

O Ignorant One, why be Proud

O ignorant one, why be proud
Of this body – 'tis the dust of Thy feet
Revel not in false glorification
Lest you forget the path you seek.

You glorify in that which is dust
And are a servitor of the transient
If you perceive with wisdom's eye
Your illusion shall be rent.

O why be proud of this body when
It shall soon to dust be reduced
When my ashes mingle with yours,
Then who is greater, can it be deduced?

I am a traveller of that path
Which leads to Ram's feet Divine;
I yearn for His glimpse 'tis my last wish
To be the dust at His feet sublime.

This body shall inevitably be fuel in the pyre
Yet, if this mind in the Lord's hues is coloured
It will spread fragrance even as it burns
And unto the Lord is offered.

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

क्यों इस देह का मान करे

क्यों इस देह का मान करे, यह तव चरणन् की धूल ।
मिथ्या सराहना मत करियो, मैं पथ न जाऊँ भूल ॥
मिट्टी का अभिमान करे, अनित्य शव चाकरी करे ।
ज्ञान दृष्टि से देख इसे, क्यों भ्रम में तू फिरे ॥

क्यों इस देह का मान करे, यह जल्द ही धूलि बने ।
मम राखी तव राखी मिले, कौन किसे फिर बड़ा कहे ॥

राम चरण का पथिक हूँ मैं, अब दर्शन की है प्यास ।
धूलि बन वा चरण चढ़ूँ, यही है अंतिम आस ॥

सामग्री तो यह स्वाभाविक है, श्रेय पथ सुगन्धि बने ।
राम रंग में रंगी हो पूर्ण, जब अर्पित होने चले ॥

(अर्पणा प्रार्थना शास्त्र १, न. २३ - २०.१.१९५९)



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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.

The Lord Beckoned...

A TRIBUTE BY ABHA BHANDARI



Miss Vishnu Priya Mehta

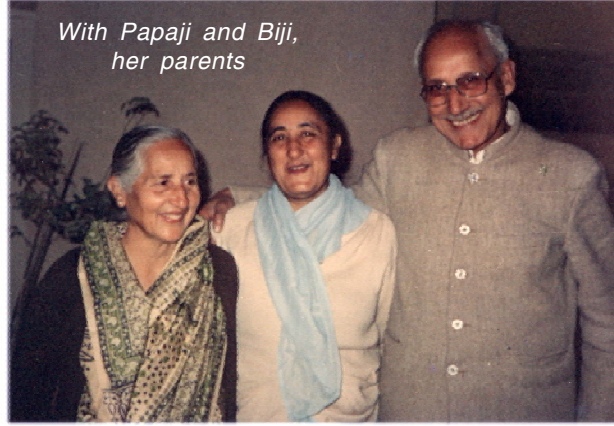
02.02.1945 – 19.09.2023

Vishnu Priya... her name says it all. Devotion and love for the Lord and His Word were perhaps her most predominant lifeline... the reason for her existence.

The experiences of her childhood and youth in the company of Beloved Ma helped her to understand her life's true purpose and goal. She fell in love with 'Urvashi'... Ma's divine Word, at a very young age... it is difficult to say whether she was more 'in love with' Ma or the wisdom that flowed from Ma in beautiful devotional verse... Urvashi. In her own words, she acknowledged that Ma was her Ideal and she sought nothing more than being with Ma at all times!

Having taken birth in the family of Revered Seekers such as Dr. JK Mehta, Arpana's Chairman Emeritus and Mrs. Satya Mehta, her genes had no choice, but to research the horizons of a spiritual life. When a heart is

truly seeking, the Lord is the Eternal Supplier! The ocean of Urvashi was hers to explore and absorb. Vishnu Behanji delved into the very depths of that vast ocean of divinity and selected the purest pearls of spiritual wisdom. Because of her deep study and research, we have today several precious manuscripts on various important topics of Urvashi.



Her love for her ‘Guru’ ensured that she received the appropriate combination of nurturing and chiseling from her Divine Sculptor. She too was ‘put through the paces’ as all true *sadhaks* are... and in each phase, her faith and her love for her Guru grew in measure. In the early days at Madhuban, I remember harvesting the wheat crop with her... and infinitely more satisfying was the time when she, as an elder sister, would prepare a delicious meal which we all partook of together! Her aim to excel was evident in every task that was given to her... whether it was starting the handicrafts activity, which she initiated with painstaking finesse and hard work under the guidance of revered Ms. Nirmal Anand, Pujya Ma’s elder sister... or keeping Trust Accounts, or looking after the kitchen and churning out delicious fare... or her most valuable participation in Arpana’s publications!

Her excellent knowledge of Sanskrit and her vast study of the scriptures elucidated by Ma flowed as wonderful informative and illuminating articles for Arpana’s quarterly magazine. She edited several manuscripts, readying them for printing and publishing.

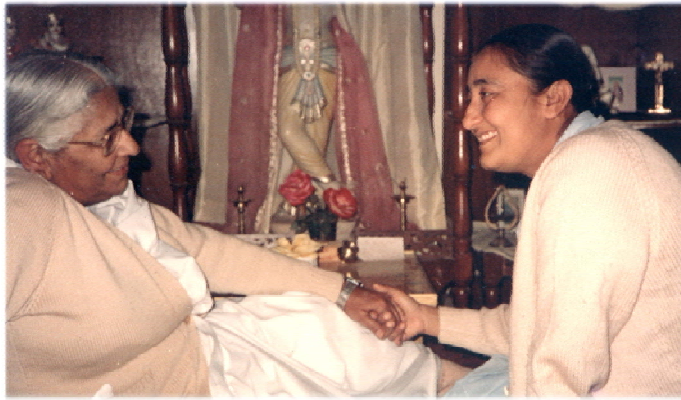
Her probing questions put to Ma in the Mandir and Ma’s responses provide us with an eternal treasure of a *sadhak’s* spiritual journey. Her study made her a veritable encyclopedia of the Scriptures which she often quoted...

Vishnu Behanji’s deep study amalgamated with her devotion, also prepared the ground for a continually progressive understanding of spirituality which later became the firm foundation of her rendition of the Shrimad Bhagvad and nurtured her already budding sapling of devotion for Lord Radha Raman.

Her personal mandir was live and throbbing... because her 'Lord' whom she later addressed as 'Thakurji' was infinitely loved and worshipped... daily she would place flowers at His feet and thought nothing of even incurring the displeasure of the 'garden in charge' as she plucked every beautiful flower for the feet of her Lord. Often, if there were no flowers, she would decorate her mandir with leaves! Whether she ate or not, she would make sure that her Thakurji had partaken of her offering!

The Lord says in the Gita, that a quality which marks a true *bhakta*, is 'generosity'. There was very little that Vishnu behanji would keep for herself... she much preferred to spend it on others... and even simply on *prasaad* to be distributed!

In recent times, how often we probed her to share her experiences with Param Pujya Ma... she did so with alacrity and with joy. In fact, on 26th August this year, she embarked on telling the story of the Illuminating five years



of Ma's life... when the time flew past, and her story had not concluded, she promised to 'continue the story' on the 2nd of October!

Dearest Vishnu Behanji, the story you were to tell, still remains untold! We all know that the Lord will certainly have placed you in such wonderful circumstances in your next manifestation, that the remaining story shall culminate in the achievement of your Aspired Goal!

