge of Him! The sacred chant of Omkar initiated their discourse, Each thought, finding expression, was offered to the Lord.

He who is Formless, Timeless: unattached, unmanifest: How does He create these worlds, He who is Truth's eternal Essence? The Self is He, void of non-thought and thought May we know Him, in whom are fixed the worlds which He has wrought!

He is beyond the senses, unknowable by the intellect's faculties; What is the path that we may know the Supreme? How does the King of kings – He who is the Truth most high How does that Unmanifest, assume forms visible to the eye? Who is the Primal cause of Creation? Who creates all that is? Who, taking name and form amongst us, acts and moves and lives?

The enquiry, the devotion, the thirst, the yearning of these learned sages, these rishis who are steeped in the scriptures, comes alive in the

rushing current of Urvashi. Their queries spilling over, brimming and flowing and cresting in the direction of the Eternal Truth...



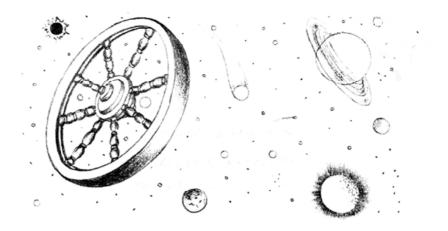
Who is the foundation of these worlds, who is the Highest God Who is Governor, who is the authority above all?
Who is it gives form to all, who moulds all those born?
Why has He created all beings? who is the Doer of all?
Who is the support of existence? in whose governance is order maintained?
Who is all knowing, the one who is the Primal Cause, who creates and sustains?

The devotional queries of the *rishis* delve into the profound mysteries of Creation, Sustenance and Dissolution of the universe – of birth and death and the interim: these questions embrace all diverse aspects of being.

Why are we not able to know who is the support of the existence of all creatures? Why are we unable to pierce the layers of ignorance that prevent us from knowing the Truth?

A mass of superimpositions obscure the reality from us: what is that impediment which does not allow us to lift this veil of darkness?

Destiny has defined the path of life which the body must traverse, as also the intellectual and mental faculties which guide it on its journey. Who



creates the environment to facilitate the particular journey of each being? Who and what are the processes that create the laws that maintain the order of the Universe, and of mortal beings?

The questions are of profound and deep relevance for all men. Who is it who assumes the infinite forms of all the cosmos; where does the Highest of High abide?

The sages, who posed these queries and plumbed the depths of knowledge, carried in their breasts this burning thirst for the Truth –

May we know the Truth, may we see the Supreme Who are we, from whence have we come May the Primal Truth to us be revealed.

In this *shloka* we experience the current of spiritual enquiry that fills the heart of these seekers of yore; in the next *shloka* the rishis explore diverse options.

As Swami Tyagi Ananda of Shri Ramakrishna Math explains 'The next mantra points out briefly, the nature of 'Manana' (reflection by 'the neti, neti' method) or the process of elimination.

Lord, may we too, with single pointed devotion, seek the Truth, piercing, with Param Pujya Ma's grace, the layers of attachment and ignorance that blind our vision.



Glimpses of Days gone by...

On the special occasion of Param Pujya Ma's birthday, we thought we'll share some memories with you all. The pictures have been picked randomly and are in no chronological order.



Ma in the early days at Madhuban



Ma shared a special bond with Ganga Ma



Ma's complete identification with the children made every occasion more joyous





Celebrating birthdays with Ma and the whole family was so much fun



Ma
partaking
the Preeti
Bhojan
along with
guests
and
villagers



Enjoying a lighter moment



With her canine friends



Every meal at Arpana starts with a prayer



The colours of Holi seemed all the more brighter with Ma in our midst



Dr. Mehta's residence at Jalandhar held special memories for Ma.



Arpana

Newsletter

ARPANA TRUST, Madhuban, Karnal, Haryana, India August 2023

Arpana Divas 2023

Commencement of Ma's Centenary Year!

The birth of a little girl child in the home of Shri CL Anand in Lahore on 26th August, 1924, began a most incredible life, bringing light, joy and love to all who lived in her ambit. August 26, 2023 marks the beginning of Ma's Centennial year, a time for all of us who have been guided and inspired by Ma, to focus on her Life and Words of eternal *SatChitAnand*. Ma's Divine Legacy imparts sustenance, hope and light to spiritual seekers to increase devotion and focus to perpetuate and strengthen Ma's Spirit.

Ma would often call Arpana an experiment to see whether people with divergent personalities, beliefs and attitudes could live together in peace and harmony and progress towards a Spiritual life in togetherness. In the process, our personal experience has taught us what an exhilarating, often challenging, but always



profoundly fulfilling, this journey has been and continues to be.

Seeds of Service

The planting of Arpana's seed of service, upheld by the sap of spirituality



manifested by Ma, has grown into a tree, yielding the fruits of education, wellness, empowerment and self esteem to our underserved brethren. This is a time to rededicate ourselves to ensure the perpetuation of Ma's legacy of Spirit and Service.

