

ARADHANA

Yoga of the heart ❤️

Year 9 Issue 2
March/April 2020



Rikhiapeeth, Rikhia, Deoghar, Jharkhand, India



ARADHANA Yoga of the heart ❤️ is an offering to Paramguru Swami Sivananda and our beloved Pujya Gurudev Swami Satyananda. It is compiled, composed and published as an offering of seva by the sannyasin disciples, devotees and well-wishers of Paramahansa Satyananda.

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Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati



Rikhiapeeth, the tapobhumi of Swami Satyananda Saraswati, has developed into a vibrant spiritual epicentre abundant in peace, plenty and prosperity. Aspirants, seekers, devotees, householders and sannyasins come from all parts of the world to live and work together for the benefit of others by following the high ideals of seva, selfless service, sadhana, spiritual practice, swadhyaya, self study, and satsang, association with truth, as taught by Swami Sivananda and established by Swami Satyananda. It is a place of inspiration and joy for the thousands of natives who live in the hundreds of villages that surround Rikhiapeeth, as well as for millions of spiritual aspirants and devotees who come to imbibe the spiritual vibrations that abound in this sacred place.

ARADHANA Yoga of the heart ❤️ is intended to share the profound teachings and lifestyle that are being practised and lived in this sacred place for the benefit of all.

This issue of ARADHANA is dedicated to Lord Shiva, the first Guru of our lineage. If we remember Lord Shiva we are also remembering Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda. This issue also features a tribute to the Panchagni Sadhana undertaken by Swami Satyasangananda in January 2020 to uphold the tradition of a Paramahansa as established at Rikhiapeeth by Swami Satyananda.

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Aradhana Invocation

देवाभावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः । परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ Bhagavad Gita 3:11
Yajnas nourish, strengthen and empower the Devas, they in turn empower us.
Strengthening and nourishing each other in this way, both attain shreya (prosperity).

We are part of a beautiful
lineage of Gurus.

Lord Shiva is the first Guru of
our lineage, so if you remember
Shiva you are also remembering
Swami Sivananda and Swami
Satyananda. They are not
different; they are part of the
same current of energy.

The energy of this lineage is
flowing like a river, right from
Shiva to Adi Shankaracharya
all the way through to Swami
Sivananda and Swami
Satyananda.

- Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati -



The Grace of Shiva

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



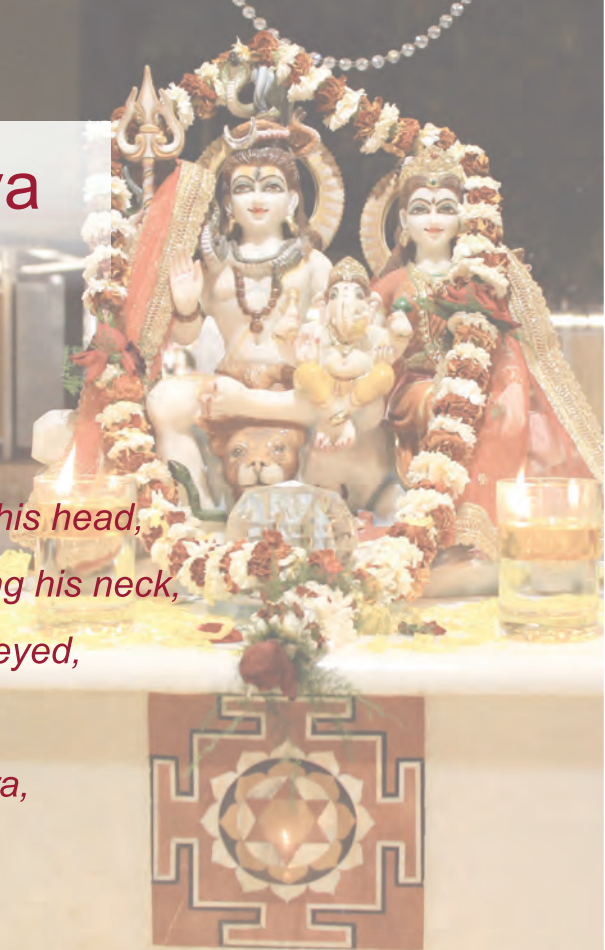
Shiva is full of grace. He helps the aspirants. He showers His grace on those who worship Him with faith and devotion and who have childlike trust in Him. Shiva himself is the Guru. The grace of Shiva is the road to salvation. Shiva lives in the Guru and looks with intense love on the sincere aspirant through the eyes of the Guru.

If the aspirant establishes a relationship between himself and Lord Shiva he will grow in devotion quickly.

Uniting the self with the true Shiva Tattwa by the control of the senses is real wearing of Bhasma, because Lord Shiva through his third eye of wisdom burnt passions to ashes. In the heart there is a ten-petalled lotus. It has ten nadis. It is the Jivatma's abode. This Jivatma lives in a subtle form in the mind and is Chitta or Purusha itself.

Lord Shiva

*The Ganga on top of his head,
The serpent garlanding his neck,
Broad-browed, three eyed,
Smeared in white,
Such is Shivashankara,
The consort of Girija.*



This form of the Lord is even beyond the reach of yogis, but we can see him embodied in suffering humanity. This is the possibility in Kali yuga. All of you who aspire to have the experience of Lord Shiva should try to remember that he can be seen in people who are poor, who are suffering from disease, who are totally helpless. It is easy to see God in a temple with five heads and three eyes. But it is hard to see God among the poor. Everybody wants to see God only in the mandir, the temple, but you should seek Him among the poor.

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Shiva : God of Love

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

The Grace of Shiva is boundless. He is the savior and Guru. He is the Beloved of Uma. He is Satyam, Shivam, Shubham, Sundaram, Kantam. He is the Supreme Light that shines in your heart. Meditate on His form, Hear His Lilas. Repeat His mantra 'Om Namah Shivaya'. Study Shiva Purana. Do His worship daily. Behold Him in all names and forms. He will bless you with His vision.

A devotee of Lord Shiva should apply Vibhuti to his forehead and body. He should wear a rudraksha mala. He should worship the Shiva Lingam with leaves of the Bilva tree. He should do japa and meditation of the Panchakshara 'Om Namah Shivaya'. Lord Shiva is propitiated by every one of these actions. Vibhuti or Bhasma is very sacred. It is worn by Lord Shiva Himself. The bead of rudraksha mala represents the third eye on the forehead of Lord Shiva. Bilva leaves are regarded to be one of the five abodes of Laskhmi or the Goddess of wealth.

It is Shiva only who causes bondage and Mukti for the Jivas. It is Shiva who makes the Jivas realize their essential divine nature. Shiva made Maya as the body, senses and the Universe and thrust the Jivas into the Maya. He created the idea of egoism, 'I'-ness in them. He bound them in karma and made them experience pleasure and pain according to the nature of their karmas, virtuous actions or vicious deeds. This is the stage of bondage of the Jivas.

Gradually it is Shiva only who releases them from the fetters of egoism, karma and Maya and makes them shine as Shiva. This is the state of Moksha or freedom. It is only through the grace of Lord Shiva, that they attain the state of final emancipation.

Shiva Lingam

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati



Supposing I ask you to visualise supreme awareness or supreme consciousness, how are you going to do it? We need some base or foundation to build and perceive these abstract concepts. Tantra and Yoga have utilised prateek, or symbol, as an efficient tool to solve this problem. Sri Swamiji has said that the Shiva Lingam represents all that is unseen. The Supreme Awareness is there and just because we can't see it doesn't mean that it's not. It is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. It is above us, below us, besides us, it is everywhere. But we can't see it. Lingam means

'the source', the effulgent source from which all creation emerges. And Shiva means auspiciousness. Thus Shiva Lingam is a symbol from which all auspiciousness emerges.



Usually Shiva Lingam come from the River Narmada, in Central India. But we have some very unique Shiva Lingam, which come from Gangotri in the Himalayas. They were specially brought here for Gurudev, twelve exactly the same size and shape, and he worshipped them every

day, morning and evening, for twenty years. They are consecrated, they are alive, they are the twelve Jyotirlingams – you don't need to go all over India to visit them, because they are here.

Maha Shivaratri, the great night of Shiva, is the night a union took place between Cosmic Consciousness and Cosmic Energy. That great union is the marriage of Shiva and Parvati. All over India during Shivaratri people throng to temples and holy places to worship the Shiva Lingam.



On this sacred night, here in Rikhiapeeth, we also worship Shakti. After all, you cannot have a wedding without the bride. In a wedding, the bride is always the center of attention – she is adorned and beautified, and everybody gazes at her beauty. So along with the Rudrabhishek, we also conduct the abhishek of the Sri Yantra. We worship both because they are one. They separate for the creation – the One becomes Many.

On Shivaratri we worship all the Siva Lingam in the ashram – the kanyas and batuks do their pujas, as well as the pandits from Kashi, and also the sannyasins. Everywhere we will be worshipping the Shiva Lingam. Why? The answer is simple because we love to do it, we enjoy it. We are not trying to become enlightened or to receive boons, we are simply doing it out of love. Where that will lead us, only Shiva knows, so we leave it to him. But love will always lead us in the right direction.



Shiva is Multi-dimensional

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati

Rikhia, the tapobhumi of Swami Satyananda, is in close proximity to Deoghar, the residence of Shiva as Baidyanath. Baidya means doctor, and as the lord of the doctors, Shiva can cure all ailments, whether they are physical, mental, emotional, psychic, karmic or spiritual – all ailments that we suffer from as humans.

