

ARADHANA

Yoga of the Heart ❤️

Year 12 Issue 4

July/Aug 2023

For Free Distribution



Rikhiapeeth, Rikhiya, 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.

Editor:

Swami Yogamudra Saraswati

Assistant Editor:

Swami Gurumaya Saraswati

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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 a special tribute to Guru. It includes satsangs, poems and teachings on the topic of Guru and features highlights of the GuruPurnima Aradhana 2023 which was conducted at Rikhiapeeth.

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Aradhana Invocation

देवाऽभावयतामेन 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).

Prayer to the Guru

Life is a canvas,
A magnificent creation of the painter's brush.
The painting depicts the various facets of life
And reflects the pictures of this vast creation.

O artist of our lives,
Use your brush to create new life.
Paint a new life for us all
And in that picture give men, women and children
Laughter, happiness and joy in plenty.

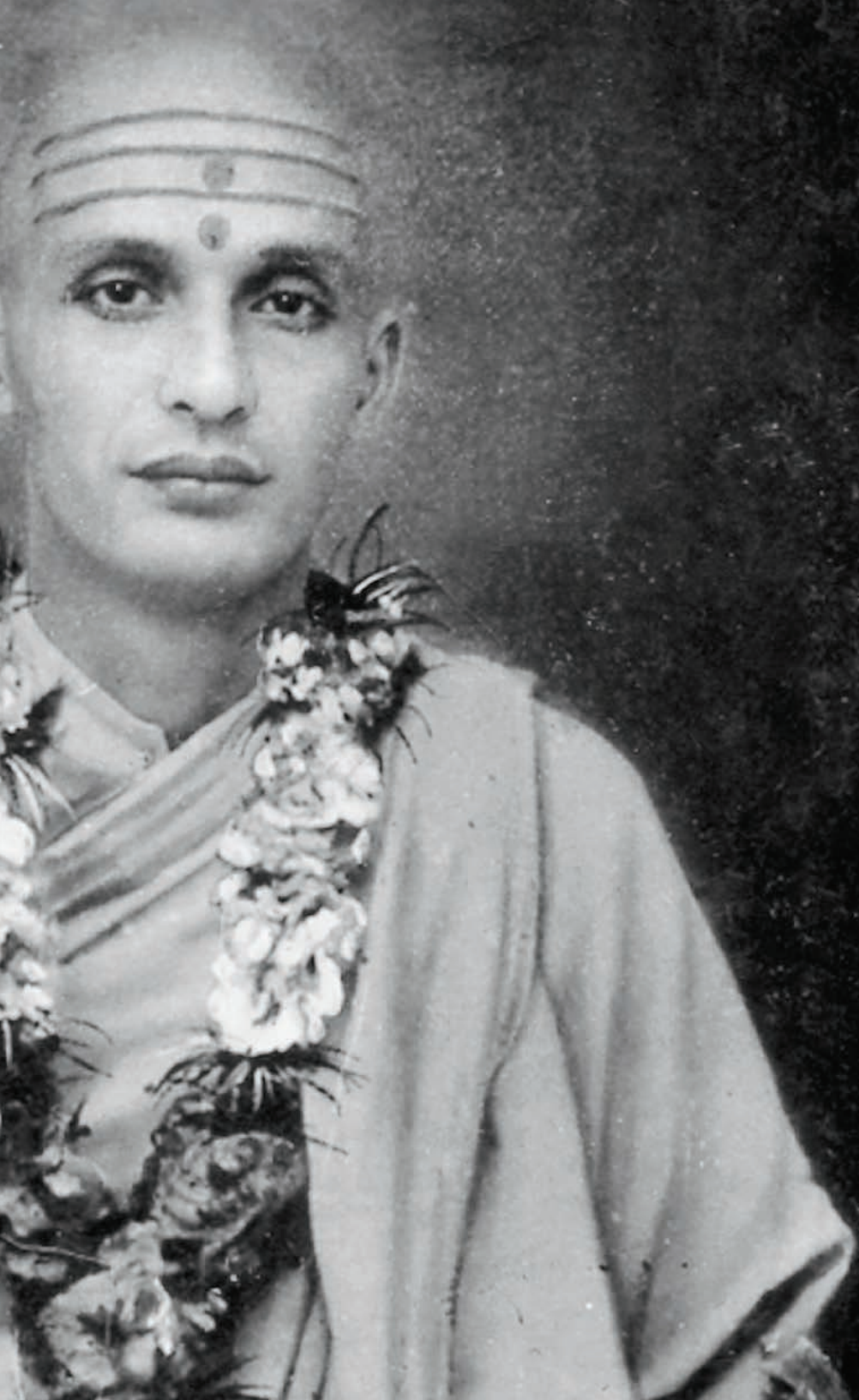
O light of my life,
In this dark night
Give me a glimpse of yourself in my subtle mind,
And make the journey of other co-travellers
Bright, blissful and eternal.

O friend of my journey,
The path to the source is endless,
Unknown are the ways that lead there,
Only a few travellers dare to tread upon it.
Tell me, when shall we reach it?

I have covered a part of the journey,
Crossed some of the ups and downs
And traversed a few valleys,
But the journey is not yet over.
Inspire me through your paintings
And in the shadow of your feet
Enable me to complete my pilgrimage.

Swami Satyananda Saraswati, 1957







Guru Bhakti

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

There was once a man of good spiritual impressions who used to attend satsang classes where he heard that the Guru's grace as indispensably necessary for God-realisation. From that very moment he began to search for a Guru to receive instructions and practice sadhana. He came across many sadhus and saints but found some fault or other with every one of them. He had a perverted intellect and a narrow-minded, fault-finding nature. Therefore he was not able to find a Guru. As long as one does not crush one's pride of intellect and learning and become like a child with intense faith, one cannot find a suitable Guru.

One day while sitting in his house in a sorrowful mood, his wife asked him the reason for his lamentation. He replied that he could not find a Guru who would show him the way to God. His wife suggested that they should both go to the forest at night and sit on the wayside, and the man who happened to pass that way first should be taken as their Guru. The husband agreed.

The next day they went to the jungle and sat on the side of a pathway. It so happened that a thief with some stolen ornaments was hurrying that way. The couple at once caught hold of his feet and took him as their Guru. They begged him to teach them the Guru mantra.

The thief was very surprised and also frightened. They narrated the whole story to him. He was moved by their faith and expressed the truth that he was a thief. The couple, however, would not allow him to go further and insisted that he teach them the Guru Mantra. The thief was alarmed that if he tarried any longer he would be caught. In order to get away somehow, he asked them to bend down, close their eyes and catch hold of their ears. He asked them to remain in that posture until he again ordered them to stand. They obeyed him and assumed the position.

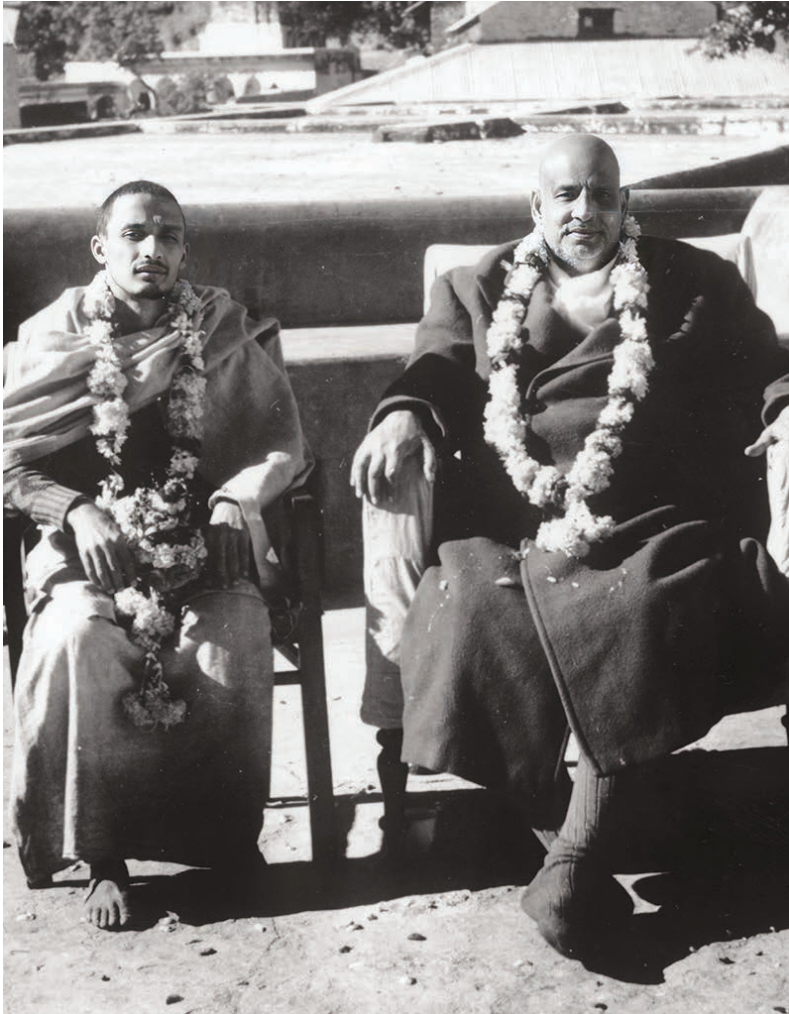
They remained like that throughout the night and the next day also. The couple did not take any food or water. In the meantime the thief was caught and put into prison. Lord Vishnu and Goddess Lakshmi were very much moved by their faith. Lakshmi became restless and prayed to the Lord to give them Darshan. Lord Vishnu appeared before them.