Thank you, dearest Vishnu Behanji, for expanding our understanding of Ma's life and times and painting them on the canvas of our hearts with your brushes of devotion, dedication, commitment and love.

Thank you for being a wonderful, loving sister and friend... and sharing yourself so freely with all of us!

We look forward to meeting you soon... very soon... again! ❖

Love Letters to Her Lord...



~ A Blueprint of the Aspirant's Path

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

TRANSLATED BY ABHA BHANDARI

Yagya or an offering of oneself at the feet of That Supreme One is the only way to exist. The Creator created all of Nature in the image of pure giving. The clouds give rain which falls equally on all without any choice of 'me' or 'mine'... the tree gives its shade to the noble and the evil equally without any further thought... the flower unfolds its fragrance for the benefit of all... every herb gives of its goodness to all irrespective of any further distinction. Then why does man distinguish? Why does man confine himself only to those he knows as 'me' and 'mine'? In doing so, he is sabotaging the rules of life as laid down by the Supreme...

In Ma's own words:

"My Lord has taken upon Himself the burden of Creation. Why should I place obstacles in His path? He can Himself do all and does not need my assistance. They say, 'That which is given by the Beloved, and that which belongs to the Beloved is dear indeed...' Many interpret this by saying 'This world is His... all that it contains is also His... so why should we not partake of it?' Yes... partake... surely! Love all... but remember all this is His... therefore, deem it all to be your very own. All are His children. All

homes are His homes. All pain, problems and agonies that are His should therefore be accepted. Do not say “this is my child...” say “this child belongs to my Beloved... therefore acceptable to me.” This is truly ‘following the path.’ Why should I limit myself to my small pocket of wealth or my home, or my small little family? This entire world is His family. The sky is His roof. The earth is His very body... and these directions are His arms. As long as there is air, there is breath. Therefore, All is acceptable to me. This belongs to my Beloved, therefore it is mine. This is ‘Pravritti Marg’ or the path of progress towards Him.”

In continuation:

Chapter 3

अन्नाद् भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसम्भवः ।
यज्ञाद् भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः ॥१४॥

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् ।
तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥१५॥

Describing the expansion of the cycle of Creation, the Lord says:

Creatures are born of food, food is produced by rain, rain is caused by sacrifice – yagya – which is caused by actions. Actions originate from Brahm and Brahm from the indestructible, eternal Essence. It is thus clear that the all-pervading Supreme Brahm is ever present in yagya.

Shloka 14, 15

O mind! Analyze your body and analyze your world. Who abides in this body, mind and intellect? Who sustains it? Who is the Inspirational Force? Who is present all over, as the Omnipresent One and yet most unconcerned and unattached? Who abides in grain, in rain, in this body, in action? Who is the Support of all this? Who is the One Who as water, irrigates this entirety... who regulates the activities of digestion and absorption? Who leads these senses and is yet completely unconcerned? Everything is from Him, within Him... He is ever stable... ever present... He is these thoughts and justifications... He is all. Therefore, O mind, why do you not pursue and hold Him? He is not distant, He is not different... yet why does He elude my grasp? This is exactly His Divine Play. That Brahm Who resides in His heavenly abode, eludes me again and again. O friend! Come! Help me! He says “Become indifferent as I am... then only you can attain Me!” But I cannot even release this world from my grasp! Come Ram! Help me!

I try to seize Thy command. This world of latencies is You... and this path is also You... yet I find it so difficult to know You. Your embrace is all-pervading. You are my thoughts, my body, mind, intellect and also this ego. O Ram! Allow me to see Thy Essence clearly... let me experience Thee clearly, so that this life is fulfilled.

एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः ।
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥१६॥

Partha! He who does not interact in accordance with this cycle of the Universe, leads a sinful life and, delighting in sense enjoyments, lives in vain.

Shloka 16



This is the world cycle. Do not try to infringe it. Until you gain salvation, until you attain the perfection described in *Sankhya Yoga*, you must not renounce action. Actions are the only means to this attainment. Purification of the latencies and attainment of Truth, acting for Universal benefit etc. will have to be in accordance with destiny. One cannot put a stop to the organs of action and allow the mind to partake of sense enjoyments... this will lead to utter failure. This is hypocrisy and theft. Keep treading the path towards Ram with sincerity of purpose. Do not worry... the mind will slowly fall in place. *Tapas*, *yagya*, *daan* should be practiced at all times. Or else you will always be in control of the sense organs. Your life will be wasted. Engage in *sadhana*. Listen... whatever life is left to live, is very short. O mind! Do not waste these years. Be careful lest this life passes away in a futile manner. If you do not agree, then you are destined to degradation. If you do not want to employ

these methods of attaining Ram, then it is better to drown in the Ganga! Shameful indeed! Your life is then a complete wastage.

O Ram! When I take Thy Name
And I know You are all,
Then pray lift this veil from my eyes
And grant me Thy vision withal...

This world of Yours O Ram,
Casts this illusion every moment upon me
It shows me beauteous dreams
And distances me from Thee.

This desire to merge with Thee remains
This thirst to see Thee grows
Pray distance this world from me
My yearning to be one with Thee grows.

This desire to see Thee has arisen Lord
Within the heart of this seeker...
But as he embarked on his journey
The world appeared as a hindrance maker.

This fraudulent world deceived me thus
And distanced me from Thee... I cognize...
I have fallen Lord – so drastically
Still this mind does not realize!

And even now, this foolish 'I'
Has still not reached satiation...
It is constantly deluded still
By those same 'pebbles'
that caused the delusion.

Whenever I seek Thee Lord
In those very pebbles,
Amazingly I find that You come
As those very pebbles!

O Ram! Hear my plea,
Why have You distanced Yourself from me?
Come Lord, just this once
That this mind may find peace within me.

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।
आत्मन्येव च संतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥१७॥

However:

He who delights in the Self, is contented in the Self, and ever satiated in his Self, he has no duties to perform.

Shloka 17

Listen! First implicit trust, then implicit faith... The Lord says “Do not extend your hand in seeking from others. Be satiated within yourself. If you are constantly seeking the support of others, you will never find peace. Remain completely absorbed in your Atma Self. Believe only in the Atma, and merge only in the Atma... this is the highest *sadhana*. This is the only goal to reaffirm. This is the mark of the Perfect One. Leave the body to destiny. This has already been decided by the Lord. And O foolish mind, you have no hand in it. O mind... make all your efforts towards That Atma Essence. You agonize for that which is already determined... which you are destined to get. You are wasting your effort. You do not even look towards that which is so very important to attain. Wake up Miss! Begin your journey immediately. Why are you wasting your life? Time is short and the goal is distant. Come! Proceed towards That One immediately.

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥१८॥

The Lord speaks of the Atmavaan:

Such a One has no use for accomplishment of action nor for deeds not accomplished; he depends on no one for the fulfilment of any selfish purpose.

Shloka 18

Perform all actions in the spirit of Yagya. Act selflessly – then you will be established in the Atma Essence, and you will be satiated. Then no desire will remain. No dependency will remain on any sense objects. Even that intellect will not remain which decides “I want to do this, or I don’t want to do that!” Then of what consequence is duty... what is duty when there is no desire or incentive left? Absolute indifference will then remain. What does it matter then whether any particular person supports you or not.