Shiva has many aspects, many dimensions. Because that supreme awareness is total and complete, every aspect of experience is enshrined in Shiva. As Bholenath, Shiva is the innocent lord. Because of his purity and innocence, he will grant boons even to the undeserving. That's how innocent people are – they don't calculate, they don't evaluate what they will get in return, they don't judge whether a person is good or bad, straight or crooked. Shiva is like that. So you are lucky, with Shiva you don't have to wait until you are good. Even if you are undeserving he will help you when you are in difficulty.

Most people have so much guilt and negativity about themselves. They think, "I am so bad, I am so stressed out, I am so worried, my life is so difficult," and they revolve around that thinking throughout the day until negativity becomes more and more pronounced. That's what they think, and so that's what they become.

But we can change those negative ideas. Instead of saying, "I am a bad person," we can instead say, "I am Supreme Awareness. I am good. I am happiness. I am love, I am joy. I am divine." If we say this over and over to ourselves, we will become that. And if we invoke Bholenath, the innocent Shiva, then even if we are bad, even if we are negative, Shiva will still come





and bless us. We just need to ask – “Please, Shiva, give me your grace, give me your aashirvaad or blessings.” If we are in difficulty, in pain, in anguish, even with so many self-created afflictions, Shiva will drop his grace upon us if we are innocent and empty.

Shiva is also Dwandwadith, above the dualities. Dwandwa means duality, conflict, opposition. Heat and cold, love and hate, like and dislike, good and bad, night and day, these are all dualities, opposites, and we are all influenced by them. But not Shiva, he is above the dwandwas. We are pulled by that, but Shiva is not. He can live in the graveyard, covered in bhasma, with snakes and scorpions. In fact, on his wedding night, he came with the snakes and scorpions and all the ghosts and goblins. This was his wedding procession, and he himself was riding a bull and he was fearful. Imagine going to your wedding looking like that. The mother in law fainted, the father in law closed the door and said, “Please go back, I am not going to give my daughter to such a person!” But Parvati said, “No. I have done penance for him, I have done panchagni. This is the person I have chosen.” As soon as she said that, Lord Shiva became beautiful, and so did his entourage.

According to the tantric, yogic and Vedic philosophies, it is possible for an ordinary Individual to rise from gross awareness to very subtle and transcendental awareness. It can happen in this body, with this mind. You yourself can experience that transcendental awareness. That was Lord Shiva's achievement, and that is why he is known as the Adi Yogi, the first Yogi.

Lord Shiva is a beautiful representation of transcending the opposites, of transcending the effects of the gunas. That is why Shiva is called a yogi – not because he did wonderful asanas and pranayama, but because he had transcended the gunas.

Shiva is known as Adi Guru, the first guru, and he is also Adi Sevak, the first sevak. There is a story in the Puranas about the Samudra Manthan, when the great ocean was churned and out of it emerged many precious and valuable gems. All the devas and the daityas, the demons, flocked to take these gems. But when the poison was churned out, they said, "Who is going to get into this?" and they all fled. The only one who came forward was Shiva, because he knew that if the poison was not consumed, the whole creation would be destroyed. So to save the creation Shiva drank the poison, and that is why one of his names is Nil Kanth, because when he swallowed the poison his throat turned blue.

If he hadn't done that, you and I would not be sitting here today, the whole creation would have ended there and then because the poison was so powerful. When he drank the poison all the devas raised their hands and said, "Devon ka dev Mahadev!" He got the name Mahadev when he consumed that poison. He sacrificed himself, and so he is the original sevak, he is the Adi Sevak. Our tradition of seva comes down from Shiva, that is how important he is to us.

Sri Swamiji's life was also a life of sacrifice. He gave the mandate of seva and he also lived that. He did panchagni and he was not a young man at that time. That is self-sacrifice, born out of faith. He knew that out of his tapasya a way would be born for us to solve our difficulties and afflictions. That way is the Wave of Bhakti. Seva is bhakti, it is the form, symbol and foundation of bhakti. Why do you do seva? Because you have a certain faith in it, a belief in it. You feel the seva is sacred – otherwise you wouldn't do it.

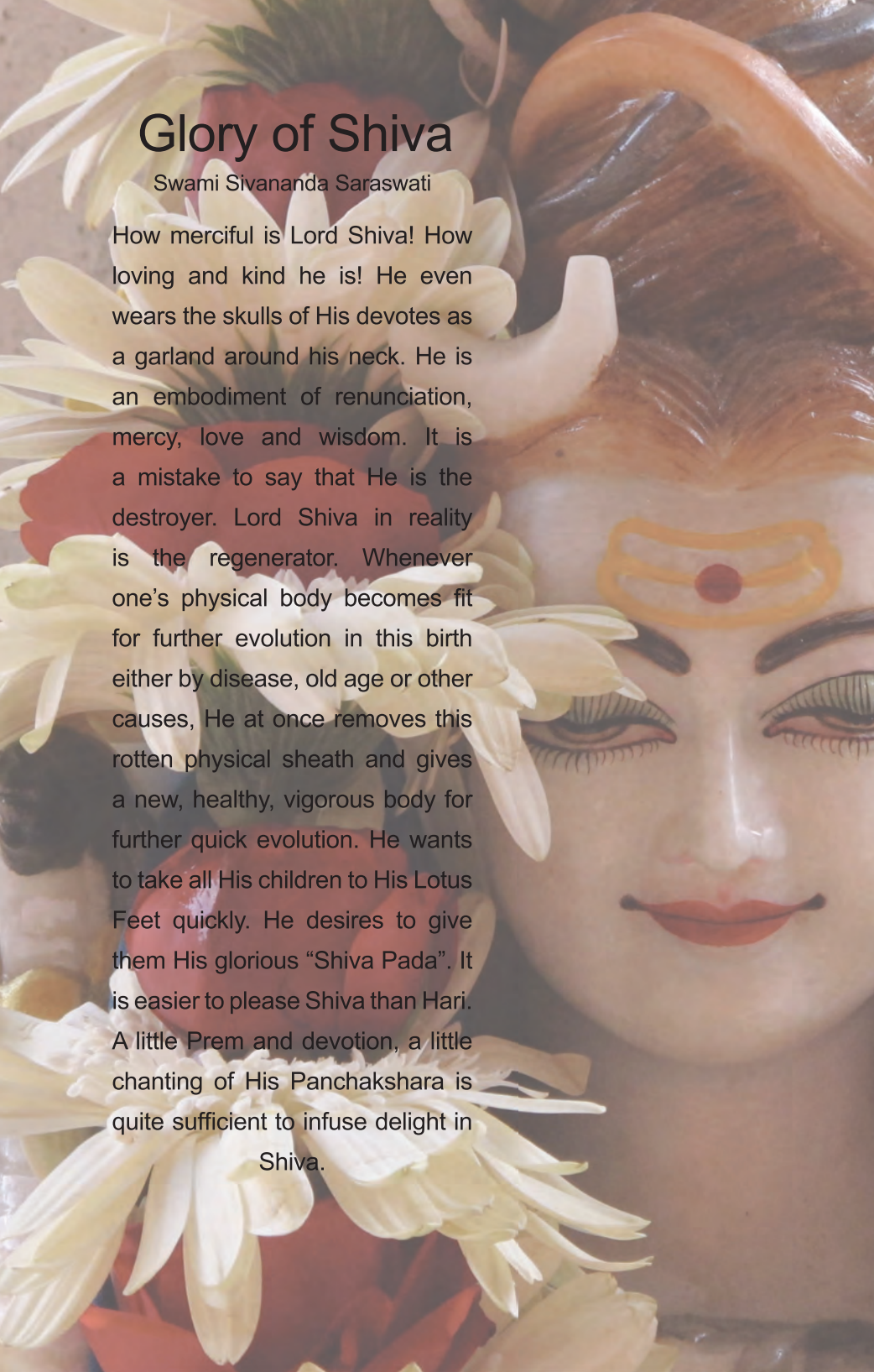
All these traditions – Yoga, Tantra, Guru and disciple and Seva – they all came from Shiva.



Glory of Shiva

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

How merciful is Lord Shiva! How loving and kind he is! He even wears the skulls of His devotees as a garland around his neck. He is an embodiment of renunciation, mercy, love and wisdom. It is a mistake to say that He is the destroyer. Lord Shiva in reality is the regenerator. Whenever one's physical body becomes fit for further evolution in this birth either by disease, old age or other causes, He at once removes this rotten physical sheath and gives a new, healthy, vigorous body for further quick evolution. He wants to take all His children to His Lotus Feet quickly. He desires to give them His glorious "Shiva Pada". It is easier to please Shiva than Hari. A little Prem and devotion, a little chanting of His Panchakshara is quite sufficient to infuse delight in Shiva.



The Power of Mantra

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati



When you chant the mantra Om Namah Shivaya, you are not praying to God, you are creating an energy field. Mantra is not the name of God, it is encapsulated sound energy, and it is a very important tool that can be utilized to improve the quality of your life. Om Na Ma Shi Va Ya – these are sounds to invoke an energy field. Shiva is an energy, a force, and which is as real as you and me. The mantras effectively clear the way so that we can experience the positivity of that energy.

There are billions of mantras, and they all have a defined outcome. Take, for example, Maha Mrityunjaya mantra. It is chanted to remove all difficulties from our lives. As you go on chanting this mantra over a period of time, you will find that things are changing, you are more positive and inspired, your ideas are better, you keep better company.