On seeing the Lord the couple was pleased but did not open their eyes or stand up. The Lord requested them to stand up but they replied that they would not do so without the permission of their Guru. Thereupon the Lord appeared before the ruler of the country in a dream and asked him to release the thief from prison. The Rajah thought that the dream was false, but when it was repeated thrice, he at once released the thief. The same night the Lord appeared in the dream of the thief and told him to go to the place where the couple still remained in the same posture as he had ordered, and ask them to open their eyes.

Upon his release the thief immediately proceeded to the jungle and asked the couple to open their eyes and stand up. They did so and explained how the Lord had given them Darshan. The thief too revealed to them his dream and about his release.

A voice from heaven was heard, “ I am very much pleased with the intense faith you have in your Guru. Do Bhajan, Japa and meditation regularly. I will give you Darshan and liberate you from the cycle of births and deaths.” From that day onward the thief also left his habit of stealing and became a devotee of Lord Vishnu. The couple commenced regular Sadhana and Bhajan and became liberated souls while living.

Devotion and obedience to the Guru can achieve anything. Guru Bhakti is the supreme purifier and illuminator. It is devotion to the Guru alone that makes the life of the aspirant blessed and fruitful.



Serving the Guru

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

To convert emotion into bhakti, first of all a mould is needed, and the mould is the Guru. But the Guru is also a human being made from the five elements, just as your body is made from the five elements. As you live and are bound by the gunas, the three aspects of creation, so is the Guru. In the most natural way he cannot be perfect, and that is the first thing the disciple has to understand. If the disciple wants to see total perfection in the Guru, if he wants to see him without any blemishes, this is impossible.

One should always keep one point in mind - every human being is a perfectionist by nature. By perfectionist, I mean that every human being has some ideals and he wants to see those ideals. You have an ideal, and you want to see the image of it in me. I can never be it one hundred percent because you have created a sense of perfection from some complex or some mental block.

Every person has a preference and watches to see whether or not he can get that preference. While going to a shop to purchase a sari, you look to see whether the shopkeeper is a brahmin or not. Why are you concerned with that? You want to purchase a good sari, but for you the shopkeeper should be an old man and a brahmin, and he should be neither too tall nor too short. We call this perfectionism. Through this perfectionism you have created a psychological barrier in yourself. This needs to be understood. In the science of human psychology, perfectionism is a complex. It is your personality barrier and that barrier is created to fulfil your need for security, because basically everybody is insecure. A human being has four instincts: food, sleep, sex and fear. The meaning of fear is insecurity; it is ingrained in everyone.

Now, maybe the Guru drinks tea two, three or four times a day and wears leather shoes, or sleeps and snores during the day. Why do you see all this? When the heart accepts, the brain does not play any role. When you love, the brain should not be allowed to come in between, otherwise it will spoil the whole thing. Therefore, to transform emotions into bhakti and remove this mental barrier, establish your relationship with the Guru through Guru seva.

Guru Seva

Service to the Guru is of many kinds. Lord Krishna used to collect wood at his Guru's Sandipani's place. Lord Rama used to live in the cave where his Guru Vashishtha himself used to live, ninety-six miles away from Rishikesh, near Brahmapuri, right on the bank of the river Ganga. Lord Rama worked with a spade, looked after the cows and buffaloes, picked up wood for the ashram. Maybe he also washed Arundhati's clothes. Who knows? He must have done everything as seva. He must have travelled back and forth daily, and it would not have been on horseback. While living in the Gurukul, he had to follow the rules of the ashram. He had to sleep on the floor, which was the rule in the ancient period. Lord Rama had to lead a hard life and he was trained in his Guru's ashram.

Later on, when Lord Rama was exiled to the forests, he did not feel the pain and hardship of forest life because the austerity of his Guru's ashram had made the pain of life lighter. The austerity of the Guru's ashram renders that service. The difficulties which come in life are of many kinds. They are in the form of pain: poverty is pain, hunger is pain, thirst is pain, disease is pain, criticism and back-biting are pain; there are many types of pain. So these become lighter and insignificant.

By serving the Guru and serving him endlessly, the ego of the disciple is effaced. He does not think, "I came to the Guru for self-realization and he is only getting me to do all the cleaning. He gets me to clean the toilets! In me he has an unpaid servant." The Guru creates conditions so that the disciple may purify himself. The most difficult thing in life is purification of the consciousness, the atma, the self. At present, you do not know what consciousness is or what the faults within you are. You try to correct your social and mental faults, but there are faults embedded deep within your personality. Therefore, the Guru often performs an operation on the disciple, which is not tonsillectomy but egodectomy, the removal of ego. This operation on the ego is so difficult that many disciples cannot bear it. However, if it succeeds, then they reach the goal.

So a disciple must have certain cardinal qualities, like devotion to the Guru and an innocent personality. Before Guru you are not an intellectual, not intelligent, you are like a child in your mother's lap. While serving your Guru, you are not serving him as a servant, but as a disciple. Service, devotion, innocence and faith are the four very important cardinal principles in the life of a disciple.



Tulsi Kutir, where Sri Swamiji attained Maha Samadhi on 5th December 2009, Sivananda Sarovar, Rikhiapeeth

Swami Sivananda

When I went to Rishikesh looking for a Guru, I went to Kailash Ashram first. I asked Swami Vishnudevananda for sannyasa, but he said, "When you take sannyasa I will be present, but go to Swami Sivananda. He is a sadhu and an educated person and you are also educated."

So I went to Swami Sivananda and said, "I have come here to live with you." He said, "Okay, live here but first of all clean your mirror. Whatever you want to achieve is within you, it is not within me. The Guru doesn't give anything. The soul, the atma, is the truth within us. Consciousness is within us, the light is within us. Brahma is within us. Everything is within us."

Swami Sivananda was a great devotee from South India and he wanted to build a temple to Lord Vishwanath in Rishikesh. Now from where were we to bring water? A lot of water is needed for construction and the Ganga is a long way down from the ashram. Those who have been to Rishikesh know that. In those days there was no electricity in Rishikesh and no generator. I saw electricity and generators for the first time only in 1950. Anyway we went up to Tapovan village where there was a waterfall, dug a drain in the hill over a period of fifteen days and built a big water tank, forty by twelve feet. It was my duty to fill up the water tanks in the ashram from the Ganga, fifty buckets daily. Bringing bel leaves from the forest for the worship of Lord Shiva was also one of my duties.



Chanting of the Vedas, Guru Purnima 2023, Rikhiapieth

Sometimes I was asked to clean the library and while dusting I would see the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda and the Sama Veda there. This was a great temptation. The Upanishads and other texts used to tempt me. I said to Swamiji, "There are so many books. Can I take a few?" He replied, "Satyananda, you are talking of infection, you should talk of education. Infection is when knowledge comes in from outside. When inner knowledge is revealed outside, that is called education. All knowledge is within you. The knowledge of the four Vedas is within you. The human being is all knowledgeable. Atma, your spirit, is omniscient."

Change Your Heart

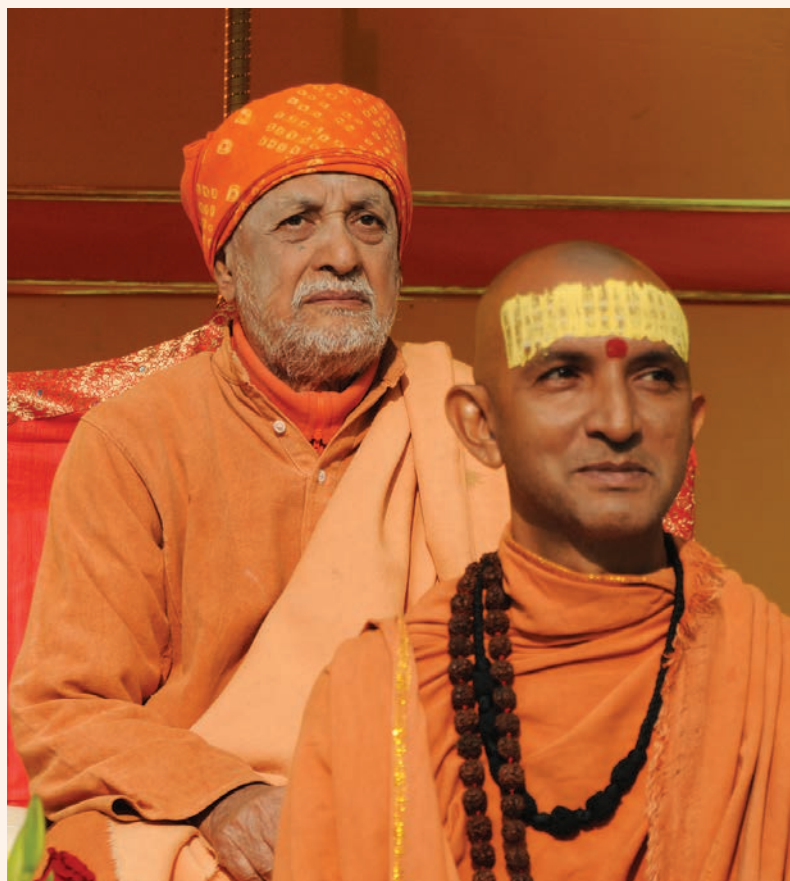
Many years ago during a Kumbha Mela, a man suffering with leprosy was brought to the ashram in a sack. Swami Sivananda called me and said, "Put him in a room and clean his body with the necessary antiseptics." Swamiji was a doctor and he knew what to do. I also had a little knowledge about such matters. So I carried out the duty I had been given. That man was obnoxious; his smell, his attitude, his behaviour, his entire being was something which I could not accept.