Do not understand this wrongly. Act you must... in accordance with your

state. Actions are your ONLY means to your goal. If you seek That Goal, then wealth, status, knowledge, mind, intellect, health are aids only till you reach it. Once one is established in That Goal, of what avail are actions? Then one needs no assistance any more. When one is lost in That One, of what avail this world? Let alone the world, one does not even need this carcass. With whom does one interact? Such a one is liberated in this very life. He is a *Jivan Mukta*. He has no immediate desires.



However, neither you, nor Arjuna have reached that state. Therefore the Lord warns... “Do not renounce all foolish one!”

Our lives are well knit. Even the body and its various component parts are interdependent. Even the sense organs are completely dependent on each other. Without absolute co-ordination and cooperation, they cannot work. No one is ‘self-made.’ No one is completely independent. Some depend on fame, wealth, home, children, wife etc. The body depends on food, doctors etc. Now they say, ‘Renounce dependency’ for, any one at any time can deceive you. Depend only on Him and be satiated in That Self. Then who can be fool you? There is complete non-attachment. This is what will take you towards supreme peace. This is in Ram’s hand, O fool! How can I reach this state Ram? Where all will I need to cut the roots of attachment? It is only with Your Grace that they can all be eradicated in one moment. O Lord! Come! Grant me Thy Grace. I have left all to Thee... may Thy Will prevail... it is Thy decision. Do as You will.

O mind! Come! Plant the seed of Independence today. Allow me to tread the path of *Shreya*. I have to be one with Ram. Of what avail this world? Shyam has said, “I have no use for accomplishment of action nor for deeds not accomplished...” but how can I perform my actions thus indifferently? O Ram! If You show me the way, only then will I be able to follow suit.

Shyam says, “Do not be a fool. Are you a child? The Yoga of action, and Sankhya Yoga are the same – since their fruit is the same... the attainment of the Supreme.” The difference lies in one’s intent... not in the action.

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।
असक्तो ह्याचरन् कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥१९॥

Therefore O Arjuna!

Be unattached and constantly perform all necessary actions efficiently, because one achieves the Supreme state through the performance of detached action.

Shloka 19

We are not ‘Knowers of the Atma’... nor was Arjuna. They speak here of the law of *karma*. They talk of complete detachment with the world and a one-pointed concentration on the Goal. They advise, “Free yourself from attached action – but only after establishing a relationship with the Supreme.” He is all. Know this truth. A monkey releases its hold on one branch only after it has gained a good hold over the next one. A caterpillar first gets a good foothold with its front legs before it leaves its earlier footing. You also should do the same! If you have relinquished attachment with the world and not established it elsewhere, you are bound to wander. You will then become anguished and will inevitably fall. Then *taamsik* latencies will emerge. Therefore, first connect the mind with the *Atma* Essence... join your heart with That Supreme One with the adhesive of devotion. Then relinquish your hold on the world. Then the question of renouncing or not renouncing will not arise.



The world may speak of *Nivritti* (turning inwards) or *Pravritti* (turning outwards)... but Miss, you have determined what you must do – You must affix your mind in Ram... the rest will fall away. Establish a firm relationship with Him and hold His feet... let your tears of joy in unison flow. When your meditation on Him and your confluence with Him is as incessant as the ceaseless nature of the flow of oil, and you flow persistently in His thoughts, then He Himself shall release you from the world. Then,

whatever the circumstance, the mind is affixed in Ram... it matters not what situation one faces... one's mind is laid at the feet of the Lord.

Lord! I shall do as You say. But You must give the orders – otherwise I shall not leave Your temple. Do as You will. I shall go only on one condition – You must abide in my conscious mind every moment... or else Your world is becoming meaningless for me. You must stay with me forever in my mind. Only this desire remains. What care I for wealth, fame, recognition etc.? I have nothing to do with the status of the other... nor my own... we are but beggars before You. Others are far greater... at least they are deserving... whereas, I, burdened with the dirt of attachments and *moha*, am not even deserving of Thee. Lord! Have mercy! Remove me from the world and grant me place at Thy feet.

Why should I bother about disturbing or pleasing circumstances? I have no time for these. All this time is yours. Do as You please. You decide all circumstances...so be it... now that I know that all ensues from Your Inspiration, then why should I worry? Is this *sadhana*? You say *sadhana* is imperative for me. You say it is important to engage in action... then walk along with me. We shall go wherever You think fit. But I will not walk without You. I cannot understand Your orders. You must come Yourself... then I shall obey. I seek only to serve You. Your constant meditation is my fervent wish. You are my Goal. I shall do whatever You tell me to do. They say this world is the arena wherein my *sadhana* shall become established. You want me to plunge into it. If so, then come and abide in my mind at a conscious level and lead the chariot of this 'carcass'. Of what consequence are Your words? I seek to meet Ram – come before me Ram! If You wish me to engage in action, come and engage me. You know what I must do. Come now.

It is said from the Universal point of view, "Do all that is allotted to you by destiny and circumstance, with complete detachment and indifference and irrespective of religious barriers. Watch your body.



Yes. Your body performs the allotted actions from a distance in an unconcerned manner. Knowing that all duties have already been allotted by Him, and knowing that you cannot go even slightly against His ordinance... why do you then not give in? I am Your servitor, Lord. How does it matter to me... Do what You will... and not knowing exactly what You desire of me, I shall just imitate You! Or else, tell me what shall I do? Let me just practice 'copying' You. I know You will not accept me until my nature does not become like Yours! Till such time Lord, I shall not rise from my place at Your feet.

But O *Liladhar*! You are performing Your play. You have pressed my 'button' and I am rotating like an automatic machine! Then how does it matter? Why should I take the responsibility of anything? I shall deploy myself wheresoever You decide. I shall sing the *Raga* You decide. They say, 'that Guru, mother, father, friend etc. are to be renounced, who do not take me towards Ram.' Renounce them immediately O mind! He knows that this is not in our control! He knows that we do not have this ability to reach Him through the *Yoga* of knowledge. He knows all; therefore He is suggesting an easy way. He says, "Let everything happen the way it is happening... just eliminate your reaction in every circumstance. Do not worry... smilingly accept every situation He has placed you in. Be indifferent to it.



If someone has come to meet you, there is no harm... but the thought 'why has he come' or any other negative reaction is sinful. The wavering of the mind is wrong. If the mind is truly fixed in Ram, it will not waver nor vacillate. But why do you worry? If someone comes, you can always interact in a way that the mind does not swerve from That One... so that there is no deflection of the mind. Always remain in equanimity in all situations... as the lotus leaf remains untouched. Your mind must not be touched by what others say. Not a line of resentment should occur. If it does, then go and live in the world – endure the lashes of joy and sorrow. Do not pretend. Your goal is something else... then why do you pretend otherwise? Or else, forget the world and ceaselessly dwell in Him.

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।
लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन् कर्तुमर्हसि ॥२०॥

यद् यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥२१॥

Supporting the necessity of action, the Lord says to Arjuna:

Janak and other perfect souls attained the Supreme goal by deeds alone; moreover, even for the maintenance of the world order, you should perform actions.

Bhagwan Krishna is again stressing the importance of action:

What a noble person does, others also do the same; the world follows the standards set by him.