When you enter an energy field where mantras are being chanted, a shift takes place automatically, just as when you enter an air-conditioned room from the heat outside and immediately, without thinking, you begin to get cool. The mantra's effect is also automatic – it works whether or not you

like it or understand it. As soon as you enter the space, even if it is by mistake, there will be a positive shift within and around you. It is a process, and as you continue chanting the mantra, or continue to be exposed to the mantras, the process is intensified and this leads to transformation. Repetition is most important, because as you repeat a mantra its effects become stronger. That is why you have to be regular in your practice, whether it is your Guru mantra or any other mantra. If you chant only once in a while, you may get results, but the benefits will quickly dissipate. Regularity and repetition are absolutely necessary to achieve long-lasting and transformative results from mantras.

The practice of mantra is just as important for us as the seva. All day long we are chanting mantras here, because that is what Sri Swamiji did here in Rikhiapeeth. For twenty years he perfected the art of chanting the mantra with every breath. Do you know what that means? To have full awareness of the mantra with every breath means that you can't do anything else – you can't even scratch your nose because that will take your attention away. To attain such a level of perfection is not easy. Even if you can do it for a split second, that would be an achievement, what to speak of 24-hours.

When a Paramahansa Siddha of his magnitude performs a sadhana, an anusthan, the effect is magnified a thousand-fold. When we do such things our minds are so dissipated that we cannot achieve much of an effect. So many people have benefited from Sri Swamiji's efforts. Even today, Rikhiapeeth is surrounded by a transformative and divine magnetic field of energy which he created, and we all benefit from that.



Shiva

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

The word Shiva is made up of three letters: Sha, e and va. In this context, sha stands for nitya sukha or eternal happiness and ananda or bliss. E means purusha or consciousness and va means Shakti in the form of amrita or nectar. When we utter “Shiva”, we refer to both Shiva and Shakti. It is very important to remember that the nectar from Shakti and the transcendental Purusha, who is auspicious, benevolent and bestower of ananda, is called Shiva.



Shiva is jnana and Shiva is the ultimate experience. If Shiva is the goal, then bhakti is the means. Once again, ask yourself, “Who was there before creation and who will be there afterwards? You will receive the answer “Before creation, Shiva was there and he will be there after creation, and Shiva and Shakti are not different from each other”.

Shiva is not male, nor is Shakti female; they are the eternal elements of the manifest and unmanifest creation, which expand into the world and accompanying life. The glory of Shiva is infinite.

Paramshiva

Paramshiva is formless, unmanifest, eternal, without a beginning, and is consciousness itself. Paramshiva is not visible to anybody, nor cognizable by any sense organ, and cannot be touched by the mind, nor reached through any emotion. The symbol of this ultimate reality is the Shiva Lingam; it is the symbol of the formless existence of Paramshiva. Paramshiva says: “As I am formless, this Shiva Lingam is also beyond form.” Therefore, the worship of the formless is achieved through the Shiva Lingam.



Paramshiva is the beginningless God, the beginningless element. His presence pervades all three dimensions of time. You can see him in whatever form you desire. He can be seen in a form that is beyond the gunas, or sometimes bondage of the gunas; sometimes as a tapasvi, or as a yogi, or an ideal mother or father. His sakara, with form and nirakara, formless, manifestations are complementary to each other. Whether we talk about his sakara or his nirakara manifestation, it is all the same, as that same formless Paramshiva assumes a form to enact the lilas in this world.

Aum Namah Shivaya



Deoghar

The Abode of Shiva

In close vicinity of Rikhiapeeth is the temple town of Deoghar. Also known as Baidyanath Dham, Deoghar finds mention in the Shiva Purana, which relates it to the Treta Yuga, the era of Lord Ram and Ravana. The central figure around which everything revolves is Baba Baidyanath, the jyotirlingam of Shiva. Carved out of a single rock, its magnificence and power draws lakhs of people to Deoghar for worship. Narad Muni in his description of Baidyanath Dham to Hanuman describes it as the only place where Lord Shiva grants boons to each and every person whether deserving or undeserving, sinner or saint. This is also evident from the fact that lakhs and crores of devotees throng here throughout the year. The name 'Deoghar', which literally means 'home of the gods', is a modern name.

Deoghar is also a very important shakti peeth. Some puranas ascribe the advent of Baidyanath Dham to the Satya Yuga when Sati, the consort of Shiva, immolated herself. It is said that when Lord Shiva was carrying the body of his consort Sati who had immolated herself at the yajna of her father in defiance of his disrespect to her husband, Lord Vishnu, seeing the uncontrollable grief and rage that overcame Shiva, sent forth his sudarshan chakra to dismember her dead body. It was cut into sixty-four pieces, and as Shiva roamed the length and breadth of the universe in wild abandon,

different parts of Sati's body fell in different places, which became the sixty-four peethas or important places for worship of Sakti. Her heart fell at Baidyanath Dham and this is known as the Hridaya Peeth.



Swami Satyananda has said, ***"Deoghar is the cremation ground of Devi, the place where her heart fell millions of years ago. It is also the birthplace of a new Devi. The message for the awakening of women will go out from here."***



Perhaps the most significant feature of Deoghar is the annual kanwariya mela held in the month of Sravan, in worship of Baba Baidyanath. This is an auspicious time for bathing the jyotirlingam with Ganga water and crores of devotees, rich and poor alike, walk barefoot 104 kilometers from Sultanganj, carrying Ganga-jal in their kanwars or earthen pots. At that time Deoghar resounds with the auspicious mantra Om Namah Shivaya, and the presence of Shiva becomes most intense.

Swami Satyananda said that Baba Baidyanath is an awakened shrine where the devotee's pleas are heard immediately and never go unanswered. Quite close to Deoghar is another awakened shrine of Shiva known as Vasukinath, which is most powerful. Sri Swamiji described these two



temples as the civil and criminal courts of Shiva where not one prayer goes unheeded.

Thus Deoghar is an important seat of both Shiva and Sakti for they are eternally present here and their influence is all pervading.

Know Your Mantra

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati

Rudra Gayatri

Rudra, the fearful one, represents the benevolent and compassionate form of Lord Shiva. When Shiva was moved with compassion a teardrop fell from his eye and that is how the Rudraksha tree was born. 'Aksha' means eye and that is what Rudraksha means - originating from eye of Rudra. So it seems that Shiva, at some point in time, due to some incident, was moved to immense compassion and benevolence towards humankind. And the Rudra Gayatri is a means to invoke that form of Shiva who is compassionate and kind towards us, and showers us with blessings.

This mantra can be chanted either in the morning, or in the evening before going to sleep. The number of rounds it is to be done is 11 times, as that is the number of Shiva. Use this mantra only when needed, it need not be done daily. This mantra is actually a tool, just like a spade is a tool. When you need that specific tool then you use it. It is only when you need to, that you use it to dig the ground. In the same way, when you feel the need for the blessings, compassion and grace of Shiva, then you can practice this mantra.

Sit wherever and however you feel most comfortable and become aware of the benevolent presence of Shiva within you, in the form of your own consciousness, which Shiva ultimately represents. Maintaining your awareness on this inner experience of peace, auspiciousness, compassion and kindness, allow all your other thoughts and worries to vanish, and chant this mantra aloud 11 times. After chanting the mantras sit for a few moments with your eyes closed, and experience yourself surrounded and protected by the vibrations of the Rudra Gayatri.

Om tatpurushaaya vidmahe mahaadevaaya dhimahi

Tanno rudrah prachodayaat

Know Your Mantra

स्वामी सत्यसंगानन्द सरस्वती

रूद्र गायत्री

दयालु और करुणामय भगवान शिव के अनेक रूपों में से एक रूप रूद्र भी है। पौराणिक काल में एक बार मानवता के प्रति असीम करुणा से द्रवित, भगवान शिव के नेत्रों के अश्रुपात से रूद्राक्ष के पेड़ का जन्म हुआ। रूद्राक्ष का शाब्दिक अर्थ है - रूद्र के नेत्रों से उत्पन्न। रूद्र गायत्री वह मंत्र है जिसके द्वारा हम भगवान शिव के करुणामय रूप का आवाहन कर उनकी कृपा-दृष्टि और अनुग्रह की वृष्टि के पात्र बन सकते हैं।

इस मंत्र का जप प्रातःकाल या रात को सोने से पहले किया जा सकता है। भगवान शिव के ग्यारह रूप हैं इसीलिए इस मंत्र का ग्यारह बार जप सर्वोत्तम है। यह मंत्र-जप दैनिक-साधना के रूप में नहीं वरण आवश्यकतानुसार किया जाना चाहिए। यह मंत्र वास्तव में एक उपकरण है, जैसे कुदाल एक उपकरण है जमीन खोदने के लिए। जिस प्रकार आप कुदाल का उपयोग तभी करते हैं जब कभी आपको जमीन खोदने की आवश्यकता पड़ती है, ठीक उसी प्रकार इस मंत्र का जप केवल विशेष परिस्थितियों में ही भगवान शिव के अनुग्रह-प्राप्ति के लिए किया जाना चाहिए।

किसी भी आरामदायक आसन में बैठ जाइए। अपनी सारी चिन्ताओं व परेशानियों से विमुख होकर विचारशून्य बनने का प्रयास कीजिए और मन में आन्तरिक शान्ति का अनुभव कीजिए। इसी मनोदशा को बनाए रखते हुए ब्रह्माण्डीय चेतना के प्रतीक भगवान शिव के करुणामय और मंगलकारी स्वरूप को अपनी अन्तःचेतना में धारण कीजिए। अन्तःचेतना में शान्ति, शुभता, करुणा, दया और अनुपमता के अनुभव के प्रति सजग रहते हुए, जोर से उच्चारण करते हुए (बैखरी-जप) ग्यारह बार इस मंत्र का जप कीजिए। मंत्रोच्चारण के पश्चात आँखों को बन्द रखते हुए कुछ पल तक शान्त बैठे रहें और स्वयं को रूद्र-गायत्री मंत्र के स्पन्दनों से घिरा एवं संरक्षित अनुभव कीजिए।

ॐ तत्पुरुषाय विद्महे महादेवाय धीमहि

तन्नो रूद्रः प्रचोदयात् ॥

The Glory of Shiva Mahimna

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati

In the Shiva Mahimna Stotram, it is said that even if all the ink and pens in the world were available, one could not describe in full detail the greatness of Shiva.