The next morning when I gave Swamiji a report, he asked me how the man was. I said, "Swamiji, that man is so difficult, his disease, his sores are so difficult." Swamiji replied, "You want to find God without any effort. You want to realize God without a change of heart, mind, philosophy, and concept, without destroying your personal nest. You have a personality, character, views, habits, likes and dislikes. Destroy them first and change your heart." If it had been a beautiful young lady, I would have served her without complaining. Even if it had been a young man, a beautiful or rich man, I would have served him. Such a man was I. Do you think I was fit to realize God? No, I was unfit.

Before self-surrender can take place, the entire personality has to be rearranged. Self-surrender is not just the thought that you want to surrender; it is an inborn quality. For surrender, you require innocence, but everybody has lost their innocence. The heart, mind, buddhi, have become tough and rigid. In order to soften your heart, mind and intellect, satsang is necessary for a sustained period of time. Satsang is a very powerful tool. It took me so many years to emulate my Guru and practise his principles. He used to say, "Serve, love, give. Whatever you have, give it to others. It does not belong to you." I never understood him then, but now I do. Nothing belongs to me, nothing is mine. I am just a medium.



Satsang at Sadguru Peeth, Sivananda Sarovar, Rikhiapeeth



We have to be clear about one thing: the Guru is not an ordinary individual like the rest of us. The Guru's consciousness and mind are not related to this world, but dedicated and devoted to God. Their consciousness is one with the higher consciousness. This is what distinguishes ordinary people from extraordinary people. When a person's focus is pointed towards things that are ordinary and worldly, they are within the ambit of maya, they are embroiled in maya. When, with the strength of sadhana, the same person is able to free himself from the influence of maya and his mind is centred on God, such a person is called Guru. A Guru is, in reality, a sannyasin. A sannyasin is not a renunciate, sadhaka, or tapasvi. He is one who has dedicated his life to the search for truth and God.

- Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati -

Fibre of a Sannyasin

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Sri Swamiji was a true sannyasin and his whole life exemplifies sannyasa. One must understand that the process of sannyasa and a sannyasin are two different things. When you look at Sri Swamiji, you see in him what you want to see. You want to see him as Guru, so you see him as Guru. You haven't seen him as a sannyasin, so you do not know his sannyasa aspirations and the trials that he had to go through as a sannyasin.

In sannyasa one has to go through a process of education, not initiation. Most aspirants go through the process of initiation and not education. The process of education is primary in order to become a sannyasi and initiation is secondary. However, for most aspirants initiation becomes primary and they are not interested in education.

Just because you have shaved your head and been initiated with a name, mantra and colour does not mean that you have become a sannyasin. If you think you are a sannyasin, think again. Think whether you are living the life of a sannyasin. Don't be a donkey in the skin of a lion. By wearing the skin of a lion the donkey does not become a lion. For most aspirants who come to the path of sannyasa and take sannyasa, it is like putting on the covering of a lion, but their heart remains that of a donkey, their speech remains that of a donkey, their expectations and desires remain that of a donkey. They don't become the desires, expectations, strength, force, confidence or character of a lion. Therefore, remember that initiation into sannyasa and a sannyasin are two different things. There is a sloka:

Aabaddhakritrimasataajatilamsabhitti

Raaropito mrigapateh padavim yadi shvaa

Mattebhakumbhatatapaatanalampatasya

Naadam karishyati katham harinaadhipasya.

If one ties a lion's mane around the shoulders of a dog and seats him on the throne of the king of beasts, can he roar like the fierce lion that dashes out the brains of a mighty, mad elephant with a single stroke of his paw?

There have been very few people in history who have been the lions of sannyasa, who have been able to hold up the highest standards of sannyasa and also take the tradition forward. Swami Sivananda was one of them and Swami Satyananda was another. They presented the lifestyle and lifelong sadhana of a sannyasin by living it.

There are many who take sannyasa, but there are very few who live the real life of a sannyasin. Anybody can be initiated into sannyasa; every Tom, Dick and Harry has the right to take sannyasa, of course, if they qualify. These days sannyasa has also become a business; people think that if they take sannyasa they will be recognized as Gurus. They will acquire disciples, make ashrams, and live in luxury on the earnings of disciples. It is true that many people think in this way. People want to create institutions, have disciples, and earn name and fame. However, a sannyasin does not have any desires for himself; in fact, he does not have any desires in life. One who lives as a sannyasin is a person with a different character, a different mentality, a different perception and a different attitude in life. Such people become the examples of a parampara, tradition. And this is what we find in the Gurus of our tradition: both Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda lived as sannyasins.

Medium of Grace

There is a story. Once there was an aspirant who performed intense tapasya, austerities, for many years. His goal was to have the darshan, vision, of God.

God was pleased with his tapasya and appeared before him. Now, whenever God travels down to earth it is for only one reason: some human has asked him for something. People keep praying, "God, give me this. God, do that for me." Therefore it has become God's habit to say, "Ask for a boon!" the instant He manifests before a human. So when He appeared before this aspirant also the first thing He said was, "Ask for a boon!"

The aspirant replied, "God, it is your grace that I have been granted your vision. The only purpose of my sadhana was to receive your darshan and that has been accomplished. So thank you very much, now you may go back to your heavenly abode." God said, "I cannot leave without granting you something." The aspirant replied, "I am not a business person who practises give and take." God insisted, "But now that I have come here, you

have to ask for something." The aspirant replied, "Aren't you omnipresent and omniscient, don't you reside in everyone's heart?" God replied, "Yes." The aspirant said, "Don't you know what is in every being's heart?" God replied, "Yes." The aspirant said, "Then how come you don't know what is in my heart?" God said, "What do you mean?" The aspirant said, "There is no desire in my heart. If you call yourself omniscient, then you must know that there is no desire in my heart; the only desire was to have your darshan and that has been fulfilled."

God said, "Yes, I do know, but what can I do! Every time I come to samsara, the software of my mind changes into the giving mode and the words 'Ask for a boon!' come out of my mouth automatically. The beings of samsara have worked on my mind in such a way that I must play this role whenever I come here. It was by mistake that I spoke those words, O aspirant, and I ask for your forgiveness. However, as the words have been uttered, ask for something. My word will then be honoured."

The aspirant said, "No, I don't want anything," and turned his back and walked away. He thought, "If I continue to stand here having God's darshan, God will continue to harass me. It is better that I leave, and when He finds that I have gone He will also leave." With these thoughts, he prostrated before God, performed namaskara, turned his back and left. God was



totally perplexed. He thought, "My devotee is walking away without taking anything from me! But I have given my word and I must give him something. Yet, if I attempt to do so I will displease him. What should I do?"

As God watched the aspirant leave and wondered what to do, suddenly He noticed the man's shadow. It was sunset time, the aspirant was walking towards the sun and his long shadow was reaching up to God. God thought, "Wonderful! Found the solution! I will not bless the aspirant, I will bless his shadow. May whoever it falls upon become happy, healthy and prosperous."

The aspirant did not know that his shadow had received this boon. He kept on walking, and wherever his shadow fell miracles took place. It fell on a sick person and he was cured. It fell on a blind man and he gained eyesight. It fell on a lame man and he could walk. It fell on a dying tree and it became green and laden with flowers and fruits. In this way, without the aspirant's knowledge, his shadow continued to perform miracles. The shadow became the medium of God's grace.

This is what happens to true sannnyasins. Our paramguru, Swami Sivananda, and our Guru, Swami Satyananda, were such kind of bhaktas. They never desired anything for themselves. At the age of sixty-five Sri Swamiji left Munger, an age at which every individual is only concerned about securing the future. After establishing such a large institution and initiating a yogic revolution he left everything to walk his path alone. Only a person who is not influenced by his karmas can do this, and such a person is a sannnyasin.

For a worldly person attainments are everything, while for a non-attached person renunciation is the cause of attainment, and attainments are the cause of bondage. You feel happy in attainments, but a sannnyasin feels bound in attainments. Expectations rise and desires become sky-high when there are attainments. And who do you go to when you are not able to fulfil your intense desires? You go to a sadhu or a siddha, unload your sack of desires and problems on him, and ask for a solution so you can be free of their weight and bondage. So, for a sannnyasin attainments are bondage and renunciation is freedom.

Today, when we observe Sri Swamiji's life, we find that it always exemplified the qualities of a sannnyasin and that was also his teaching to us.



Become a personification of receptivity. Empty yourself of your petty ego-sense. All the treasures locked up in the bosom of Nature will become yours! You will have progress and perfection in an amazingly short time. Become pure and unattached as the mountain breeze. As the river flows continuously, steadily, and constantly towards its goal, the ocean, by moving every moment of your life towards the Supreme State of Existence - Knowledge - Bliss, let all your thoughts, all your words, all your actions be directed only towards the Goal.

- Swami Sivananda Saraswati -

Guru Bhakti Yoga - Satsang on Sannyasa

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati

Often people take sannyasa but when they face the slightest difficulty, they begin to reconsider their dedication. That is not the spirit of sannyasa. Sannyasa means total consecration, sam means total, nyas, means consecration. Consecration of what? Of yourself, total consecration of yourself to the Divine will. If you totally consecrate yourself to Guru, who is the representative of God's will on this earth, and then have your own choices, your own mind, your own desires and ambitions, then that is not sannyasa. One takes sannyasa when one wants to become nothing, not when one wants to become something. And that is the example that has been set for us by Swami Satyananda who despite being one of the greatest Gurus of our times never considered himself anything other than a sannyasin, a disciple of his Guru.