Shloka 20, 21

They say, “Look at your destiny and your nature.” What is meant here is that one’s duty is to maintain the world order through the nature/qualities endowed upon us by Nature and through the circumstances that have been given to us. We must not hinder the world order. If you cannot do one thing, do another. But whatsoever you do, do towards That goal. It matters not whether you have knowledge or not. Do your duty. Do whatever you can – and do it with non attachment. If you cannot even do that, then only engage in action. But act you must. Slowly, you will attain perfection. Take the example of Janak and other Seers and act accordingly. Even then you will be liberated. Even those who were Knowers of the Truth, engaged in action. Raman Maharishi, too, used to interact with people. Keep their example before you and act... and then become an example yourself. Those Knowers of the Truth always did what was right. They engaged in action without any attachment or interest. Others merely followed them. The Knowers of Sankhya also recommend engagement in action... but completely devoid of any self interest. They love all and are yet indifferent to all. Other people’s destinies are also mingled in yours. How can you give up any work? One has to carry on as He desires.

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥२२॥

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥२३॥

Addressing Arjuna, Krishna says:



There is no duty for Me to fulfil in all the three worlds; neither do I have anything to gain. Even so, I engage myself in action.

Thus continuing, Bhagwan says:

If I did not conscientiously engage in action, people would follow My example in all matters.

Shloka 22, 23

The Supreme Lord is also of our 'kin'! He is our 'relation'. This is what is being clarified here. Therefore, this is a unison of 'family members!'

I took the support of Ram. He has accepted me. Then why can I not believe that His strength is my strength? Pakistan also takes so much pride in being supported by USA! After a treaty, even a weak country feels strong. So why be afraid of anything... even death? Death too is subservient to That Supreme One. My protection is the *dharma* of my Beloved. O Ram! Why can I not believe this experientially despite knowing it is a fact? The Lord says, "If I relinquish action, the entire world will also do so. That would bring about a holocaust."

Just as when one makes someone one's hero or ideal and wants to be like that one, our hero is the Supreme Lord. We want to be like Him. Only He is this Whole, but indifferent... detached. O mind! You too must go to His feet and endeavour to become like Him.

...to be continued

Simple Revelations

ADAPTED FROM PARAM PUJYA MA'S SATSANGS BY ARUNA DAYAL



On Festivals and Fasts

Question: Amongst Hindus, religious festivals are observed by fasting. Why is this so?

Answer: In Hindu philosophy the faithful are enjoined to transcend the concept 'I am the body'. This is the basic spiritual precept and practice of the Hindu faith. Devotees have to learn to transcend the body self. A religious festival is an occasion of spiritual practice. A day to practice control of the mind and its wandering *vritties*. Fasting is a method used for this so that the mind remains fixed on the Deity. Thus, the actual meaning of 'vrata' is a vow or a pledge.

A devotee will regard his Lord's birth differently. He will say, "O Lord, how were you born for one like me? Whenever you come to earth, I reject You, whenever Your glory is manifest in human form, murderers like me become the cause of Your death!"

On this day the devotee reflects on his negative qualities and on the divinity of his Lord. He is full of gratitude for the Lord's gifts to him so it cannot be said that he has eaten nothing and drunk nothing. He has partaken of his Master's favours to him and drunk deeply of His Love.

Question: On Lord Krishna's birth anniversary we fast totally and eat nothing while on Sri Ram's birth anniversary we partake of fruit. Why this difference?

Answer: Different concepts have moulded customs at different times. But when we observe a fast on such a festival, what is the food being referred to? Is it in reference to the food of the mind? Or the body? Or the intellect? What is the nature of the food being referred to? Is it *Rajasic* food or *Tamsic* or *Satvic*?

In actual fact, not to take in any food on such occasions is a reminder of the Truth that 'I am the *Atma*! I am not the body'. If we take a *vrata* to mean a mere fast at the gross level, what spiritual progress will we make? Thus, to keep a *vrata* is to remember that we should abide in the *Atma*. We should remain unaffected. We should stay untouched.

The deeper meaning of a *vrata* is to remind us of our true nature – the spiritual Self.

Sadhana

Question: What is the path of a true *Sadhak*?

Answer: Do not criticize anybody.

Do not humiliate anybody.

Do not think you are right.

Don't ever think you know everything.

If you think you are right, your internal attitude will go wrong. You will begin to imagine you are superior and your concern for others will decrease.

Do not try and subordinate others to yourself. You will go astray.

Love everybody and the divine qualities will naturally grow and blossom in you.

The Habit of Fault finding

Question: How are we to rid ourselves of the habit of fault finding and criticism?

Answer: If it is your habit to criticize others, you must realize there is a strong failing, a deep-rooted fault in your own self. The habit of criticism is like a cancerous disease. In fact, it is like this incurable disease AIDS,

where the body gets weaker, eaten up from inside by the disease and the muscles lose their strength. The habit of fault finding also eats you up from within. It is destructive.

If your children commit mistakes, you do not indulge in criticism. You correct them, help them and encourage them to overcome their weaknesses. Why, then, indulge in fault finding where others are concerned? A *sadhak* will not apportion blame even if a person commits a wrong in front of him. His attitude will be one of compassion and helpfulness.

So you must look within. See your own folly, your own weaknesses and transgressions. See your own impurities. Then you will not be able to blame or criticize others once you have seen the truth about yourself.

The Lord's Name

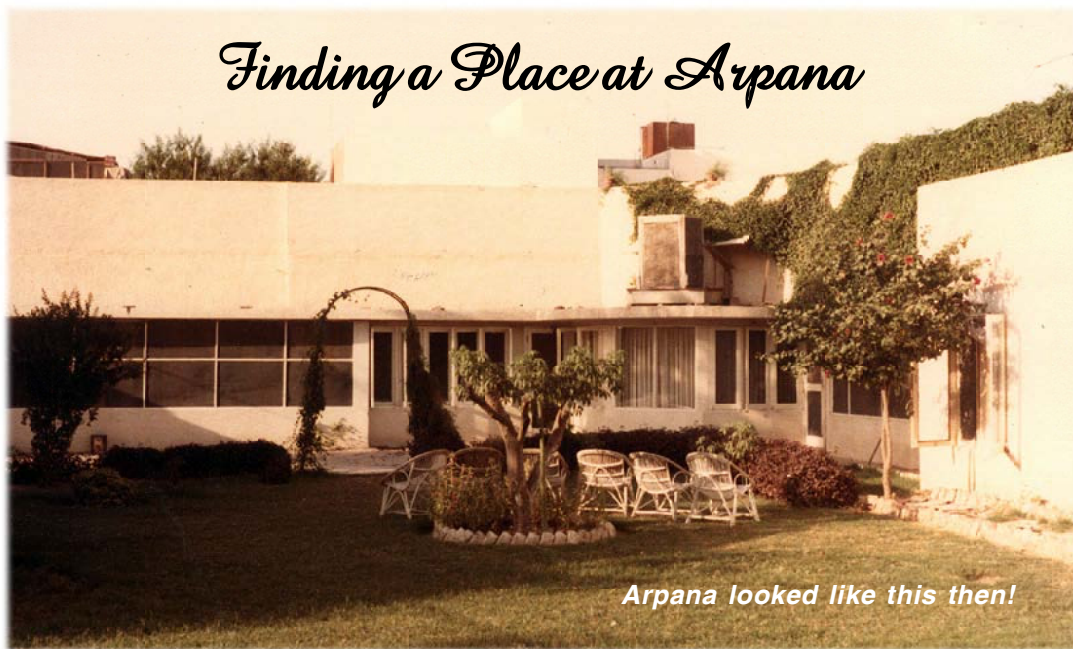
Question: I want to take the Lord's Name but I am unable to. What should I do?