Ma planting a sapling with children

Rural Haryana

Arpana's rural team has been organising functions in different villages as part of Param Pujya Ma's birthday celebrations. The sheer exuberance of the Self Help group women is a delight to witness as they sing, dance and stage plays to demonstrate the transformation their lives have undergone in the past 25 years, when Arpana stepped in to translate Pujya Ma's vision for them into reality. Today these women feel so empowered that they are ready to take on the world!



Awareness Campaign against Flu in Flooded Villages

Fifteen villages near Karnal were severely flooded and isolated for 5 days. Flu became widespread, especially affecting children and the elderly.

Awareness campaigns were launched by Arpana through Sarpanch Naresh, Pradhan of Arpana's Federation of the differently-abled, and 3 SHG volunteers who informed the village folk about preventive measures to keep the flu from spreading.

Arpana Hospital

Eye Camp by Arpana Hospital



A **Free Eye Camp** was organized on 28th July by Arpana Hospital for 15 villages of Karnal's Indri Block that were severely flooded. 250 patients' eyes were checked and free medicines were given.

New Hope for Patients

In May, Arpana purchased a new Ambulance to provide affordable and

accessible medical care to those who need it the most. The Chief Minister's Discretionary Fund gave Rs.5 lacs through Shri Harvinder Kalyan, MLA Gharaunda, which was used towards this Advanced Life Support Ambulance to serve the local population.



Programs in Molar Bund, Delhi

Career Counselling

On 24th July, Major General Sanjeev Choudhary, having more than 37 years of experience in the Indian Army, took a Session with senior girls from classes 9 to 12 on Career Planning and How to Join the Indian Army.

The Major General discussed Agniveer Mahila Bharti Yojana, personality building for young Indian women, and shared general tips for success.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education

A session was conducted by the Family Planning Association with all girls from classes 5 to 11. Age-specific information on growing up, menstrual hygiene and family planning was shared with them.



Vector Borne Diseases



In July, Mr. Krishan Gopal, MCD Asst. Malaria Inspector, interacted with primary and middle school students to spread awareness of different Vector-Borne Diseases like dengue, malaria, chikungunya, etc. He informed them of simple steps to keep water around the house free of parasites, etc.

Life Skills Sessions Conducted by Modicare Foundation

In June a 3-day workshop was held with older students, separately for girls and boys. Agespecific inputs were given on Life Skills, i.e. Growing up and Responsible Behavior, Bullying, Peer Pressure, Substance Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse (Info was shared on POCSO Act). Certificates were given to all.



Himachal Pradesh

Irrigation Systems Increase Farmers Earnings

Irrigation tanks were built by residents in 9 villages, facilitated by Arpana, enabling them to grow vegetables. Earlier people only grew maize which did not need irrigation, but only brought them about Rs.2,000 per year.

Now farmers in 8 villages have started planting vegetables. These will be sold when they are ready later this year.



Garlic was ready in May. The farmers sold 1,276 kgs. of garlic for Rs. 85,245. Farmers have made an average of more than Rs.10,000 each – only from garlic!

Arpana is deeply grateful to the Baij Nath Bhandari Public Charitable Trust, Mr. Ravinder Bahl and Mrs. Sushma Agarwal (all of New Delhi) as well as AVIVA Life Insurance, India, and the Indian Development Relief Fund (USA) for magnanimous support for Arpana's programs.

We urgently need your assistance to continue these programs in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and New Delhi

Contact Persons: Mr. Harishwar Dayal, Executive Director, Mobile: 91-9818600644 Mrs. Aruna Dayal, Director Development, Mobile: 91-9991687310

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Arpana Ashram Research

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Arpana endeavours to share its treasure of inspiration – the life, words and precept of *Pujya Ma*, through the publication of books and cassettes.

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- Integrated Medical & Socio-Economic Centre

In Delhi Slums

- Health care to 50,000
- Immunisations
- Antenatal Care
- Ambulance

Women's Empowerment

Capacity Building

- Entrepreneurial activities
 - Local Governance
 - Micro-Planning
 - Legal literacy

Self Help Groups

- Savings
- Micro credit
- Federation
- Community Health
- Exposure Visits
 Gender Sensitization

Income Generation through Handicraft Training Skills

Child Enhancement

Education

- Children's Education
- Vocational Education
- Cultural Opportunities
- Day Care Centres
- Pre-school Care & Education

Health

- Nutrition Programme
- School Health Program

In Delhi Slums

- Environment, Building Parks & Planting trees
- Housing Project
- Waste Management

Arpana Research and Charities Trust Exempt U/S 80 G (50% deduction) on donations for the Hospital & Rural Health Programmes. Regd. under FCRA (Regd. number 172310002) to receive overseas donations.

Contact for Questions, Suggestions and Donations:

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