Of course, we are inspired and dedicated when everything is as we want it, but when difficulties arise, we often fall short. If there is a physical difficulty, an emotional or mental difficulty, one has to face it, otherwise why are you treading this path? You must face difficulties, without facing difficulties you cannot refine yourself because refinement is a process of alchemy. You face the difficulty with equanimity because you have the faith and assurance that Guru is watching you, Guru is there by your side, Guru will guide and direct you in the face of difficulty.

The potter puts the vessel through the burning heat but all the time he has his eye on that vessel that it does not break, that it does not shatter. In the same way Guru always has an eye on the disciple according to his commitment, according to his dedication and sincerity. To think that you will not be tried and tested is a foolish idea. To think that Guru is not watching you and not seeing how you are progressing, that is also a foolish idea. Because when you accept Guru then you have to also believe and accept that Guru is all-pervading. Guru can know each and everything about the disciple whether he is physically present or not. Even after he leaves his body the Guru examines the disciple at every step and sees the disciples progression by testing him.



A sannyasin should never forget that, once he has made a commitment to Guru, the Guru is watching each and every action, word, movement of his. If you can't have that conviction forget about Guru and forget about sannyasa, for sannyasa has no meaning without commitment to a Guru. Sannyasa is not time pass, if you are here just to pass your time, then sannyasa is not for you. This is why sannyasa is considered a difficult path meant only for the chosen few, who have the courage, who have the dedication, humility and surrender to overcome any difficulty. For that you need courage, one small difficulty comes and you start cracking. That is not the sign of a courageous person. One has to have courage to stand in the face of difficulty. That is the calibre of Swami Sivananda and that is the calibre of Swami Satyananda who are the inspirers and founders of the sannyasa tradition to which we belong.

Do you think Swami Satyananda did not face difficulties in sannyasa life? Of course he must have. But difficulties are not difficulties when you have a commitment, when you have a goal. They only appear as stepping stones and a way to perfect oneself. If you do not see sannyasa in this light, then sannyasa is a farce. One must understand the sannyasa path one is treading, as a path of total selflessness. The person whom we are commemorating today, Swami Satyananda, was a symbol of selflessness, he exemplified selflessness and surrender to Guru. Each and every disciple who belongs to his tradition has to therefore accept that challenge

of rising above the petty trivialities and selfishness that binds us and works towards the accomplishment of selfless action. The life that he led was very different from what we imagine, because we only see his greatness and we only see the glory, but the life that he led was a difficult life and he exposed himself to that voluntarily.

A sannyasin chooses a life of difficulty and austerity, it is not imposed on him. He chooses that life because he knows that in that lies his salvation. One chooses difficulty, if there is no difficulty in your life as a sannyasin then you must find it. You must create difficulty so that you can become better and better. Because it is in the difficult situations that one grows, one evolves.

We should rededicate ourselves to the path that we have chosen and remind ourselves of our dedication and not be careless about that. Sannyasins must work as a unified unit, not as individuals. In sannyasa there is no individualism. To be individualistic is to be egotistic, and ego has no place in sannyasa. You must set aside your ego, because ego is the biggest barrier. Very often we are not even aware of the ego playing tricks on us. At that time who is going to tell us the pitfalls of ego? It is the Guru who is going to tell you, but then, you have to open yourself to the words of the Guru. You have to be receptive to what the Guru says, even if it is not in accordance with your whimsical mind. When Guru tells you, "Look you are going to fall in the pit", because pride always comes before a fall, you have to be open to what is being told and not resist it. At that time under the sway of ego many begin to doubt the Guru's words and imagine that Guru is exploiting them for his own work. They begin to think that they are more knowledgeable than the Guru. If that were so, then why did you choose to be a disciple. You chose to be a disciple no one forced you or was your dedication and commitment a sham.

That is the dedication which we have to make today on this day when we are commemorating the samadhi of a sannyasin of a very high calibre. In sannyasa you have to be very honest with yourself, there is no use deluding yourself about your commitment and if you falter don't put the blame on someone else. Put the blame on yourself, you have to be very courageous about your intentions and your motivations. Very often we have desires lurking in our mind which we want to fulfill but we don't want to accept it and so we find very convenient reasons to fulfill those desires. No, you have to be honest with yourself, there's no use fooling yourself about that.

When you lead your life in this manner, then the Grace comes. The grace descends and the difficulties, cease to appear as difficulties. Guru accepts us with our weaknesses. He accepts us the way we are. From our side we have to ensure that we remain dedicated, committed and sincere that is all. For such a disciple grace is ensured and through that grace he rises out of the mire and begins to shine like a radiant light. It is the Guru who picks you up every time you fall, you don't have the strength for that.

And you have to realise that you are not the doer, you have to realise that you are not the doer because it is when you think you are the doer that the ego gets strengthened. Everything that's happening here in Rikhia it is happening by the grace of Guru. And no individual should feel or take the credit for that or feel that "I am responsible for everything that is happening here", which is often what happens in the life of a disciple. He begins to imagine that he is doing everything, he begins to imagine that he is very great. No, it's not possible without the grace of Guru, everything that happens, that is happening in Rikhia, is happening by the grace of Guru who is ever present.



Guru Purnima 2023:

A Sacred Tribute through Vedic Chanting

28th June to 3rd July 2023

As part of the Amrit Lahari celebrations, an inspiring Guru Purnima aradhana was conducted at Rikhiapeeth. This auspicious event saw Bramhasri Kumaraguru Ghanapatigal, along with 22 Veda Brahmanas, from Chatur Veda Vidhya Ganapathi Vedashram in Aathur Chengulpet (Tamil Nadu), leading Vedic chanting at the Samadhi Sthal of Swami Satyananda Saraswati. This 'Chatur Veda Sampoorana Parayanam', symphony of Vedic hymns, served as a heartfelt offering to Sri Swamiji, a testament to the Guru-disciple relationship, and as a tribute to the timeless wisdom contained within the Vedas.

The Symphony of Vedas

Chanting all four Vedas - Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda held profound significance as these texts encompass a treasury of spiritual and philosophical knowledge. The recitation of the entire Vedas symbolized the highest form of devotion to Guru and a commitment to preserving this ancient wisdom.

Honoring the Guru-Disciple Relationship

Swami Satyananda Saraswati, continues to guide and inspire his disciples even after attaining Maha Samadhi. The act of chanting the Vedas at his Samadhi Sthal was an acknowledgment and reverence for the enduring bond between Guru and disciple. The timeless knowledge encapsulated within the Vedas has illuminated the path of humanity for millennia. It is a heritage that must be safeguarded and passed down through generations.

In conclusion, Guru Purnima 2023 at Rikhiapeeth was a profound and transformative tribute to Guru. The symphony of Vedic chants echoed not only the verses of the ancient scriptures but also the devotion of countless disciples. It was a resounding testament to the enduring power of spiritual guidance and the wisdom enshrined within the Vedas, serving as a guiding light for all seekers on the path of self-realization.

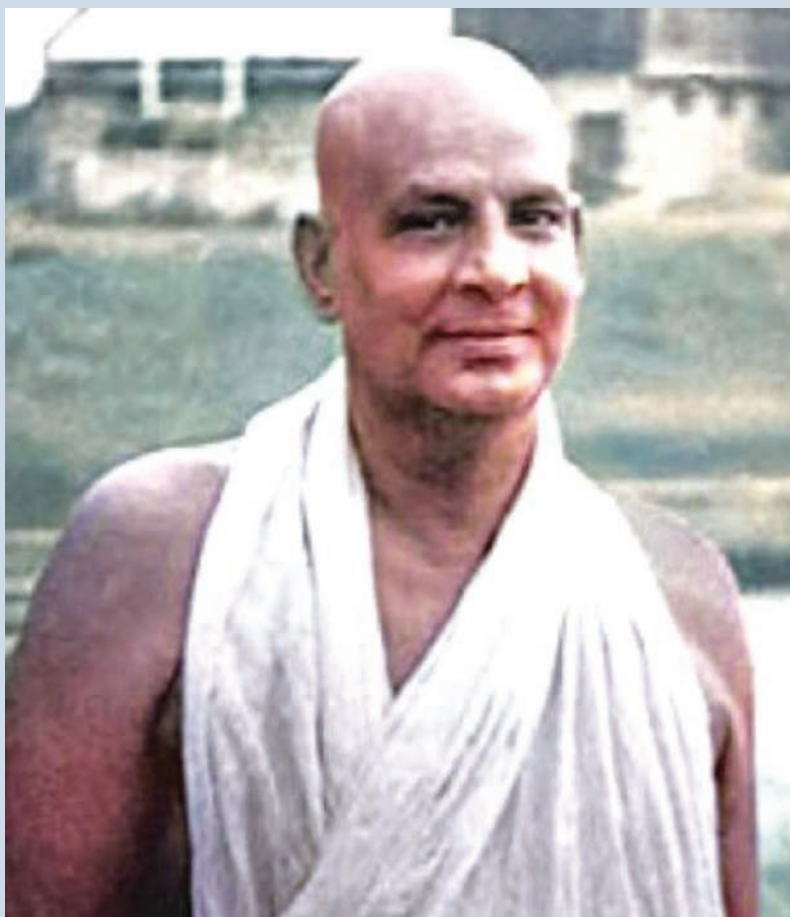


Guru Purnima 2023









It is the Guru alone that breaks the binding cords of attachment and releases the aspirant from the trammels of earthly existence. Guru is Brahman, the Absolute, or God Himself. He guides and inspires you from the innermost core of your being. He is everywhere. Have a new angle of vision. Behold the entire universe as the form of the Guru. See the guiding hand, the awakening voice, the illuminating touch of the Guru in every object in this creation. The whole world will now stand transformed before your changed vision. The world as Guru will reveal all the precious secrets of life to you and bestow wisdom upon you. The supreme Guru, as manifested in visible nature, will teach you the most valuable lessons of life.