Answer: You have never remembered the Lord – that He is the One who has given me all I have. All the wealth of happiness I have today is the gift of the Lord to me. What I eat and drink – all are part of His bounty. Just by a mere repetition of His Name – by chanting 'Ram, Ram, Ram' – the Lord will not abide in the heart. Try and become like Him! Then His Name will become part of your life. First express your gratitude to Him for all you receive each day. Thank Him constantly for all you have and His Name will fill your heart!

Question: We are totally involved and attached to this body self. What is the way out?

Answer: We have forgotten that this body is the Lord's creation. I do know that I have not created this body. So how can I be vain and proud about it? My family, my children, all this has been given to me by the Lord.

If you say that you cannot concentrate on His Name, then try and remember Him in every situation. Start thinking in this way – that all you receive is from the Lord. All you have is given by Him. In this way, He will be all around you. If someone hits you, it is Ram who has ordained it. If some work is completed, Ram has had it done. In this way the Lord's Name and Presence will abide in your heart. It is very important to strengthen His Name within yourself. Do all your routine work, but bring the Lord into all aspects of your life. Things will become much easier. Do all you have to in His Presence. ❖



PART II OF 'MY ARPANA JOURNEY' BY ANNE ROBINSON

When I arrived at Arpana Trust, Madhuban, Karnal, Haryana, on 1st October 1979, Param Puja Ma was not there. She was in Arpana's home, Vashisht House, in Himachal with (as I recall) Chhote Ma, Dr. J.K. Mehta, Lav Kapur and Reva and Abha Bhandari, daughters of Major General B.N. Bhandari.

Manju introduced me to the two or three dozen people living at the Arpana Trust House, who were mostly from five families:

1. Ma's relatives consisted of her cousin, Mr. R.K. Anand (who was near the end of his days), and his son, Krishan Anand. Also, Ma's niece and nephew, Niriti and Varun, the children of Ma's brother, Dr. A.K. Anand.
2. Chhote Ma's relatives were her sister, Vandana, with her husband, Kamal, and their two children, Anand and Nandini.
3. Dr. J.K. Mehta and his wife, Bijji, and their 3 daughters, Vishnu, Annu and Priya
4. Mrs. Sheila Kapur, her son Lav and his wife, Annu Mehta, and their 3 children
5. The Dayals which included Manju, Deepak and his wife, Aruna, and their two children, as well as Ravinder and his wife, Priya Mehta, and their two children

Other members of the family at this time were Chachiji (who was near the end of her days), Mrs. Batra (who handknitted huge warm shawls), Raj from Kutail Village who had just completed his IT Graduation and Chhote Chachaji, a distant relative. Along with Ma and the Dalhousie group, there were a total of 34 living at Arpana at this time.



I was very keen to meet Revered Ma (as she was called then). There was talk of taking me up to Dalhousie to meet her, but there was unrest with Pakistan and the border was very close to Dalhousie. The Indian Army did not want foreigners in the area. In addition, there was the uncertainty of violence due to the Khalistan Movement in Punjab. Thus, since Ma was to return in a few weeks, it was decided I should just wait in Madhuban.

Because Ma was not there, I got to know the rest of the Arpana family and was soon joining them in their activities. My childhood friend, Manju Dayal, had just fulfilled a dream of hers by opening a gift shop in Karnal, with all proceeds going



My Shop in Club Market, Karnal

to charities, and I enthusiastically joined in the work.

In addition, there were six children under the age of 3 years in the family who I especially enjoyed being with. Shabri was 2 ½ and Shravan was 2 years old. There were two sets of twins: the girls, Shruti and Smriti, were 4 months old and the boys, Aman and Naman, were two months old!



Soon I was taking Shabri and Shravan on walks around the *ashram*: visiting the brick kiln nearby where several workers lived in temporary housing; reaching the large irrigation canal on one side; discovering ants, grasshoppers, butterflies, peacocks – a whole world of flora and fauna! Of course, the little ones were unable to walk for long and I ended up carrying them both back home from our excursions, one in each arm.



Mrs. Mehta (Biji) with Aunty Batra

Besides the little children and helping in the shop, I started asking questions about what Ma taught from Manju and others. Biji, and later Aruna Dayal, offered to help translate Ma's *satsangs* for me. I eagerly accepted and was soon immersed in different perspectives, wisdom I had never understood before and logical support for knowledge that had, up till then, only been an ideal without a strong foundation.

I was excited to hear that "Everyone is doing the best they know with what they have." In other words, it is ignorance that leads to mistakes, misery, violence and all the evil we see around us. I was happy to think that we could not truthfully blame anyone. It is ignorance that is at fault! So the Lord tells us in every religion, "Do not judge." He says, "I have come not

to judge, but to serve.” That is what the Lord wants us to do – serve with compassion and make the world a more beautiful place!

I learned that primal ignorance is the thought, “I am the body, mind and intellect.”

- I learned that whatever I could see, I could not be (e.g. I look at my body, but each part that I see is not me). I learned I am what sees, I am the see-er!
- I learned that whatever I thought, I could not be, because my thoughts are ever changing!
- I saw that my intellect could reach logical conclusions to a point, but was influenced by my own agenda and emotions, so I could not be sure of their truth. So I could not be the intellect.

I learned to focus on that witness which was seeing instead of the emotions of the mind which are basically reactions (temper tantrums) against not getting what we want.

I learned that we all have all the qualities within us – good and evil. We are all egoistic, selfish, wanting things our own way AND we also have humane qualities of caring, compassion, love and identification with the other.

As one wise story has it, “We become that which we nurture.” So if we nurture our love of the Lord, all other humane qualities will be strengthened and we become the embodiment of the Lord. But if we continue to want what we want, without thought or action for others, we strengthen the ego – the selfish, fascist beast within us – and we become that!

I was not able to assimilate all these teachings (and a great many more) within me at that time – it is taking years! But the joy of learning the truth about our lives, about the Creator, about our purpose and our mission was planted in my heart and I felt that here at Arpana I could learn all that I yearned to know.



*Anne sharing a lighter moment
with Mrs. Sheila Kapur*



Reva with Aruna and Chhote Ma

Thus, when nearly two months passed and Ma was still in Dalhousie, Reva Bhandari came to me and said, “Anne, you are on a 3 month tourist visa, with which you planned to visit Rajneesh Ashram in Pune. Ma may not come for some time. Why don’t you visit Rajneesh and see if it is what you want. If not, you can always come back.”

I replied, “I have interacted with devotees of Rajneesh in America and have done trainings which opened up my thought processes, but in Pune there are 4,000 devotees in his *ashram* and one rarely if ever has the chance of personal instruction. Here, there are only a few people and I am assured that Ma will answer my questions. Here I can live with Such a One without the distraction of thousands of others. So I do not want to go there. I want to see Ma.”

Another member of the ashram, K.K. Anand, an acclaimed architect, told me of his experience. He said, “When I came here initially, Ma told me to go visit all the other *ashrams* that I had heard of and find one I wanted to stay in. She said if I didn’t find one, I could always come back to Arpana. So for a year I visited many *ashrams*, but I realized it was only at Arpana that I felt I could gain my goal.”

Without thinking I immediately replied, “She won’t tell me that. I am not interested in exploring different *ashrams*. I want to learn more of what Ma is teaching. I want to learn the truth.”