This stotra promises *samipya*, or the feeling of Shiva's presence. It also promises *salokya*, which means that you can have the darshan of the Loka where Lord Shiva, that Supreme Awareness, resides in all its purity. It then promises *sanidhya*, or nearness, so that when you chant these mantras, you begin to feel nearer to Lord Shiva who is that Supreme Consciousness. Finally, the Shiva Mahimna Stotra promises *sayujya*, oneness. When you chant these verses you begin to merge and experience oneness with that Supreme Consciousness.

You must know that this is the song that Shiva likes the most. You should sing it with love and devotion, so that you can earn the grace of Shiva. You have to earn the grace, just like you have to earn love or respect. You can't demand it, you have to qualify to receive the grace. What is the qualification for grace? It is so simple. You don't need a university degree for it, you



just have to empty yourself like a flute, so that a beautiful melody can emanate from you. You have to become like a child, innocent. The minute that happens, the grace will pour over you.

Right now we are full and that is why we feel over burdened by the agonies of life. We are swinging like a pendulum between pain and pleasure. But when we become empty like a flute, then the pain and pleasure have a different meaning. It's not as if the pain and pleasure go away, maybe they won't. But the vision changes, the attitudes and responses to the events of life change.

Mantras are intended to help you empty yourself. You don't have to understand them, just sit and bask in the vibrations, let them enter your being. You will become empty and you will find yourself experiencing a different field of energy, a different level of awareness. You can chant the Shiva Mahimna at home, every morning. Get up early, light a deepak and chant these sacred verses. You will gradually find that you are getting closer and closer to that immense power, and in time you will discover it is inside of you. Everything is happening inside of you – outside is only a reflection.



The Grace of Panchagni

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Panchagni is a sadhana of penance undertaken to wash off the karma collected during a sannyasin's mission phase. As directed by my guru I stayed in his ashram at Rishikesh for twelve years, then left for Munger where the wheel of karma was set in motion with great momentum. It was like entering and living in a chamber of soot. To become stained with the soot was inevitable. A sannyasin has to undertake the panchagni sadhana to undo the karma of his mission life. This only happens by the grace of God.

This is a very ancient practice which all cannot and should not try to do; it is not permitted. When desires become weak, when passions become very, very weak, when you do not want anything from anyone for any purpose, and can manage with just one meal and a little sleep, then you can practice this sadhana. If you have not extinguished those inner fires of passion, anger, greed and attachment, and you practice with the outer fires, you will die. The human body can stand such heat for one day, one week or possibly even for one month, but for years together it is not possible.

The rules of panchagni vidya are only meant for two types of people; either a person who is beyond all cares and concerns, or a rajarishi, a royal rishi. A person who can face these five inner fires, he alone can face the five external fires. Otherwise a sadhaka doing panchagni sadhana commits suicide. Panchagni is a way for sannyasins to commit suicide because thereafter one really does not survive. You sit surrounded by four fires and above you is the sun. It really isn't necessary to get your head cut off, just do panchagni.



Panchagni Tapas

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The Panchagni Tapas, or austerity of the five fires, is one of the most arduous sadhanas prescribed in the Vedic tradition for Paramahansa Sannyasins. The purpose is to break human limitations and attain the experience of transcendence, and the tapas requires the sadhak to sit surrounded by four blazing fires with the fifth fire the sun above. He or she remains in the Panchagni vedi from sunrise until sunset, for six months in the year when the sun arcs through the northern firmament in its most scorching form. The sadhaka enhances the intensity of the tapas gradually.

During the sadhana the temperature in the panchagni vedi can rise up to 75 or 80 degrees. It is only with Atma shakti, inner strength, that the sadhaka is able to endure this extreme condition. He must be able to disconnect from the body completely and maintain awareness of a higher perception with resolute one pointedness. If he allows the mind to waver, the fires will consume him. In order to sustain this sankalpa of the sadhana, he forfeits travel, has minimal connection with the world, and observes many other strictures.

The panchagni is not a sadhana for the faint-hearted, and across the ages, the most daring and determined of sadhakas have undertaken it. The scriptures record the names of Ma Parvati, sage Sutikshna and Ma Sharada among those who have performed the sadhana.

Parvati performed many difficult sadhanas, such as panchagni, sitting amongst the five fires, in order to win Shiva's favour. At the beginning, she would take food, but later on renounced it and started living on leaves. Slowly, she gave up the leaves and subsisted on air alone. As her tapasya became severe, its tejas, fire spread across the whole universe.

Ode to Tapasya

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



*This ascetic has endured heat
And on shivering winter nights, the
cold too.*

*Many storms and hurricanes
Have swept past his dhuni.*

Its flames rose high and fell.

*Many oblations have fallen into
these flames.*

*And how many lives have been
nurtured by it?*

*Many sorrows of the suffering
Have been burnt here too*

And their ill-fortune averted.

This tattered geru robe

Has seen precious wealth.

Many have bowed and prostrated into it.

But this tapasvi remained

Unmoved, unaffected, unclad,

Swallowed up by water,

*Scorched by the heat of burning
hot sands,*

*Consumed by the fire of his
austerity.*

*This tapasvi remained enraptured
in meditation.*



(Excerpt)

The Power of Endurance

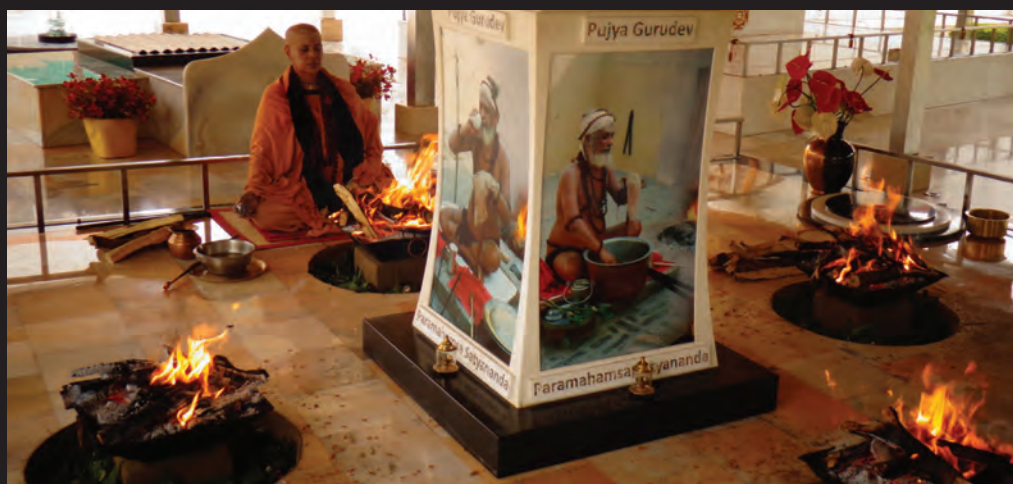
Endurance is being like a blade of grass that bends with the trampling of passers-by, yet never complains. Even if it is trampled a thousand times daily, each time it straightens itself to stand up again.

If life has to be defined in one word, then that word is endurance. The whole life is a journey of endurance and through that we polish and refine ourselves in order to shine and glow more and more. This is only possible when one surrenders to the present. Whatever situation life places you in, live within those parameters, enduring that and learning from it. Not out of a sense of defeat but out of acceptance.

Endurance liberates you from the captivity of insecurity and dependence, which in turn transforms you into a person who has the focus to achieve his goals.

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati





Lighting of the Panchagni fires at Sri Swamiji's Panchagni Vedi and Mahakaal Chitta Dhuni, 2020



Swami Satyasangananda performing Panchagni Sadhana at her Vedi, 2020



Poornahuti of Panchagni

February 14th 2020

On this day when the world is celebrating LOVE, I shall spend it with my beloved, becoming empty like a flute and dancing in ecstasy to the divine melody, for –“Love is kind, love is patient, it does not envy, it does not boast. It is not proud. It does not dishonor others. It is not self seeking. It keeps not record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth”

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati



The Fire of Aspiration

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

There is only one fire to burn all desires. Nachiketa had that fire. So many attractive and alluring things were offered to him by Yama; he was offered money, beauty, strength, power, kingdoms, all vidyas and alluring objects for the senses, but Nachiketa reduced all such impressions into ashes because he had that one fire, and that was mumukshutva, spiritual aspiration. Aspiration is a positive fire in which all desires and cravings are reduced to ashes. This is the fire that should characterise all sadhakas, yogins, and vedantins and those who lead the divine life. The disciple should have a furnace of aspiration. Only then is he a real disciple.

If you want to lead the divine life, your inner heart should be a place of aspiration. A fire of yoga should burn in you always. This blaze should be maintained. You cannot completely change the outward mode of life, but inwardly there should be aspiration. This fire should burn day and night, when you are awake, when you are sleeping, when you are alone, when you are among men, when you are meditating, when you are engaged in work. This fire should not be put out. This aspiration should always form an integral part of your being. Then you are living the divine life. If this fire is there, you need not worry what work you are doing, in which place you are living, because you will be leading the divine life.