- Swami Sivananda Saraswati -

Guru Seva

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Aspirants should direct their whole attention in the beginning towards removal of selfishness by protracted service of Guru. Serve your Guru with divine Bhava. The cancer of individuality will be dissolved. The captain of a ship is ever alert. A fisherman is ever alert. A surgeon in the operation theatre is ever alert. Even so, a thirsting hungry disciple should be ever alert in the service of his Guru.

Live to serve the Guru. You must watch for opportunities. Do not wait for invitation. Volunteer yourself for the Guru's service. Serve your Guru humbly, willingly, unquestioningly, unassumingly, ungrudgingly, untiringly, and lovingly. The more you spend your energy in serving your Guru, the more divine energy will flow into you.

He who serves the Guru serves the whole world. Serve the Guru without selfish ends. Scrutinise your inner motives while doing service to Guru. Service must be done to Guru without expectation of name, fame, power, wealth, etc.

Surrender and Grace

If you want to drink water at the tap, you will have to bend yourself. Even so, if you want to drink the spiritual nectar of immortality which flows from the holy lips of the Guru, you will have to be an embodiment of humility and meekness.

The lower nature of mind must be thoroughly regenerated. The aspirant says to his preceptor: "I want to practise Yoga. I want to enter into Nirvikalpa Samadhi. I want to sit at your feet. I have surrendered myself to you." But he does not want to change his lower nature and habits, old character, behaviour, and conduct. One's individual ego, preconceived notions, pet ideas and prejudices, and selfish interests should be given up. All these stand in the way of carrying out the teachings and instructions of one's Guru. Lay bare to your Guru the secrets of your heart. The more you do so, the greater the sympathy, which means an accession of strength to you in the struggle against sin and temptation.



Swami Satyasangananda worshipping Guru Parampara in Akhara, Rikhiapeeth

The aspirant, before he desires the grace of the Master, should deserve it. The supply of divine grace comes only when there is a real thirst in the aspirant, and when he is fit to receive it. Guru's grace descends upon those who feel utterly humble and faithful to him. Faith is confidence and trust in Guru. Faith is firm conviction of the truth of what is declared by the preceptor by way either of testimony or authority, without any other evidence or proof. The disciple who has faith in the Guru argues riot, thinks not, reasons not and cogitates not. He simply obeys.

The disciple's self-surrender to Guru and Guru's grace are interrelated. Surrender draws down Guru's grace, and grace of Guru makes the surrender complete. Guru's grace works in the form of Sadhana in the aspirant. If an aspirant sticks to the path tenaciously, this is the grace of the Guru. If he resists when temptation assails him, this is the grace of the Guru. If people receive him with love and reverence, this is the grace of the Guru. If he gets all bodily wants, this is the grace of the Guru. If he gets encouragement and strength when he is in despair and despondency, this is the grace of the Guru. If he gets over the body-consciousness and rests in his own Ananda Svarupa, this is the grace of the Guru. Feel his grace at every step and be sincere and truthful to him.



Art and Origami Workshop was conducted for Rikhia Kanyas, July 2023

Pre-requisites of Sadhana

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

When I went to my Guru's place and stood in front of him on the first day, he asked, 'Why have you come?' I explained. He said, 'Do seva (selfless service), do hard work and the light will by itself come to you; because the light is inside you. And until you clean your own lantern, how will its light come outside? The light is yours, it is not a ghost!'

Many people see ghosts. They get scared, saying they can see a ghost. I say, you don't see a ghost! You have done some sadhana incorrectly and have forcefully entered inside yourself, you will only see ghosts. There's nothing like a ghost. The soul is itself seen as a ghost; soul itself is seen as an apparition; soul itself is seen as an animal, as a woman, in the form of a lady, in the form of a dacoit. The same soul is seen in the form of sorrow as well as joy. In all your dreams, it is the same soul.

This is exactly what is written in Mandukya Upanishad, it has been clearly explained. Do whichever sadhana you want to do. First clean your inner self. Otherwise it gets very confusing inside. Depression starts to set in. Someone says, 'I am hearing things.' Someone else says 'I can hear a voice.' Someone says, 'Someone is sitting in my stomach'. Someone tells me 'Swamiji is calling me.' I get a letter. I don't read myself. They say, 'You were calling me.' I said, 'I don't even think about it!' Some one tells me, 'Swamiji, I have seen you. Saw you with a beard, you had all these things on your body. I am Brahma-Vishnu!' I said, 'Don't talk nonsense! Your mind is not right. Sit down and clean your lantern, your mirror, first.' Did you understand or not?

You have to know only one thing, you don't have to do anything else. Self has to be purified. Mind has to be purified. And serve others. Do these two things together. God gives everyone to eat. Swamiji said to me, 'You serve others; food will be given by God.' God has given me many meals all my life. He has continued to feed me.

Shravan Bhoj: A Feast of Giving

July 4th to August 1st 2023

In a grand celebration of spirituality and selfless service, Rikhiapeeth conducted the month-long Shravan Kanya Bhoj, as part of Amrit Lahari, paying tribute to the life and teachings of Sri Swamiji. The annual Shravan Bhoj stands as a living testament to the enduring legacy of Swami Satyananda, carrying forward his commitment to the betterment of humanity.

This annual event, established by Swami Satyananda, has become an integral tradition at Rikhiapeeth. Each day during the auspicious month of Shravan, hundreds of local children are served a delicious and nutritious meal as an Aradhana and sacred offering, with the belief that the Divine is being nourished. Chefs prepared nutritious dishes from India and beyond, creating a culinary journey that boosts the children's excitement while emphasizing balanced nutrition.







ASHRAM LIFE RETREAT

2nd October to 30th December 2023

The Vedas have enumerated Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Gyan Yoga as necessary for human evolution. For it is the combination of these three that unfold the path towards the overall development of our personality. In fact, they are as relevant to our mundane daily life in the world, as they are to our deepest spiritual aspirations - they nourish both the material and spiritual dimensions of life.

If we wish to transform our personality then knowledge alone will not suffice, experience is also needed. Without experience, all knowledge is merely intellectual. This Ashram Lifestyle Retreat, integrating facets of Karma, Bhakti and Gyan Yoga, has been specifically formulated so that you may rekindle your own inspiration and vitality, enrich the quality of your day-to-day experiences and bring about a positive transformation in life.

During this retreat participants will be able to be a part of several aradhanas, including Ashwin Navaratri and Deepavali, and will also have the very good fortune to offer their seva in the historic centenary birth anniversary of Sri Swamiji that will be celebrated as part of the 'Amrit Lahari – Waves of Nectar' during the Sat Chandi Maha Yajna, Ananda Utsav and Yoga Purnima events. An entire series of events that will be offered throughout the year as tribute to his life and teachings, will come to a grand culmination on his 100th birth anniversary on the 26th of December 2023.

If you wish to apply, please fill the form online, or download the application form from the Rikhiapeeth website and email us a scanned copy filled with all the required information. For further information please contact us at rikhiapeeth@gmail.com



गुरुकुल आश्रम जीवनशैली सत्र

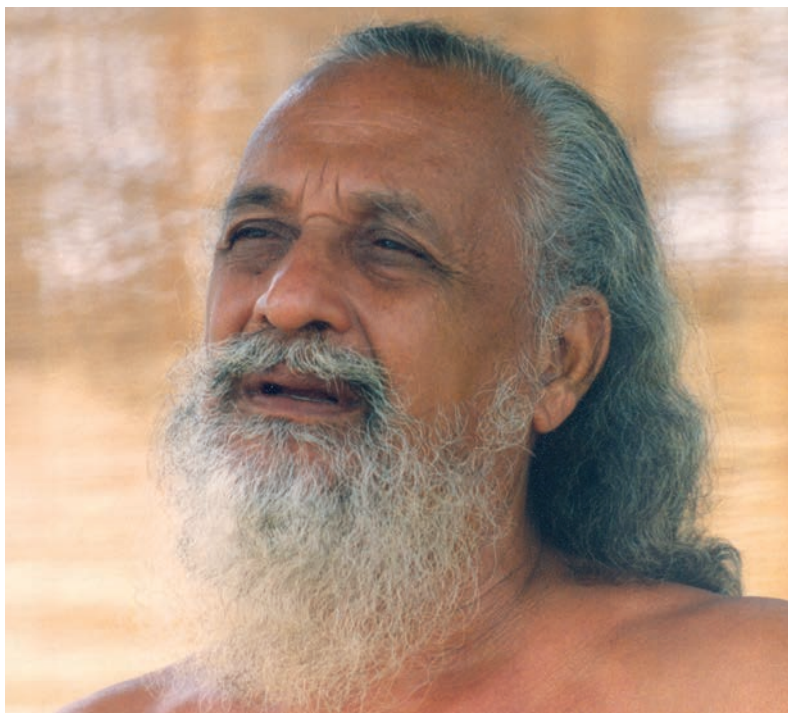
2 अक्टूबर से 30 दिसम्बर 2023

वेदों ने कर्मयोग, भक्तियोग और ज्ञानयोग, इन तीनों को मानव जीवन के लिए अत्यावश्यक बताया है। ये तीनों मिल कर हमारे व्यक्तित्व के समन्वित विकास का मार्ग प्रशस्त करते हैं। इन तीनों का सम्बन्ध हमारे दैनिक सांसारिक अस्तित्व के साथ-साथ हमारे आध्यात्मिक आकांक्षाओं से भी है। ये हमारे जीवन के इन दोनों पक्षों का पोषण करते हैं। व्यक्तित्व में रूपांतरण के लिए केवल ज्ञान ही काफी नहीं है, अपितु अनुभव की भी आवश्यकता होती है।