Finally, two months after I arrived at Madhuban, Ma returned from Dalhousie. I was eager, yet nervous, to meet her. She exited the car and came towards us.

I was introduced to her and she welcomed me, telling me she had heard a lot about me. At that moment I felt like the earth moved. It was not a huge earthquake, but it was something that I was not expecting – and could not ignore. I had never believed in such signs before, but something was telling me this was a defining moment in my life.

I was anxious to talk to Ma, but two full days went by before she called me. She was sitting in the enclosed porch next to her bedroom working on her papers and bade me sit. She welcomed me to Arpana and said she had heard



good things about me – that I was entering into the life of the community, being friendly and taking care of the children, assisting Manju in the charity shop she had set up as well as showing interest in Ma's *satsangs*. "What do you want to do now?" she asked. "Can I stay here for a while?" I asked, "I've heard that I can probably extend my tourist visa to six months." Ma laughed and asked about my finances. I told her I had used up most of what I had saved just in traveling to India and said I would have to get a job as soon as I returned to the USA. Ma said that I wouldn't need much if I stayed in the *ashram* where I would have a place to stay and my meals. She said I should conserve the few hundred dollars I had in hand for the future.

Then she asked if I had any questions and I blurted out, "Ma, what is God?"

Now I had grown up in a religious Christian home. My parents were missionaries in India for twenty years. I had gone to Woodstock School in Mussoorie where we had prayers, Bible classes, Church services on Sundays



Anne with her parents

and also mid-week as well as teachers and counsellors whose advice and guidance was based on their belief in God.

However, I saw the

discrepancies between what was taught and what was practised by Christians. I saw their intolerance for other religions and beliefs. Also there were many instructions in the Bible I could not agree with. For instance, that the only son of the Father God was Jesus Christ – and nobody could be saved but through him. But what about the thousands of years before Christ and the millions of people who had never heard of him? What about the *avatars* in other religions like Ram and Krishna? Were Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva – who were worshipped by millions – just mythology?

Other injunctions in the Bible I refused to give credence to such as in Ephesians 5:22-30, “*Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church.*”

Even in the New Testament, slaves are ordered to “in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters.”

And so much more.

When I was in high school in the 11th class, I began reading Western philosophers and soon rejected the concept of the Christian God. I called myself an atheist. But I did not explore other religions and turned to science instead. I met new friends, all of whom thought religion passe and that science was the way to find answers. I enjoyed fast and furious discussions as well as learning of the frontiers of research. I married a physicist who worked at the Johns Hopkins Advanced Physics Laboratory.

However, my interests lay in writing and I soon put my time into writing science fiction stories. This did not go well, however, and I began trying my hand at other activities.

Within a few years, we decided to ‘leave the rat race’ and purchased 250 acres of land in the state of Maine. We built our own house and over the next few years purchased plots of land and built homes for sale. I was quite proud of my building skills!

I then returned to University as I had not completed my degree and decided to get a B.Sc. qualification in economics and political science. However, as our interests and activities diverged, my husband decided we should get divorced. This traumatic event was completed over the course of the next year, about the time I graduated from the University of Maine in Portland.

I had been living in Portland, Maine, and made friends with those I met in the ‘New Age Center’. I still loved exploring new ideas and it was here I met disciples of Bhagwan Rajneesh (later called Osho) and eventually decided to come to India to meet him.

My unlikely journey to India and, specifically to Arpana Trust, are narrated in ‘Finding Arpana’, My Arpana Journey, Part I (published in Arpana Pushpanjali, August 2023).

As I mention above, it was two months after I came to Arpana before I was able to meet Param Pujya Ma, who was in Himachal Pradesh when I arrived at Arpana. In my first private meeting with her, after reassuring me that I was welcome to stay at Arpana for free, she asked if I had a question. And I blurted out, “Ma, what is God?”



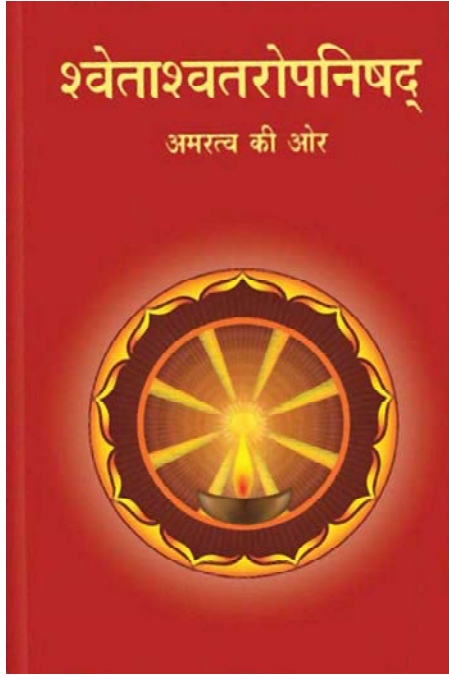
Ma started to answer and then laughed. “You are intelligent and will be staying here for some time. Don’t worry, you will figure it out!”

I felt relief. I didn’t have to defend any position I had. I didn’t have to disbelieve what she said. Ma said I could figure it out by myself. I smiled and thanked her, grateful I had found a place at Arpana – even if it was just for a few months.

*...to be continued in Part III
of ‘My Arpana Journey’*

The Primal Cause of Creation

ADAPTED FROM THE 2ND SHLOKA OF THE SVETASVATARA UPANISHAD
BY ARUNA DAYAL



The Svetasvatara Upanishad is an important treasure of Vedant. The Maharishi Shewetashawar contemplates on the creation of the Universe, on its casual principle. The spiritual enquiry, elucidated by Param Pujya Ma flows as a harmony of devotional enquiry as to who is the Supreme Principle! A devotional celebration and Praise of the one Supreme Truth and pondering on what is the First cause of the cosmos.

In this humble adaptation of Param Pujya Ma's elucidation as we too, delve into the process of contemplation and cogitation of the seekers.

कालः स्वभावो नियतिर्यदृच्छा
भूतानि योनिः पुरुष इति चिन्त्या ।
संयोग एषां न त्वात्मभावा-
दात्माऽप्यनीशः सुखदुःखहेतोः ॥२॥

Time, nature, law, chance, matter, energy, intelligence neither these nor a combination of these, can bear examination because of their own birth, identity and the existence of the self. The self is also not a free agent, being under the sway of happiness and misery (Swami Tyagishananda).

The original enquiry arose amongst the seers about was who is the cause of Creation. The debate amongst them, began focusing on the primal cause.

Thoughts arose, words flowed as this great mystery explored:
Who or what is the cause of the Universe:
Who assumed its infinite forms:
Who is it who ordains, and decides cosmic norms:
Who maintains Nature's laws?

From whence has man come, from where has he found support:
Who is the Highest Being from whence he finds his energy and power.
Under whose aegis does Creation thrive;
Who controls the flow of events:
What is the agency from whence the world comes forth?

The first option considered is **Time**, from whence creation and destruction arise. It is time that orders and ordains events and so governs birth and demise. No, said others. It's not time; on whom or on what does Time rest? there is another cause behind time itself. The Supreme cause is not Time, it is other than Time, for that Supreme Truth cannot be bound in the coils of time. The Supreme it is, who gives power to Time. That Essence is other, it is unknown. Time cannot be the Primal Cause, it is another, and remains unknowable to the *rishis* engaged in this vein of spiritual enquiry.