The Magic of Seva

For many years Swami Yogabhakti of France has been a regular attendee of the annual Shivaratri Aradhana at Rikhiapeeth. This year in February she was joined by a group of 25 aspirants from France, many first time visitors to Rikhiapeeth, who came to experience the fullness



of ashram life through satsang, seva and aradhana and a bit of Yoga asana, pranayama and meditation too. The following are excerpts from their personal accounts of the experience:

“The immense social surge of solidarity we see today highlights the concepts of seva, service to a population in need. There is a lot to learn regarding the importance of seva and the urgent necessity to adopt it in the world to come.” - Swami Yogabhakti

“Rikhia is steeped in spiritual energy, a favorable place to walk the spiritual path. Everything is organized according to this aim. We slow down our rhythms and lose our bearings in order to open up this omnipresent energy called ‘Love’.” – Christine Duluc (Sannyasi Kriyamurti)



“Seva is magic! I dare say that my experience at Rikhiapeeth changed my life. Through seva, I understood the essentials of life: Giving, sharing, working together, growing together.” – Virginie Haaz (Aishwarya)

“It moved me deeply to act for the good of all. I felt like a small gear in a magnificent, love-filled beehive making and spreading flows of honey and kindness. I felt delighted to experience some form of pure love for all. That’s a unique feeling I want to keep experiencing and sharing in my life back in France.” – Pierre Filaudeau (Vivek)

“Offering seva at the medical camps of Rikhiapeeth twice a day during our stay in February was an unexpected experience. How could one anticipate that simply giving time and attention to others could be so powerful? Keeping focused when acting kept me away from my unruly mind – this is yoga, indeed.” – Dominique Garreau (Ananta)



“Seva was a pleasure to be shared with others, to contribute modestly to this beautiful ashram in the service of the underprivileged. Even for a short time, I felt I was a link in this chain of love.” – Christiane Martel (Gyaneshwari)

“Having been in Rikhia, I realize what happiness is. I gave my time and energy to an activity from which I did not intend to reap the fruit. I felt it as an invitation to know myself better and deeper than I could imagine. Seva acts as a sort of cleaning, which makes me feel both lighter and happier, somehow liberated.” - Valerie Guerguy (Atmanavi)



“Seva in Rikhia confirmed what I realized some years ago: life is meant for serving others. “ - Beatrice Cante (Shraddha)

Rikhiapeeth

Aradhana, Seva, Yoga

January - February 2020

Tribute to Panchagni - Sri Lakshmi Narayan Aradhana



This annual aradhana is dedicated to Gurudev Swami Satyananda and the arduous panchagni sadhana he performed for nearly a decade here in Rikhiapeeth. The esteemed pandits from Kashi conducted the daily worship with mantras and abhishek of the Shiva Lingam and Sri Yantra,

along with evening arti. The anusthan culminated on Makar Sankranti with the symbolic lighting of the panchagni fires by Swami Satyasangananda. With a final havan and ceremonial lighting of the fires worshipped by her beloved Gurudev, she brought the experience full-circle and provided a powerful reminder of the importance of tradition. Her sadhana of panchagni commenced with this auspicious aradhana.

February Medical Camp

Swami Sivananda, the inspiration behind the annual medical camps, taught that love is the most potent medicine one can receive. Over the course of conducting these medical camps doctors and patients alike have come to see for themselves the transformative power of love in service. More than 5,000 patients from Rikhia and surrounding panchayats received medical services during this 5-day event, which drew general practitioners and specialists from all over India and volunteers from all over the world, including Brazil, France, Israel, Germany, Ireland, Greece and Spain.



Shivaratri

During this year's Shivaratri aradhana Swami Satyasangananda guided sincere aspirants through a powerful worship of Lord Shiva that lasted through the night and included abhisheks of every



Shiva Lingam and Sri Yantra in the ashram, variously conducted by the Pandits of Kashi, the kanyas and batuks of Rikhiapeeth, ashram sannyasins and of course Swamiji herself. It was a magnificent celebration, a night infused with mantra chanting and heart-spinning kirtans that had everybody on their feet dancing with joy into the night for the ultimate union, the marriage of Shiva and Shakti, our cosmic Mother and Father.

Sports and Skills Workshop

More than 350 kanyas and batuks participated in this year's Skills Workshop Week, developing their skills in Yoga, basketball, volleyball, badminton, football, kabaddi, kho-kho, art, dance and Rubiks cube. Following a week of training from professional coaches, the children participated in two days of matches and demonstrations, showcasing their skills and excellent team spirit. As a grande finale a special aradhana was conducted in the presence of Swami Satyasangananda who wished them all success in their future endeavours. An annual highlight for the local village children and renowned coaches alike!



शिवलिंगम्

स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती

शिवलिंगम् तीन प्रकार के होते हैं। पहला गोमतेश्वर, दूसरा नर्मदेश्वर और शिवलिंगम् का एक तीसरा स्रोत है, जिसको हम कहते हैं ज्योतिर्लिंगम्। ज्योतिर्लिंगम् का मतलब है, वह वहीं प्रकट हुआ है, कहीं से लाया नहीं गया। जैसे यहाँ जमीन है, खोदा और शिवलिंगम् निकल आया। तब उसकी स्थापना वहीं होगी, उसे सरकाया नहीं जाएगा। जिसे मन्दिर बनाना है वहीं बना देते हैं। कितने मन्दिर हैं, जिनमें शिवलिंगम् बाहर से ही आते हैं, किन्तु बारह मन्दिर ऐसे हैं जिनके शिवलिंगम् वहीं से निकले हैं, उनको कहते हैं द्वादश ज्योतिर्लिंगम्। ये हैं रामेश्वरम्, सोमनाथ, महाकालेश्वर, भीमशंकर, त्र्यम्बकेश्वर, काशी विश्वनाथ, केदारनाथ, घुश्मेश्वर, बैद्यनाथ, नागेश्वर, ओंकारेश्वर और मल्लिकार्जुन। ये बारह शिवलिंगम् हैं जो वहीं बने, वहीं स्थापना हुई। बाकी बहुत से बड़े-बड़े मन्दिर हैं, जहाँ शिवलिंगम् बाहर से लाकर लगाए गए हैं। शिवलिंगम् कहीं पर भी, कितनी भी संख्या में हो सकते हैं, लेकिन ज्योतिर्लिंगम् में केवल बारह की पहचान की गई है।

ज्योतिर्लिंगम् और सामान्य शिवलिंगम् में अन्तर यह है कि जब कोई लिंगम् किसी स्थान पर प्रकट होता है और उसे वहाँ से हटाया नहीं जाता बल्कि वहीं शिवालय या मन्दिर बना दिया जाता है, तब उसे ज्योतिर्लिंगम् या स्वयंभूलिंगम् कहते हैं। लेकिन जब एक स्थान से लाकर दूसरे स्थान पर लिंगम् प्रस्थापित किया जाता है, तब वह शिवलिंगम् कहलाता



है। शिवलिंगम् मध्य भारत की नर्मदा नदी में या फिर गोमती नदी में पाए जाते हैं। ये दो स्थान हैं जहाँ के पत्थर शिवलिंगम् के आकार के होते हैं। शिवलिंगम् का आकार अण्डाकार होता है। वैज्ञानिकों का शिवलिंगम् कैसा होता है, आपने कभी इस पर विचार किया है? जो परमाणु रिएक्टर होते हैं, वे न तो त्रिकोणाकार होते हैं और न ही गोल। उनका ढाँचा भी अण्डाकार होता है। अब आप ही सोचिए कि शिवलिंगम् और परमाणु रिएक्टर के बीच क्या सम्बन्ध हो सकता है। एक बात और सभी का चेहरा भी शिवलिंगम् के जैसा



होता है, किसी का चेहरा त्रिकोणाकार नहीं होता। सब के चेहरे, परमाणु रिएक्टर और शिवलिंगम्, ये सभी अण्डाकार होते हैं।

शिवलिंगम् केवल भारत में ही नहीं होते। प्राचीन काल में, रोमन सभ्यता से भी पहले शिवलिंगम् की पूजा होती थी। हमने संग्रहालयों में प्राचीन शिवलिंगम् देखे हैं। इनमें स्फटिक के शिवलिंगम् भी थे, जो बहुत पुरानी चट्टानों से निकलते हैं। केवल हिन्दुओं ने इस परम्परा को अविच्छिन्न बनाए रखा है। भगवान शिव की पूजा बहुत ही प्राचीन है। भगवान शिव भोलेबाबा हैं, ये बहुत जल्दी फँस जाते हैं। श्मशान भूमि उनका निवास-स्थान है, वे गौंजा और भाँग का सेवन करते हैं, शरीर पर जले हुए शव की भस्म लगाते हैं, साँप और बिच्छुओं को आभूषण की तरह धारण करते हैं और मृगछाल पहनते हैं।