बिना अनुभव के सारा ज्ञान केवल और केवल बौद्धिक रह जाता है। कर्म, ज्ञान और भक्तियोग से समाहित इस गुरुकुल आश्रम जीवनशैली सत्र का प्रारूप इस प्रकार तैयार किया गया है कि आपके व्यावहारिक दैनिक जीवन के अनुभवों की गुणवत्ता में गुणात्मक परिवर्तन हों। योग को न जानने वाले अभ्यर्थी भी इस सत्र में भाग लेकर अपनी ऊर्जा और प्रेरणा को नवजीवन प्रदान कर जीवन को रूपांतरित करने वाले अनुभवों का साक्षात्कार कर सकते हैं।

सत्रावधि के दौरान प्रतिभागियों को अश्विन नवरात्रि, दीपावली, शतचण्डी महायज्ञ, आनन्दोत्सव एवं योग पूर्णिमा के ऐतिहासिक अमृत-लहरी शताब्दी समारोह में भाग लेने का सौभाग्य प्राप्त होगा। श्री स्वामीजी की परिकल्पना और उनकी मूल शिक्षाओं को समर्पित शताब्दी वर्ष में आयोजित अमृत-लहरी के विभिन्न आराधनाओं की शृंखला उनके जन्मशती समारोह 26 दिसम्बर 2023 को समस्त शिष्यगण के द्वारा भावपूर्ण श्रद्धांजलि अर्पण के साथ अपनी पूर्णता को प्राप्त करेगी।

इस सत्र में भाग लेने के लिए आप अपना आवेदन ऑनलाइन भर सकते हैं, या आवेदन-पत्र डाउनलोड करके ईमेल द्वारा भर कर भेजें। आवेदन-पत्र के साथ अपना वैक्सिनेशन सर्टिफिकेट संलग्न करना अनिवार्य है। यह सत्र पूर्णतः आवासीय है जिसमें भाग लेने के लिए सम्पूर्ण अवधि का प्रवास अनिवार्य है। और अधिक जानकारी हेतु कृपया ईमेल द्वारा सम्पर्क करें (rikhiapeeth@gmail.com)



गुरु के प्रति समर्पण

स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती

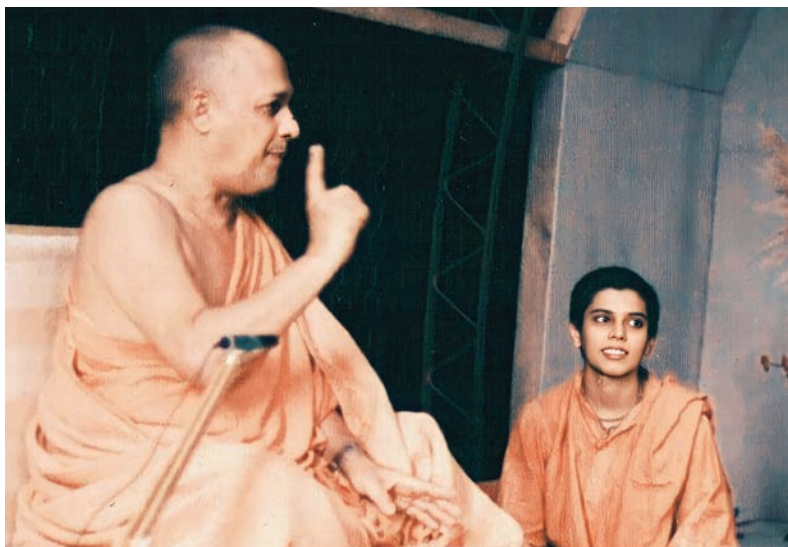
समर्पण एक संस्कृत शब्द है जिसका अर्थ होता है स्वयं को भेंट या उपहार के रूप में किसी को दे देना। जब आप गुरु के पास जाते हैं तो आप स्वयं को उन्हें अर्पित करते हैं, सौंपते हैं। परन्तु यह अर्पण है क्या? आखिर गुरु कोई राजा नहीं है, जिसे आप स्वयं को एक फल के रूप में चढ़ा रहे हैं।

गुरु के प्रति समर्पण का मतलब है उनसे सम्पूर्ण एकता, नितान्त अभिन्नता और अटूट सम्पर्क स्थापित करना। जब आप गुरु के प्रति एकदम सजग रहते हैं और क्षण-प्रतिक्षण उनकी याद आपको आने लगती है तो समझना चाहिये कि आप आत्म-समर्पण करने लगे हैं। जब कभी आप गुरु के विषय में सोचते हैं, आपका मन उन्हीं में लीन हो जाता है। समर्पण का यही तात्पर्य है।

जब आप गुरु को आत्मसमर्पण करते हैं तो आप अपने सीमित मन को पार करते हैं और पुनः उसे पूर्णता के साथ वापस भी पा जाते हैं। आत्मसमर्पण अपनी स्वतंत्रता का त्याग नहीं है बल्कि स्वतंत्रता ग्रहण है, एक राजा की भाँति। आप गुरु के सामने दंडवत करें और कहें गुरुदेव! मैं शरणागत हूँ, मेरी रक्षा करें, मुझे शरण में ले लें। यह ऐसी बात नहीं है। वह आपको शरण कैसे दे सकते हैं, आप शरण कैसे पा सकते हैं? यह तो एक कठिन, अगोचर प्रक्रिया है, परन्तु यदि आप अध्यात्म के मार्ग पर शीघ्रातिशीघ्र अग्रसर होना चाहते हैं तो आत्मसमर्पण अनिवार्य ही है। एक बार जब आपके मन तथा आत्मतत्त्व पर गुरु का सम्पूर्ण नियंत्रण स्थापित हो जाता है तब वे आपको आध्यात्मिक रूप से शक्तिसम्पन्न करेंगे ही।

समर्पण मनुष्य में एक स्वाभाविक प्रवृत्ति है। जब समर्पण पूर्ण हो जाता है, तो आपके विचार गुरु के विचारों से एकाकार हो जाते हैं। तब प्रत्येक बात जो वे बोलते हैं, आपके जीवन में सत्य सिद्ध होती है। यह मैं निजी अनुभव से जानता हूँ। यदि शिष्य अपना व्यक्तित्व बनाये रखकर अवज्ञाकारी तथा हठी होगा, यद्यपि अपने हिसाब से यह एक अच्छी बात ही हो, तो उसके संदर्भ में गुरु के द्वारा कही हुई बात सत्य नहीं निकलेगी - यह एक अतीन्द्रिय नियम है। जब शिष्य पूर्ण रूप से - आत्मसमर्पण कर देता है, और उसका मन गुरु के मन से एक सूत्र में बँध जाता है, तो वह चेतन क्षणों में ही नहीं, ध्यान के क्षणों में भी मार्गदर्शन पाता है।



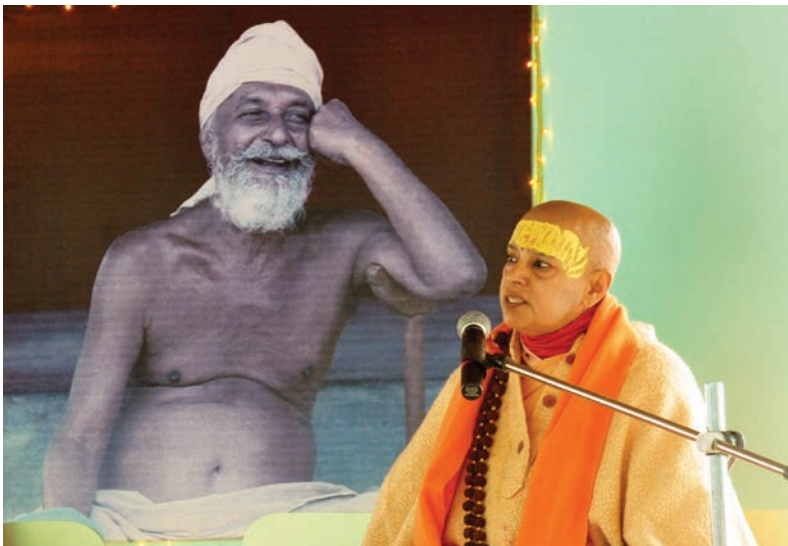


गुरु-कृपा

स्वामी सत्यसंगानन्द सरस्वती

गुरु कृपा एक ऐसी चीज है जिसे समझना सर्वाधिक कठिन है तथा उसकी विवेचना करना तो उससे भी मुश्किल है। यह मात्र उन्हीं लोगों के लिये एक वास्तविकता है जो इसके प्रति ग्रहणशील हैं। भारत में शिष्य के जीवन में गुरु-कृपा के महत्त्व पर जोर देने के लिये प्रायः एक मुहावरे का प्रयोग होता है, गुरु-कृपा ही केवलम्। इसका अर्थ यह है कि गुरु कृपा ही शिष्य को मुक्त कर सकती है।