Then it seems to the seekers that it is **Nature**, which first manifests, and in accord with Destiny, assumes names and forms to constitute the world. It is the mental trait of desire which manifests as the seen objects and sustains them. It is Nature which carries the seed of desire, that is by Fate nurtured and maintained. The seed, the mental trait or '*viritti*', is full of dynamic potency and sprouts and evolves into the manifest world that is seen. Emerging thence, names and forms do appear. But the *rishis* seek He who is the power that creates all and energises all the Universe. This power is something else: Nature it cannot be, for Nature itself is created by an agency unknown to man.

Who is the cause behind Nature, resulting in its manifestation. It is not as though all Nature appears of its own volition. Nature cannot be the Primal cause, as it is a creation by another, it is dependent on its originator.

Is the collection of seeds of action the cause of creation... as the seeds

cause, and also manifest as events and then assume all forms we see in Nature.

The secret, buried intents in *sanskaras*, can they be the Cause?
These become the cause and effect,
And turn on the wheel of *Karma*,
As fate, without pause.

In line with these *sanskars*, does Nature emerge? as do names and forms? It is in accord with ordained acts that all beings with diverse qualities are adorned. But no, that cannot be. In dissolution, who is in Command, who is it in Death, that maintains order and issues directives to create new lives and forms?

Then rises the thought, did Creation come forth suddenly, without reasons, without order, did Creation first appear... some events here, some occurrences there? However, it can be seen, and perceived, that always an order prevails.

Are the **Five Elements** the causal principle, combining to create space; wind; water; fire and earth, together, to create these worlds? No, that cannot be, for the five elements are made manifest by another agency which causes these powers to find expression and form in Nature.

Is the *Jivatma* then the primal cause? Is it this *jivatma* that assumes all of Creation? The individual soul cannot be the Primal cause since it is in bondage to fate and action. How then can it be the highest Truth and cause of all? There is a higher authority that is the Causal Principle, which becomes the forms that make up our Universe.

The *Jivatma* as we know, in joy and sorrow is bound:
the intents and seeds of past deeds hold it captive in the Karmic round.

These inanimate elements cannot be the cause, the Truth is beyond all we see. The *Jivatma* is not the final essence: it is subject to actions and their seeds.

The *rishis* thus in discussion enquire about the Supreme Being: Truth, Consciousness, Bliss. Unmanifest, Supreme Essence, what is that Primal Being?

The most High, Indestructible Brahma who is He,
The Essence of all, Cosmic form, Unseen Essence, who is that authority?

Who controls all things? who lays the law?
The highest Essence and support, that creator,
He it is, whom we wish to know.

The intellect seeks to know, that which is beyond itself. It cogitates: investigates, what is the Essence of Truth itself. The Primal Cause, the Highest God, who is He, indescribable, unmanifest Essence: Lord of all who is He? The Cosmos is His Manifest form. O Essence of Truth, who art Thee? Thou who art beyond understanding, and thought, Lord who art Thee?

In the course of the spiritual debate, the seekers realized that the first cause, the creator is not from or of the created universe, neither is HE any human being. He who can be seen, investigated and grasped by the intellect cannot be the Primal and



Supreme Truth. The discussion of the *rishis* scoured the skies of spiritual wisdom, and plumbed the depths of intellectual surmise. Finally, they had one realization: the Primal Cause is beyond the intellect, beyond the grasp or the mind. The *rishis* who were knowers of the Vedas were unable to describe in words the source and essence of language, or the primal fount, from which words and expression flow.

Revered Ma's elucidation leaves us on the flowering crest of the current of spiritual query. In shloka 3, we will commence the journey following in the wake of seers, captive in the devotional flow of Urvashi.



“Giving connects two people, the giver and the receiver, and this connection gives birth to a new sense of belonging.”

Deepak Chopra

The Master Stroke

DEEPAK DAYAL

(REPRODUCED FROM AN EARLIER ISSUE)



In the beautiful dream that is life, where everything will pass – relationships, wealth, status, name and fame, success and failure – the only reality or permanency not governed by this bewildering phenomenon, is the Truth as revealed in the Scriptures of all religions as well as in the lives of the Prophets, Saints and Sages, representative of all faiths. In this transient world, only what the Scriptures and the Prophets have said and lived is chronicled for eternity.

Therefore, to know the Truth and to live in It, the seeker derives his inspiration and direction from the lives of the Enlightened Ones as well as from the tenets of the Scriptures. In fact, the tenets of the Scriptures are

none other than a revelation, a recording, a description, an explanation, a blueprint of those who have realized and embodied the Truth in their lives.

They are not preachings but commandments, to be obeyed and inculcated by the seeker in daily life. They are totally relevant for all mankind throughout the ages. These are the Footprints to be followed for they alone lead the seeker towards infallible peace, happiness and ultimate salvation – salvation not from the world or from responsibility but salvation from an ego which denudes man of his humane qualities.

Living with an Enlightened One is an incomparable experience, for you are witness to the seemingly abstruse, abstract and incomprehensible, actually being lived. In the Scriptures you read of absolutes – absolute love, absolute desirelessness, absolute selflessness, absolute identification – in other words you read of perfection and cannot believe that such perfection can have a living manifestation, and yet the life of the Realised Soul is the only manifestation of such perfection.



The audio-visual is not accompanied by high drama or any flamboyance or showmanship. It is silent and the keynote is a humility which makes Such a One virtually impossible to recognize. It is only after long years of intimate association that you can perceive the utterly extraordinary Being behind the extremely ordinary façade.

They are in perpetual conflict with the ego because They know that it is the root cause of human suffering at the gross, emotional and intellectual levels and man's greatest enemy. They are entirely silent vis-à-vis themselves but those around them who have come for succour are afflicted by the ego in varying degrees. They deal with each one in complete identification, going to their level and even below their levels to lift them out of their gross, emotional and intellectual predicaments and establish them in peace and happiness.

Because They have no personal motive whatsoever, no hidden agenda, nothing to gain, They are exceptionally sensitive to the others' needs. They are perfect builders of people, and those who have unquestioning faith in Them will be led into the realm of eternal happiness, peace and freedom.

When the seeker has an inordinately developed ego, as yours truly does, and has repeatedly sought the Master's Grace in being rid of it, then Such a One, the Master, the Guru, in complete identification fights with the ego through various methods. None of them are conventional or predictable. If the seeker is genuine, then he cannot expect mollycoddling or gentleness. Dealing with the ego is serious business.

He may expose the seeker in a gathering. He may banish him from His presence. He may demote him to a position which is particularly distasteful to the seeker. In other words, whatever He does, is initially, akin to a hard blow in the solar plexus. The seeker has a sudden and urgent craving for oxygen! Once he has recovered, he discovers a lightness, a certain freedom because he has been brought face to face with an affliction which he was trying to hide and having seen it, he feels free.

The Master knows exactly what is going to hurt the ego of the seeker the most and He adopts those very means. The seeker has voluntarily sought help from the Master to be saved from his ego, but many times in the process of being saved, he loses his objectivity and also loses sight of his goal. He suffers severe reactions and the brunt of these reactions is borne by the Master.