भगवान शिव बहुत चतुर नहीं हैं, ये बहुत सरल हैं। उनको थोड़ी सी भाँग देकर बोलो - बैठिए, कृपया मेरी फाइल पर हस्ताक्षर कर दीजिए। ये कर देंगे। ये बहुत-बहुत निर्मल हैं। तुमने इन्हें थोड़ी सी भाँग चढ़ा दी या थोड़ा सा जल या बेल-पत्र या थोड़ी सी भस्म, बस वह इनके लिए बहुत ज्यादा है। इनको शुद्धता भी नहीं चाहिए। ये ब्राह्मण या शूद्र या मुसलमान या हिन्दु की भी परवाह नहीं करते हैं। ये इस बात की भी परवाह नहीं करते कि तुम मांस खाते हो या नहीं खाते। ये इस बात की भी परवाह नहीं करते कि तुम पीते हो या नहीं पीते हो। तुम्हारी किस प्रकार की जिन्दगी है, इसकी भी ये परवाह नहीं करते। इन्हें केवल शुद्ध भक्ति चाहिए। भगवान शिव को अपने भक्त के व्यक्तिगत जीवन से, उसके रीति-रिवाजों और विचार-मान्यताओं से कोई मतलब नहीं है। भगवान शिव के उपासक के लिए शाकाहारी होना, पुण्यात्मा होना, उच्च जाति का होना, धनी होना, शुद्ध-पवित्र

होना आवश्यक नहीं। वह किसी भी जाति का हो सकता है, एक वेश्या, चोर या व्याध भी हो सकता है, कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता। उसमें केवल श्रद्धा और विश्वास होना चाहिए। श्रद्धा और विश्वास ही भगवान को पाने का एकमात्र मार्ग है।

भवानीशंकरौ वन्दे श्रद्धाविश्वासरूपिणौ।

याभ्यां विना न पश्यन्ति सिद्धाः स्वान्तःस्थमीश्वरम्॥

पुराणों में एक कहानी आती है। एक शिकारी जंगल में शिकार के लिए गया, लेकिन सूर्यास्त तक उसके हाथ कोई शिकार नहीं लगा। रात हो चुकी थी, इसीलिए वह घर नहीं लौट सका। जंगल में शेर-चीते का खतरा था, इसीलिए रात बिताने के लिए वह शिकारी एक वृक्ष पर चढ़ गया। लेकिन उसे यह भय सता रहा था कि अगर नींद आ गई तो वह पेड़ से नीचे गिर जाएगा। नींद से बचने के लिए वह एक-एक करके पेड़ के पत्ते तोड़ने लगा और नीचे गिराने लगा। सूर्योदय से पहले भगवान शिव ने उसके सामने प्रकट होकर कहा, 'क्या इच्छा है तुम्हारी?' शिकारी बोला, 'मुझे कुछ नहीं चाहिए, मैं तो केवल नींद भगवान की कोशिश कर रहा था।' भगवान शिव ने कहा 'पर अब मैं आ गया हूँ तो तुम्हें कुछ माँगना होगा।'

उस मूर्ख शिकारी को भक्ति, मोक्ष, धन-सम्पत्ति, गाड़ी-बंगला वगैरह कुछ नहीं चाहिए था। उसने कहा, 'मुझे एक हिरण दे दीजिए, नहीं तो मैं अपने बच्चों को क्या खिलाऊँगा?' और भगवान शिव ने कहा 'तथास्तु।' जब वह शिकारी नीचे आया तो उसने देखा कि वहाँ एक काले रंग का लिंगाकार पत्थर था और जिस पेड़ पर वह बैठा था, वह बेल का वृक्ष था। वह रात भर बेल-पत्र तोड़कर शिवलिंगम् पर चढ़ा रहा था ! लोग कहते हैं कि भगवान शिव पर एक बेल-पत्र चढ़ाना भी पर्याप्त है। उन्हें प्रसन्न करना बहुत आसान है।



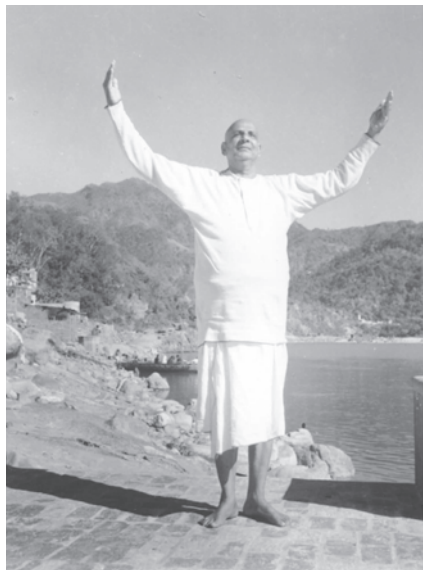
मन्दिर में होने वाली पूजा-पाठ अपनी जगह ठीक है, लेकिन अगर तुममें केवल श्रद्धा है तो वही पर्याप्त है। तब तुम्हें भगवान की बाहरी पूजा-अर्चना करने की आवश्यकता नहीं।

इश्क पाबन्दे वफा है न कि पाबन्दे रसूम,

सर झुकाने को नहीं कहते सजदा करना।

देवघर के शिवलिंगम् का अनोखा इतिहास है। रावण इसे अपनी राजधानी में स्थापित करने के लिए कैलाश से लेकर चला था। लेकिन शर्त यह थी कि इस शिवलिंगम् को मार्ग में जमीन पर नहीं उतारना है, हाथ पर ही रखना है। यहाँ से गुजरते हुए रावण को पेशाब लगी। एक ब्राह्मण-बालक को शिवलिंगम् पकड़ाकर वह पेशाब करने लगा। और करता ही रहा। वह ब्राह्मण कुमार शिवलिंगम् पकड़े-पकड़े थक गया और अन्त में उसने वह शिवलिंगम् जमीन पर रख दिया, जहाँ से फिर वह हिला ही नहीं।

देवघर के इस मन्दिर का नाम बैद्यनाथ धाम है। 'बैद्य' शब्द का अर्थ होता है 'चिकित्सक', 'नाथ' यानि 'प्रधान'। बाबा बैद्यनाथ जीवन की सभी व्याधियों का उपचार करते हैं। बाबा बैद्यनाथ के तीर्थ-यात्री अपनी यात्रा का प्रारम्भ गंगा नदी के किनारे एक स्थान से करते हैं, जो यहाँ से प्रायः सौ किलोमीटर दूर है। वे सारा मार्ग पैदल चलकर तय करते हैं और यहाँ चार दिनों में पहुँचते हैं, गंगाजल के पात्रों को अत्यंत सावधानी से अपने कंधों पर रखकर लाते हैं। कुछ लोग यात्रा के प्रत्येक कदम पर साष्टांग दण्डवत प्रणाम करते जाते हैं। प्रत्येक कदम पर प्रार्थना करते हैं जब तक वे मन्दिर में पहुँच नहीं जाते। इसमें काफी समय लगता है, सम्भवतः उनके मन्दिर पहुँचने में कुछ महिने लग जाते हैं। जो लोग असाध्य बीमारियों से पीड़ित होते हैं वे ऐसा करते हैं। यह कठोर संयम है या तपस्या, शायद यह शोधक के समान है। मनुष्य ने अपने जीवन काल में अनेक गलतियाँ की हैं। अपने कर्मों का क्षय करने के लिए, वह अनेक प्रकार की तपस्याएँ करता है और यह उनमें से एक है। इस प्रकार की तपस्या, जिसे प्रायश्चित्त कहते हैं, वैदिक धर्म का एक अंग है।



भक्ति- इक्कीसवीं शताब्दी का विज्ञान

स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती

इक्कीसवीं शताब्दी में योग ने पथ्य में चला जाएगा, भक्ति की भूमिका प्रधान होगी। भक्ति यानी श्रद्धा, प्रेम, केवल विशुद्ध प्रेम। यह अवश्य घटित होगा, एक मान्यता के रूप में नहीं, वरन् एक विज्ञान के रूप में। जैसे हमको आधुनिक ओषधियों के बारे में शोध करने से पता चला है, उसी तरह मनोवैज्ञानिकों ने मस्तिष्क पर शोध किए और मस्तिष्क के तरंगों की जानकारी हासिल की। उसी प्रकार से मीराबाई की तरह किसी भक्त पर प्रयोग, शोध करके जानने की कोशिश करेंगे कि उनके शरीर में क्या परिवर्तन होते हैं, उन परिवर्तनों को क्या नाम दिया जाए, उनके मस्तिष्क की तरंगें कैसी होती हैं, यह सब उन्हें ढूँढना होगा। मीराबाई जहर का प्याला पी गयीं और उन पर कोई असर नहीं हुआ- क्यों और कैसे? ईसामसीह को तीन दिनों तक सूली पर लटकाए रखा और वे जीवित रहे- कैसे वे जीवित रह सके?