एक शिष्य, जिज्ञासु या साधक को यह अच्छी तरह समझ लेना चाहिये कि एक बार योग की किसी भी पद्धति- कर्म योग, हठ योग, ज्ञान योग या भक्ति योग में दीक्षित हो जाने के बाद उसका सबसे महत्त्वपूर्ण एवं सबसे कठिन कार्य अपने मन पर नियन्त्रण प्राप्त करना है। इस मार्ग पर मन सबसे बड़ी बाधा है जिसका सामना प्रायः सभी शिष्यों को करना पड़ता है। मन के उपद्रवों का मुकाबला करने में उन्हें कुछ समय के लिये सफलता मिल सकती है। किन्तु देर-सबेर वे अधिक शक्ति के साथ पुनः उनके सामने आ जाते हैं। ऐसा होने पर सर्वाधिक सजग एवं सतर्क शिष्य भी असन्तुलित होकर अपना नियन्त्रण खो सकता है। ऐसा जिज्ञासु, जिसका लक्ष्य अभी भी अनिश्चित है, पूर्णतः चकनाचूर हो जा सकता है।



मन की प्रतिकृतियों, विशेषकर उसके नकारात्मक पहलुओं, जैसे क्रोध, लोभ, ईर्ष्या, वासना आदि को नियन्त्रित करना प्रायः असम्भव है। वे सभी दिशाओं से मन पर हमला करते हैं। मनुष्य के लिये यह दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण है कि वह उनके असली रूपों को नहीं पहचान सकता तथा उनका शिकार हो जाता है। यह एक बड़ी बाधा है।

आध्यात्मिक प्रगति हेतु व्यक्ति को उसपर विजय प्राप्त करने का उपाय ढूँढना ही होगा। उससे कोई भी निरापद नहीं है। कभी-न-कभी हम सभी उसकी पकड़ में आ जाते हैं। सबसे सच्चा एवं समर्पित शिष्य भी मन को उद्वेलित करने वाले आँधी-तूफानों से प्रभावित हो जाता है। कभी-कभी हम मन के आक्रमणों को थोड़े समय के लिये टालने में सक्षम हो जाते हैं। किन्तु यदि परिस्थिति का सतर्कतापूर्वक विश्लेषण किया जाय तो हम पायेंगे कि हम सिर्फ अपने मानसिक आघातों को किसी प्रकार दबाने में सफल हुए हैं। वास्तव में वे मन के पीछे कहीं छिपे रहते हैं। एक छोटी सी चिन्गारी भी उन्हें फिर से प्रज्वलित करने के लिये पर्याप्त होती है। यदि हम इन अभ्याघातों को बार-बार दबाते रहे हैं तो वे शारीरिक बीमारियों के रूप में प्रकट हो सकते हैं।

अतः समस्या यह है कि हम मन का मुकाबला कैसे करें? सिर्फ गुरु-कृपा ही हमें मन की दासता से मुक्त कर सकती है। सिर्फ गुरु ही हमें शक्ति और धैर्य दे सकते हैं जिनके बल पर हम अपनी मानसिक प्रतिकृतियों के हमलों का मुकाबला कर सकते हैं। उनकी कृपा ही कठिनतम परीक्षाओं में हमारी सहायता करती है। इसके बिना हम पिस जायेंगे या टुकड़े-टुकड़े हो जायेंगे। उनकी सहायता से ही हम एकबार पुनः सिर उठाकर आध्यात्मिक मार्ग

पर चल सकते हैं। किन्तु गुरु की कृपा बहुत सहजता से प्राप्त नहीं होती। इसे प्राप्त करने के लिये हमें पूर्ण निष्कपट एवं समर्पित होना होगा। हमें शरीर, मन और आत्मा से उनका हो जाना होगा। ऐसा होने पर जब भी हमारे बाह्य एवं आन्तरिक जीवन में कठिनाइयाँ आयेंगी तो वे हमारी सहायता हेतु प्रस्तुत होंगे, अन्यथा नहीं। गुरु अपनी कृपा कदापि प्रदान नहीं करेंगे यदि हम उसे ग्रहण करने योग्य नहीं हैं।

गुरु की कृपा प्राप्त करने के लिये यह आवश्यक है कि शिष्य का अपना मन नहीं हो। गुरु सोचते हैं और शिष्य कार्य करता है। वह गुरु के विचारों की विवेचना नहीं करता। वह उन्हें अपना ही विचार मानकर स्वीकार करता है। ऐसा ही शिष्य गुरु की वास्तविक कृपा प्राप्त कर सकता है। गुरु की कृपा की प्राप्ति के अयोग्य होने के बावजूद कुछ कठिनाइयों में वे कभी-कभी हमारी सहायता करते हैं ताकि थोड़ी मात्रा में वे दूर हो सकें। यह भी उनकी कृपा ही है, किन्तु पूर्ण कृपा नहीं। उनकी पूर्ण कृपा तो वह है जो व्यक्ति के रूप में हमारे विकास को रोकने वाले बन्धनों से हमें मुक्त करती है। हमें उसी कृपा की आकांक्षा करनी चाहिये तथा उसे ग्रहण करने हेतु स्वयं को तैयार करना चाहिये। किन्तु वह कृपा तो सिर्फ उसे मिलती है जो आकांक्षारहित होता है। हम प्रायः गुरु के पास अनेक इच्छाओं-आकांक्षाओं से युक्त होकर जाते हैं।

इनमें से कुछ तो स्पष्ट होती हैं और कुछ गुप्त। वे स्थूल या राजसिक हो सकती हैं जैसे धन, नाम, यश, उत्तम स्वास्थ्य एवं प्रसन्नता की प्राप्ति या वे अधिक सूक्ष्म या सात्त्विक भी हो सकती हैं, जैसे आत्मज्ञान, साधना में प्रगति, मानसिक शक्तियों एवं सिद्धियों की प्राप्ति। ये इच्छाएँ-आकांक्षाएँ कैसी भी क्यों न हों, हमें उन्हें निर्मूल करने हेतु निश्चित रूप से प्रयास करना चाहिये। तभी गुरु हमें बाँह पकड़कर उठाएँगे तथा आध्यात्मिक विकास के मार्ग पर साथ ले चलेंगे।

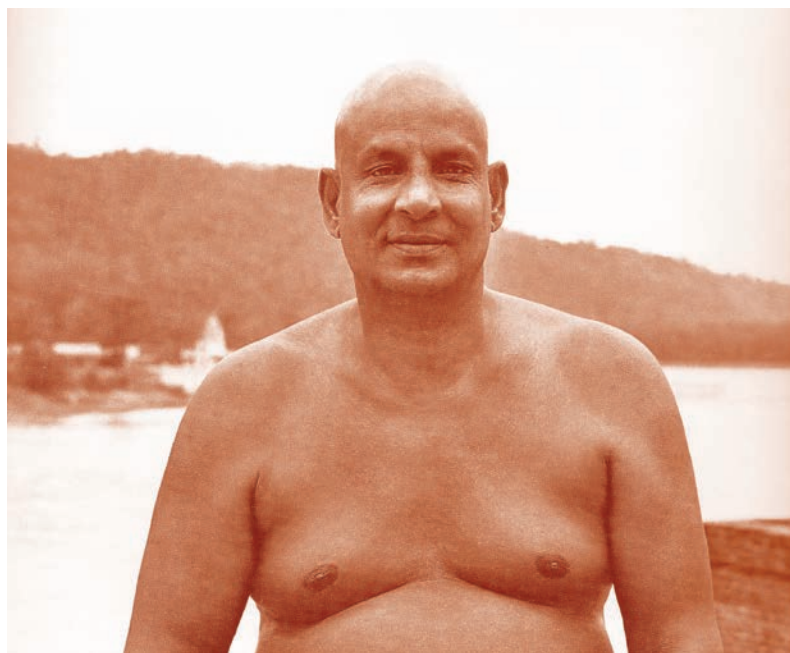
प्रायः गुरु शिष्य पर अनुग्रह की वर्षा करते हैं किन्तु शिष्य के पास वैसी आँखें नहीं होतीं कि वह उसे देख सके। गुरु की कृपा अनेक रूपों में प्रकट हो सकती है। यह मधुर एवं प्रिय या कठोर एवं अप्रिय हो सकती है। अधिकांश शिष्य विश्वास करते हैं कि जब गुरु सदय एवं मधुर शब्दों का उपयोग करते हैं तब वे आशीर्वाद दे रहे होते हैं। अतः जब वे अधिक सुखद एवं आकर्षक मालूम पड़ें तो समझना चाहिये कि वे अधिक कृपा प्रदान कर रहे हैं। किन्तु यह आवश्यक नहीं है कि ऐसे विचार सत्य हों। कभी-कभी गुरु कृपा अति अप्रिय हो सकती है।

गुरु उस बढ़ई के समान होते हैं जो एक लकड़ी के टुकड़े को निर्दयतापूर्वक काट-छाँटकर एक निश्चित स्वरूप देता है। कार्य प्रारम्भ करने के पूर्व ही बढ़ई के सामने एक स्पष्ट चित्र था कि उसे क्या बनाना है। इसी प्रकार गुरु का लक्ष्य भी स्पष्ट होता है। उसकी पूर्ति के