The seeker either goes into depression, or sulks, or tries to escape, or tries to justify himself and his reactions. In other words, he becomes a total mess, a dithering lunatic. The Master, Silence Itself, Compassion Itself, allows this intense churning to take place within the seeker. He may appear to be heartless, insensitive but what He has done is to push the seeker into himself and at the appropriate time, at the teachable moment, he will pull him out – cleansed, rejuvenated, more mature, happier and more at peace within himself.

This remains a continuous process and many seeking to tread the path of Truth, flounder because of the inability to sustain and deal with this method. The seeker must look within and discover for himself the sheer magic of the Guru's action in helping him to become that much freer from his ego.

Through this method he also learns humility which is the most cardinal quality in the seeker's make-up. When the seeker emerges from the nightmare of his negativity and he is no longer blinded, he is awed by his direct experience of the



magnificent love of the Master Who has allowed Himself to be attacked, criticized, condemned, accused just so that he could be saved.

He is also humbled by the most unique love which tells him where he is wrong and also realizes that there is none else in the entire world Who loves and cares more deeply than the Master. Who else would be so interested in him to fight with his negativity so that he could live in unconditional happiness?

Who else, with a smile and a laugh, would stake His all, His reputation, His own peace and well being, in fact, very often His own life, just so he, the seeker, can live?

The true and lasting change in the seeker can take place only when he, in turn, takes off his blindfold of selfishness and sees the extreme trials and tribulations, abuse and vilification borne by the Master in order to save him from himself. When the seeker develops the honesty and courage to introspect and relive his life with the Master, he is filled with awe and humility. The Master becomes thunder, so can the seeker perceive the infinite Silence from which it manifests? The Master presents adversity – can the seeker perceive the Love, Compassion and Grace which imbues the severity of his Guru's direction? If so, the seeker travelling the road of ego abnegation gradually finds the radiance of Spiritual Grace illumining his perception, his understanding and filling his inner world with peace and joy. ❖



Param Puja Ma

Arpana

Newsletter

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

Ashram Remembrances

Urvashi Day

Spontaneous elucidations of the most profound scriptures flowed from the lips of Param Puja Ma on that pivotal date, 2nd October 1958, bringing a river of knowledge to enlighten our hearts, minds, and intellects, enabling us to see reality as it is – the Incarnation of Divinity in the form of sensory creation.



Arpana family, staff and friends gathered at Param Puja Ma's Samadhi Sthal, Aashirwad, in prayerful thanksgiving for this Divine gift.

Practical Sadhana

The Lord tells us in the Scriptures that the Will of the Lord is to see each person as a child of the Lord and do whatever one can to assist each one. In this way, the ego vanishes in the practical endeavour of humane values.

Arpana Service Activities were created as 'temples of practical worship' to assist seekers to purify the mind and intellect.

Thus, Arpana Hospital was built so that, through compassionate medical interventions, one forgets oneself and serves the Lord's children.



The 43rd Anniversary of Arpana Hospital was celebrated on 2nd October, with love, joy, and thanksgiving by all at Arpana, including friends, family, staff, and patients.

Mrs. Sonu Bhojwani awards Satish Kumar a certificate of appreciation for 25 years of service.

Arpana Hospital



Celebrating NABH Accreditation

Arpana Hospital has successfully achieved accreditation from NABH (National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers).

On 3rd November 2023, Arpana Hospital celebrated a momentous occasion with the distribution of NABH certificates to the staff

members who played a pivotal role in the NABH accreditation process.

Arpana Hospital's top Management and 150 staff members were present.

- ♦ Dr. R.I. Singh, Dr. Anuradha Mahajan, Dr. Suwendu Sekhar Panda, and 64 Doctors and Staff Members were honored for their outstanding contributions to our successful NABH accreditation bid.
- ♦ SHG Women presented a short play on their 25-year journey from vulnerability to a sense of health, social and financial stability.

Arpana's New Clinic in Prem Nagar

As part of Arpana's outreach program, a clinic at 722 Prem Nagar, Karnal, was inaugurated on 25th November. Arpana Hospital's top Management along with Arpana Family members, 5 consultants, and 30 staff members were present. The Clinic Opening Day combined the joy of inauguration with a compassionate outreach effort – a free health camp for 90 patients. This highlighted our commitment to address the pressing health needs of individuals.

The clinic is open from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm and doctors will be available to conduct OPD.



Molar Bund, New Delhi



Ananya, an orphan, lives with her grandmother and two sisters in Molarbund. She has been studying at Arpana since pre-school. She was awarded first position in TATA Building India School Essay Competition 2023-24 in the Junior level! She received a certificate and a medal for a Hindi on-the-spot essay on 'Van rahenge toh hum rahenge' ('While forests exist, mankind exists').

Rural Haryana

Enabling Villagers to Access Government Medical Benefits



Kanta, a member of the Shri Ram Self-Help Group formed by Arpana, and her husband, Vikram, live in the village of Mugal Majra.

They have one son and have adopted a baby girl, Vidhi, who was diagnosed with Thalassemia. The child had to have blood changed every month – a back-breaking financial burden.

On learning of this, Mr. Ish Bhatnagar got the child a disability medical certificate and obtained treatment for her from the Government hospital where the treatment is free. This has given the family great relief. The Federation and Arpana also gave financial assistance to Kanta who is grateful for all the guidance and support.

Greening Their Villages – SHG Women Plant Trees

With great joy and enthusiasm, 2,491 enthusiastic rural SHG women, from 1,004 self-help groups in 106 villages, planted 2,491 trees in their villages in October. This initiative was a collective effort of Arpana and both SHG Federations. It not only reflects their commitment to the environment but also underscores the transformative power of community-led initiatives.



SHG volunteers distributing saplings

Vasant Vihar

Diwali Celebration in Gyan Arambh



Diyas, Paper Bags, Gift Tags, and Card making activities were organized for students of classes 4-12. These Diwali items were given to donors and friends of the ‘Gyan Arambh’ family.

Volunteers gave mixed Dry fruit packs to all ‘Gyan Arambh’ students as Diwali Gifts. The entire Staff of ‘Gyan Arambh’ were also given Dry fruit gifts in Tiffin boxes.

Himachal Pradesh

On 31st Oct, Mr. P.C. Kapur, Himachal Administrative Services (Retd), who has been the Director of Arpana's Himachal Center for 24 years, was honored at his retirement ceremony. P.C. Kapur's leadership and dedication played a pivotal role in Arpana's success in Himachal –his legacy will long be recalled!



Mr. & Mrs. Kapur (center), flanked by Harishwar & Aruna Dayal

Handicrafts Sale – All proceeds to Charities

Drs. Raj, Rahul and Lena Gupta Host a 3 Day Diwali Sale



Exquisitely embroidered household linen, nightwear and children's wear were available at Arpana's Diwali Sale, held by Drs. Raj, Rahul, and Lena Gupta, at their beautiful home in Friends Colony on 27-29th October.

Discriminating buyers coveted these delicately handcrafted items, happy that

each item was making a difference to village families!

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 Mr. Suresh Motiram Shivdesani for magnanimous support for Arpana's programs.

EMPOWER VULNERABLE WOMEN AND CHILDREN AS THEY REACH FOR THEIR DREAMS!

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Arpana Ashram

Research

Publications & CDs

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

Publications			
गीता	Rs.300	Bhagavad Gita	Rs.450
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Contact for Questions, Suggestions and Donations:

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Tel: (0184) 2380801-802, 2380980 Fax: 2380810 Email: at@arpana.org Website: www.arpana.org

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