भक्ति-मार्ग इक्कीसवीं शताब्दी का विज्ञान है। यह मुझे दिखता है। बीसवीं शताब्दी में विज्ञान का परिणाम प्रौद्योगिकी है। भक्ति इक्कीसवीं शताब्दी में विज्ञान का परिणाम होगी। वैज्ञानिकों ने प्रौद्योगिकी, पदार्थवाद के वैद्युतिकी के सिद्धान्तों आदि पर शोध-कार्य किए हैं और उन्होंने हमें कुछ सुन्दर एवं चमत्कारी वस्तुएँ दी हैं। इक्कीसवीं शताब्दी में वैज्ञानिक अपनी दृष्टि भक्ति की ओर फेरेंगे। उसी प्रकार भक्ति पर अनुसंधान करेंगे, जिस प्रकार बीसवीं शताब्दी में उन्होंने पदार्थ, वैद्युतिकी, नाभिकीय भौतिकी आदि पर किया है।

इक्कीसवीं शताब्दी में विज्ञान का कार्य-क्षेत्र होगा 'आस्था', उसका कार्य-क्षेत्र होगा 'विश्वास', उसका कार्य-क्षेत्र होगा 'भक्ति'। 'मानव मन, मानव व्यवहार, मानव स्वभाव और समाज एवं सभ्यता में भक्ति के प्रभाव'। यह एकदम स्पष्ट है। इक्कीसवीं शताब्दी के वैज्ञानिकों को बहुत कठोर परिश्रम करना पड़ेगा। तब आप आध्यात्म विज्ञान को मात्र धर्म या आस्था नहीं कहेंगे, बल्कि जीवन-विज्ञान कहेंगे। जैसे हम इलेक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया के द्वारा अन्तरिक्ष से सम्पर्क स्थापित करने में सफल हो गए हैं, उसी प्रकार हमें मानव-जाति, उसके जटिल मन, उसके विलक्षण व्यवहार, मानव सिद्धान्तों और मानव मन की स्वभावगत विलक्षणताओं के क्षेत्र में कार्य करना होगा। विज्ञान





भी मानव-मन को नियंत्रित करने में सक्षम नहीं है, मानव-मन पर किसी का नियंत्रण नहीं है। जब तक तुम अपने मन एवं व्यवहार पर स्वयं नियंत्रण न रखना चाहो, उन्हें नियंत्रित नहीं कर सकते। भक्ति मात्र एक दर्शन नहीं है, कोई धर्म भी नहीं है, भक्ति एक विज्ञान है। ऐसा विज्ञान है, जो व्यक्ति को आमूल परिवर्तित कर देता है। भक्ति उसकी विचारधारा को तथा वृत्तियों को रूपान्तरित कर देती है। एक ओर भगवद् प्राप्त संत और दूसरी ओर वैज्ञानिक- दोनों मिल कर इस पर चिन्तन करना शुरू कर दें, तो इक्कीसवीं शताब्दी भक्ति-क्रान्ति की शताब्दी होगी।

एक मौज मचल जाय तो तूफ़ाँ बन जाय,
 एक फूल अगर चाहे तो गुलिस्ताँ बन जाय।
 एक खून के कतरे में है तासीर इतनी,
 एक कौम की तारीख का उनमाँ बन जाय।।



शिवलिंगम्

स्वामी सत्यसंगानन्द सरस्वती



मान लीजिए कि मैं आपको सर्वोच्च जागरूकता या परम चेतना का मानस-दर्शन करने के लिए कहती हूँ तो आप इसे किस प्रकार करेंगे? इन अमूर्त धारणाओं के अनुभव या मानस-दर्शन के लिए कुछ आधार या बुनियाद की आवश्यकता होती है। तंत्र और योग ने इस समस्या के समाधान के लिए एक कुशल व व्यावहारिक उपकरण के रूप में प्रतीक का उपयोग किया है। श्री स्वामीजी ने कहा है कि शिवलिंगम् सभी अगोचर व अदृष्ट का प्रतिनिधित्व करता है। परम चेतना है, हम इसे देख नहीं सकते इसलिए इसका ये मतलब नहीं कि परम चेतना का अस्तित्व नहीं है। यह

सर्वव्यापी, सर्वशक्तिमान और सर्वज्ञ है। यह हमारे ऊपर, हमारे नीचे, हमारे बगल में, हमारे चारों ओर है, यह सर्वत्र है। परन्तु हम इसे देख नहीं पाते हैं। लिंगम् का अर्थ है स्रोत, वह दैदीप्यमान स्रोत जिससे सम्पूर्ण सृष्टि का जन्म हुआ है। और शिव का अर्थ है शुभता, मंगलता। सभी शुभकारी, मंगलकारी और कल्याणकारी वस्तुओं व परिस्थितियों का उद्भव शिवलिंगम् से ही होता है।

आमतौर पर शिवलिंगम् मध्य भारत के नर्मदा नदी से आते हैं। परन्तु हमारे पास कुछ अनूठे शिवलिंगम् हैं जो हिमालय के गंगोत्री से आए हैं। एक समान आकार वाले इन बारह शिवलिंगम्ओं को यहाँ विशेष रूप से गुरुदेव के लिए लाया गया था। और उन्होंने बीस साल तक प्रतिदिन सुबह-शाम इन शिवलिंग की आराधना की। उनकी आराधना से ये पवित्र और जीवन्त द्वादश-ज्योतिर्लिंगम्



में परिवर्तित हो गए हैं। द्वादश-ज्योतिर्लिंगम् के दर्शन के लिए आपको भारत-भ्रमण की आवश्यकता नहीं, यहीं कर लीजिए, क्योंकि ये यहाँ विद्यमान हैं।

महाशिवरात्रि भगवान शिव की एक भव्य रात्रि है जब परम चेतना और परा शक्ति का महामिलन होता है। यह महामिलन भगवान शिव और माता पार्वती के विवाह स्वरूप मनाया जाता है। महाशिवरात्रि के दिन सम्पूर्ण भारत में लोगों की भीड़ शिवलिंगम् की पूजा करने मंदिरों व धार्मिक स्थलों में जमा हो जाती है।

रिखियापीठ में इस पावन रात्रि के अनुपम अवसर पर हम शक्ति की आराधना भी करते हैं। आखिरकार बिना दुल्हन के आप विवाह-समारोह की कल्पना कर सकते हैं क्या? एक विवाह-समारोह में दुल्हन हमेशा आकर्षण का केन्द्र होती है - उसे सजाया और सँवारा जाता है, और सबलोग उसकी सुन्दरता निहारते हैं। रूद्राभिषेक के साथ-साथ हम श्रीयंत्र का भी अभिषेक करते हैं। हम दोनों की आराधना इसीलिए करते हैं क्योंकि ये दोनों एक ही हैं। ये सृजन के लिए अलग होते हैं - एकोहम् बहुष्यामि।

महाशिवरात्रि के पुनीत अवसर पर आश्रम में शिवलिंगम् की आराधना कन्या-बटुक व काशी के पंडित के साथ-साथ संन्यासीगण भी करते हैं। समाधि-स्थल में भिन्न-भिन्न स्थानों पर प्रस्थापित सभी शिवलिंगम् की आराधना हम क्यों कर रहे हैं? इसका सबसे सरल उत्तर है कि हम यह पसन्द करते हैं, हमें यह अच्छा लगता है और हम इसका आनन्द लेते हैं। हम मोक्ष या वरदान प्राप्त करने की कोशिश नहीं कर रहे हैं, हम बस इसे प्रेम से कर रहे हैं। यह हमें कहाँ ले जाएगा केवल भगवान शिव ही जानते हैं, इसीलिए यह सब हम उन्हीं पर छोड़ देते हैं। लेकिन प्रेम सदा हमें सही दिशा में ही ले जाएगा।



सद्गुणों का विकास- व्यावहारिक तथ्य

स्वामी शिवानन्द सरस्वती

मैं यहाँ उन मुख्य गुणों की चर्चा करूँगा जो कि वास्तविक साधना के लिए आवश्यक है। प्राचीन काल से ही आध्यात्मिक अनुभव प्राप्त, सन्त, ऋषि तथा भक्तजन यह घोषणा करते आ रहे हैं कि यदि मनुष्य पाप-पंकिलमय विषय-जीवन से मुख मोड़ ले, उन्नत दिव्य जीवन के लिए प्रयत्नशील हो, तो वह महान सुख, अपार शक्ति तथा असीम ज्ञान का अनुभव कर सकता है। फिर भी आज हम देखते हैं कि मनुष्य संसारिकता में अधिक नहीं तो उतना ही निमग्न है जितना कि वह शताब्दियों पूर्व था तथा मानव-जाति आत्मिक जीवन के प्रश्नों के प्रति उतनी ही उदासीन एवं आलसी है जितनी कि सृष्टि के प्रारम्भ में थी।

बहुत से महर्षियों की घोषणाओं, सत् शास्त्रों के विश्वसनीय आशवासनों तथा मनुष्य के बारम्बार ऐहिक विषय-सुख के मिथ्यात्व-सम्बन्धी अनुभवों के होते हुए भी आप बारम्बार धोखे में पड़ रहे हैं; ऐसा क्यों? मनुष्य ने साधना-पथ पर अभी तक चलना सीखा नहीं; ऐसा क्यों? हम सैकड़ों आध्यात्मिक पुस्तकें पढ़ते हैं, हम प्रवचनों को सुनते हैं तथा साधना-सप्ताह में सम्मेलन भी बुलाते हैं। वर्षों तक आध्यात्मिक ग्रन्थों के गम्भीर अनुशीलन, साधुओं की संगति तथा बारम्बार उपदेश-श्रवण के अनन्तर भी मनुष्य रचनात्मक रूप से कुछ करता नहीं; क्योंकि उसमें साधुओं के उपदेशों एवं धर्मग्रन्थों के प्रति गम्भीर तथा स्थायी श्रद्धा नहीं है। बाह्य पदार्थों में उसकी श्रद्धा उसके लिए अधिक सत्य है। यदि मनुष्य को इन महापुरुषों में श्रद्धा होती, तो वह उनके कथनानुसार चलने के लिए अवश्य बाध्य





होता। श्रद्धा का अभाव ही साधना में विफलता का मूल कारण है। साधना आवश्यक है, किन्तु मनुष्य इसे करता नहीं; क्योंकि इसकी आवश्यकता में उसे विश्वास नहीं है।

मनुष्य को इसमें विश्वास है कि उसके सुख के लिए उसे धन की आवश्यकता है। मनुष्य को विश्वास है कि यदि उसे अच्छी नौकरी मिल जाए, तो उसे धन प्राप्त होगा। उसे विश्वास है कि यदि उसे कॉलेज-शिक्षा प्राप्त हो, तो उसे अच्छी नौकरी मिल सकती है और उससे धन तथा धन से इच्छानुसार सुख की प्राप्ति। इस पर विश्वास कर माता-पिता अपने बच्चों को स्कूल में भेजते हैं तथा शैशवावस्था से ही उस बच्चे में यह विश्वास जमाया जाता है कि यदि वह अच्छे अंकों से परीक्षा में उत्तीर्ण होगा, तो उसे अच्छी नौकरी मिलेगी। उसे अच्छा वेतन मोटर-कार इत्यादि प्राप्त होंगे। वह इन बातों पर विश्वास करता है तथा परीक्षाएँ पास कर आशातीत नौकरी प्राप्त करता है। क्योंकि उसमें विश्वास था, उसने इनकी आवश्यकताओं को समझ लिया था, अतः वह इन्हें प्राप्त कर लेता है।

परन्तु सभी मनुष्यों का यह दुःखद अनुभव है कि यह सुख दसगुने दुःख से मिश्रित है। मनुष्य एक आना सुख प्राप्त करता है और उसके साथ-साथ पन्द्रह आना दुःख भी मिला होता है। दुःख के लिए तो उसने कोई कामना ही नहीं की थी। अतः यदि मनुष्य को साधना के कार्यक्रम में विश्वास हो, तो वह अवश्य तदनुकूल कार्य करेगा। इस विश्वास के अभाव में ही वह साधना नहीं करता। यदि मनुष्य को साधना-मार्ग का अवलम्बन करना है, यदि वास्तव में ही वह उस सुख को चाहता है जो दुःखों से मिश्रित न हो, तो

उसे निश्चय ही श्रद्धा पर आश्रित होना होगा। इसे अन्धविश्वास भी कह सकते हैं, परन्तु अन्धविश्वास नामक कोई वस्तु है ही नहीं; क्योंकि इस पृथ्वी की सभी वस्तुएँ विश्वास-पारस्परिक श्रद्धा पर ही अवलम्बित हैं।

यदि आज मनुष्य जी रहा है तो केवल पारस्परिक विश्वास एवं श्रद्धा के कारण ही। दस रुपये का नोट एक कागज का टुकड़ा ही तो है; परन्तु चूँकि उस पर सरकार की छाप है; इससे आप बाजार से कुछ खरीद सकते हैं। आपको इस कागजी टुकड़े में विश्वास है। यदि आपको इस टुकड़े में विश्वास न होता, तो आप घर से बाजार के लिए निकलते ही नहीं और न कभी आप अपने उद्देश्य की पूर्ति में ही समर्थ होते। डॉक्टर आपको कागज के एक टुकड़े पर औषधि लिख कर देता है। यदि आपको विश्वास न हो, तो आप उससे यह टुकड़ा लेंगे ही नहीं; परन्तु श्रद्धा के कारण-जिस पर सारा समाज टिका है-आप उसकी बातों में विश्वास करते हैं, उसके परामर्श के लिए उसे रुपये देते हैं, उस कागज को औषधि-विक्रेता के पास ले जाते हैं तथा औषधि खरीद कर रोग-मुक्त बनते हैं।



यह सारा सामाजिक विधान श्रद्धा और विश्वास के ऊपर ही चलता है। यदि आप गतिशील मानव-जाति पर श्रद्धा रखने को तैयार हैं, तो इन वस्तुओं के स्रष्टा भगवान के प्रति श्रद्धा रखने में झिझक क्यों? ऋषियों की वाणी पर श्रद्धा रख कर तथा साधना की आवश्यकता समझ कर तदनन्तर क्या करना चाहिए? आपमें श्रद्धा हो सकती है, आपके सहस्रों हितैषी बहुत अच्छी-अच्छी सम्मतियाँ आपको दें और आपको उन पर पूर्ण विश्वास भी हो; परन्तु यदि आप उन्हें अभ्यास में न लाएँ, तो वे योजना मात्र ही रह जाएंगी। अतः साधना में श्रद्धा के उपरान्त अभ्यास की बारी आती है। आपको अभ्यास में लग जाना होगा। केवल



श्रद्धा ही पर्याप्त नहीं। श्रद्धा को कार्य-रूप में परिणत करना होगा। सन्तों की बातों में विश्वास रख कर आप साधना प्रारम्भ कर दें। एक बार साधना प्रारम्भ कर लेने के पश्चात् दूसरी मुख्य बात ध्यान देने योग्य यह है कि आप उसे फिर त्याग न दें। संलग्नता बहुत ही आवश्यक है।

संसार के समस्त विधान क्रमिक हैं। उनमें अवस्थाएँ हैं। कृषि क्रमिक है। इसमें कई महीने लग जाते हैं। आपको खेत की जुताई करनी है, बीज बोना है, सिंचाई करनी है, मोथों को उखाड़ फेंकना है तथा समय आने पर फसल काटनी है। यदि आप अधीर हैं-आप बीज बो दें और अंकुरित होते ही यदि आप उन्हें भूमि से निकाल लें, तो वह विनष्ट हो जाएगा। यदि आपको फसल प्राप्त करनी है, तो धैर्य के साथ उसकी सारी अवस्थाओं से गुजरना होगा। कोई व्यक्ति कुएँ से पानी खींचते समय यदि अचानक रस्सी खींचना बन्द कर दे, तो पानी का वह पात्र पहिए के सहारे पुनः कुएँ में जा गिरेगा। उसे तब तक खींचते जाना चाहिए, जब तक कि पात्र ऊपर न आ जाए। तब तक संलग्न रहिए जब तक कि फल प्राप्त न हो जाए। आपको उसे त्यागना नहीं चाहिए।



दूसरी प्रमुख बात यह है कि आध्यात्मिक साधना में केवल सहायक शक्तियाँ ही काम नहीं करतीं। बहुत सी विरोधी शक्तियाँ भी हैं जो साधक पर आक्रमण कर उसे नीचे घसीट लाती हैं। अतः चौथे आवश्यक अस्त्र धृति की बारी आती है। संलग्न रहते हुए मनुष्य को इतना तो

साहस रखना ही चाहिए कि वह बाधाओं से सुगमतया न डिगे। उसे तूफानों का सामना करना पड़ेगा तथा विपरीत परिस्थितियों एवं कठिनाइयों से लड़ते हुए साधना के मार्ग पर अविचल रहना होगा। धृति के सहारे वह हतोत्साह नहीं होता तथा अन्तरात्मा पर आश्रित हो कर साधना में अग्रसर होता है और अन्ततः वह उस आदर्श को प्राप्त कर लेता है जिसके लिए इस जगत में उसका जन्म हुआ है।

इस प्रक्रिया से गुजरते हुए उसे इस बात पर भी ध्यान रखना चाहिए कि वह मार्ग की छोटी-छोटी बातों पर भी विशेष ध्यान रखे, उनकी अवहेलना न करे। यदि ऐसा समझ कर कि यह तो निरर्थक है कोई भी छोटी बात छूट गई, तो उसे अन्त में पता चलेगा कि उसने व्यर्थ में ही अपना बहुमूल्य समय तथा श्रम गँवाया है। इससे उन्नति में विलम्ब होता है। उच्च आदर्शों की प्राप्ति में छोटी-छोटी बातों पर ध्यान देना अत्यावश्यक है; क्योंकि उन्हीं के संग्रह से ही उच्च आदर्श की प्राप्ति होती है। अतः दृढ़ श्रद्धा, व्यावहारिक साधना, संलग्नता, छोटी-छोटी बातों के प्रति सावधानी तथा परीक्षण में धृति रखते हुए आपको साधना-मार्ग पर पग रखना चाहिए।





I have neither hatred nor attachment, nor greed or
infatuation,

I have neither pride nor a competitive spirit, I am not after
duty, wealth, passion, or liberation.

I am the essence of consciousness and bliss -

Shivoham! Shivoham!

"Nirvanashtakam" by Adi Shankaracharya



Prostrations to the source of bliss, earthly and heavenly.

Prostrations to the auspicious one, more auspicious than anything else.

Prostrations to the one present in holy rivers and in idols installed on their banks.

“Sri Rudram” YAJUR VEDA

Rikhiapeeth Website: www.rikhiapeeth.in

The Rikhiapeeth website is a sanctuary for all spiritual seekers, so that they may stay connected to the cardinal teachings of Swami Sivananda that are practised and lived here at Rikhiapeeth – ‘Serve, Love, and Give’. Be inspired by satsangs, information about the tradition and Rikhiapeeth.

A new feature on the website are the current and topical satsangs of Swami Satyasangananda which are being posted regularly on the home page in the section: ‘From Rikhia the Tapobhumi of Swami Satyananda’. Stay Connected!



Since the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic Rikhiapeeth has been conducting daily havans to the chanting of the Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra. This is a healing and far-reaching mantra which is chanted for global health, peace and well-being. In compliance with the national directives, the ashram has remained closed since the beginning of March when the number of cases started increasing in India, and has cancelled all its event for the year 2020, to support the process of healing.

This time of isolation is being used to further nourish and strengthen the sankalpa given by Sri Swamiji of Serve, Love and Give, for universal peace, plenty and prosperity. Swami Satyasangananda and the sannyasins of Rikhiapeeth will continue to pray for global healing and to support the thousands of families affected by the pandemic.

To all the devotees, disciples, followers, aspirants, associates and well-wishers across the globe, we send out vibrations of love, hope and courage to each and every one of you. Know that there is a silver lining and that a process of purification is taking place which is necessary if we want a greater light to emerge. May the light of Pujya Gurudev's blessings shower upon all of you and may his grace illumine your path.



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