लिये वे शिष्य के अहंकार की काट-छाँट करते हैं। इस कार्य को वे निर्दयतापूर्वक तबतक करते रहते हैं जबतक कि शिष्य वैसा नहीं बन जाता जैसा कि वे उसे बनाना चाहते हैं। बढ़ई लकड़ी को एक उपयोगी, उद्देश्यपूर्ण एवं सुन्दर वस्तु के रूप में परिणत कर देता है। इसी प्रकार गुरु शिष्य को एक मुक्त प्राणी के रूप में परिवर्तित कर देते हैं ताकि वह बहुतां का मार्गदर्शक प्रकाश बन सके। किन्तु यह तभी हो सकता है जब शिष्य लकड़ी के टुकड़े के समान शान्त, मौन एवं अहंकार रहित हो जाय ताकि गुरु को उसे पूर्ण रूप से बदलने का अवसर मिल सके।

गुरु को समझना आसान बात नहीं है। उनमें हमारे व्यक्तित्व की गहराई में प्रवेश करने तथा हम किस लायक हैं यह निर्णय करने की क्षमता होती है। वे हमारी मजबूतियों एवं कमजोरियों को मापने में सक्षम होते हैं। हमें अपनी सीमाओं से अवगत कराने हेतु वे कठोरतम तरीकों का उपयोग कर सकते हैं। यह भी उनकी कृपा ही है। वास्तव में यदि किसी शिष्य ने इस बात का अनुभव नहीं किया है तो इसका तात्पर्य यह है कि वह गुरु को नहीं समझ सका है। गुरु की कृपा समझने तथा प्राप्त करने के लिये शिष्य को सच्चाई एवं समर्पण का भाव लेकर उनके पास जाना होगा। उसे जो कुछ मिलेगा उसे नम्रतापूर्वक स्वीकार करना होगा तथा गुरु से एकत्व स्थापित करने हेतु सदैव प्रयत्नशील रहना होगा।

इस विषय पर स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी के विचारों को यहाँ उद्धृत करना समुचित मालूम पड़ता है। उन्होंने लिखा है, शिष्य के जीवन में गुरु कृपा की यह परम्परा सम्पूर्ण विश्व में प्रचलित रही है। ऐसा शिष्य विरले ही मिलता है जिसे गुरु कृपा प्राप्त है। मैं प्रायः आश्चर्य करता हूँ कि मुझे स्वामी शिवानन्द जी ने क्यों चुना। मैं सोचता हूँ कि इसका सिर्फ एक कारण हो सकता है। मैं जबतक उनके सान्निध्य में रहा, एक भी क्षण या विषय ऐसा नहीं था जब या जिस पर उनके साथ मेरा पूर्ण तादात्म्य न रहा हो। मैं सर्वदा उत्साहपूर्वक उनका अनुकरण करता था। मैं उनके प्रत्येक शब्द तथा अभिव्यक्ति पर ध्यान देता था। मैं उनके जीवन की प्रत्येक गतिविधि का अवलोकन करता था। उनका साधारण कार्य भी मेरे लिये एक भाष्य था। अनेक अवसरों पर मैं बिल्कुल ठीक-ठीक जान जाता था कि वे क्या सोच रहे हैं। कुछ अन्य अवसरों पर मैं यह भविष्यवाणी कर सकता था कि वे क्या करने जा रहे हैं। गुरु के क्रियाशील होने के पूर्व ही शिष्य को उनके विचारों को समझ लेना चाहिये। गुरु और शिष्य के बीच इस प्रकार का एकत्व स्थापित होना ही चाहिये। ऐसा होने पर उनकी कृपा स्वतः प्रवाहित होने लगती है। अतः वर्षों पूर्व मैं एक निष्कर्ष पर पहुँचा - अपने गुरु के साथ एकत्व स्थापित करो, उनके साथ एकाकार हो जाओ, वैसे ही जैसे चीनी दूध में घुलती है। वे पूर्णतः एक हो जाते हैं, उनका भिन्न अस्तित्व समाप्त हो जाता है। दूध चीनीमय एवं चीनी दूधमय हो जाती है। वे एक दूसरे की विशेषताओं को अपना लेते हैं। इस प्रकार का एकत्व स्थापित करना ही होगा। और तब गुरु-कृपा सतत, निरन्तर उपलब्ध होती रहेगी।



गुरु की आवश्यकता

स्वामी शिवानन्द सरस्वती

अध्यात्म-पथ पर नवीन साधक को गुरु की आवश्यकता हुआ करती है। एक दीपक को जलाने के लिए आपको एक प्रज्वलित दीपक की आवश्यकता होती है; उसी प्रकार एक प्रबुद्ध आत्मा दूसरी आत्मा को प्रबुद्ध कर सकती है।

कुछ लोग कुछ वर्षों तक स्वतन्त्र रूप से अध्ययन करते हैं। कालान्तर में उन्हें गुरु की आवश्यकता यथार्थतः अनुभव होती है। उन्हें पथ में कुछ बाधाएँ मिलती हैं। उन्हें इस बात का ज्ञान नहीं होता कि इन अवरोधों अथवा गतिरोधों को कैसे दूर करें। तब वे गुरु की खोज करना आरम्भ कर देते हैं।

जो व्यक्ति बढीनाथ जा चुका है, केवल वही आपको वहाँ जाने का मार्ग बतला सकता है। आध्यात्मिक पथ में तो अपना मार्ग ढूँढ़ निकालना आपके लिए और भी कठिन है। मन आपको प्रायः बहकायेगा। गुरु पतन के गर्तों और अवरोधों को दूर कर आपको सन्मार्ग

पर ले जायेगा। वह आपको बतलायेगा - "यह मार्ग आपको मोक्ष की ओर ले जायेगा, यह आपको बन्धन की ओर ले जायेगा।" आप जाना तो बट्टीनाथ चाहते होंगे, किन्तु इस पथ प्रदर्शन के अभाव में आप दिल्ली जा पहुँचेंगे।

शास्त्र अरण्य के समान हैं। उनमें अस्पष्ट लेखांश होते हैं। उनमें ऐसे भी लेखांश होते हैं जो प्रतीयमानतः परस्पर विरोधी हैं। उनमें ऐसे भी लेखांश पाये जाते हैं जिनके गूढ़ अर्थ, नानाविध अभिप्राय तथा रहस्यात्मक प्रवचन व व्याख्याएँ होती हैं। उनमें प्रतिनिर्देश हैं। आपको गुरु की आवश्यकता है जो आपको ठीक अर्थ समझाये, आपके सन्देहों तथा अस्पष्टताओं को दूर करे और आपके सम्मुख उपदेशों का सार प्रस्तुत करे। प्रत्येक साधक को अध्यात्म-पथ में एक गुरु की अपरिहार्य आवश्यकता होती है। गुरु ही आपके दोषों का पता लगा सकता है। अहंकार का स्वरूप ऐसा है कि आप स्वयं अपने दोषों का पता नहीं लगा सकते हैं। जैसे व्यक्ति अपनी पीठ नहीं देख सकता है, वैसे ही वह अपनी त्रुटियों को नहीं देख सकता है। अपने दुर्गुणों तथा दोषों के उन्मूलन के लिए उसे एक गुरु के संरक्षण में रहना चाहिए। किसी गुरु के पथ-प्रदर्शन में रहने वाला साधक पथ-भ्रष्ट होने से सुरक्षित रहता है। गुरु के साथ सत्संग आपको भौतिक जगत् के सभी प्रलोभनों तथा प्रतिकूल शक्तियों से रक्षा करने का एक कवच तथा दुर्ग है।

जिन लोगों ने किसी गुरु के संरक्षण में रह कर अध्ययन किये बिना ही पूर्णता प्राप्त की हो, उनके उदाहरण गुरु की आवश्यकता के विरुद्ध प्रमाण के रूप में उद्धृत नहीं करने चाहिए; क्योंकि ऐसे महापुरुष आध्यात्मिक जीवन की सामान्य प्रसमता न हो कर उसके अपवाद हुआ करते हैं। आध्यात्मिक गुरु के रूप में उनका आविर्भाव गत जीवन में की गयी सेवा, अध्ययन तथा ध्यान के फल-स्वरूप होता है। वे पहले ही गुरु के अधीन अध्ययन कर चुके होते हैं। वर्तमान जन्म केवल उसके फल का निर्वाह है। अतएव उसके द्वारा गुरु का महत्त्व कम नहीं होता है।

कुछ गुरु अपने साधकों को बहकाते हैं। वे सबसे कहते हैं: "स्वयं ही विचार करें। अपने को किसी गुरु के प्रति समर्पित न करें।" जब व्यक्ति यह कहता है- किसी गुरु का अनुसरण न करें, तो उसका अभिप्राय श्रोता का गुरु स्वयं बनने का होता है। ऐसे नकली गुरुओं के पास न जायें। उनके प्रवचनों को न सुनें।

सभी महापुरुषों के गुरु थे। सभी ऋषियों, मुनियों, पैगम्बरों, जगद्गुरुओं, अवतारों, महापुरुषों के चाहे वे कितने ही महान् क्यों न रहे हों, उनके अपने निजी गुरु थे। श्वेतकेतु ने उद्दालक से, मैत्रेयी ने याज्ञवल्क्य से, भृगु ने वरुण से, नारद ने सनतकुमार से, नचिकेता ने यम से, इन्द्र ने प्रजापति से सत्य के स्वरूप की शिक्षा प्राप्त की तथा अन्य

अनेक लोग ज्ञानी जनों के पास विनम्रतापूर्वक गये, ब्रह्मचर्य व्रत का अति-नियमनिष्ठा से पालन किया, कठोर अनुशासनों की साधना की तथा उनसे ब्रह्मविद्या सीखी।

भगवान कृष्ण अपने गुरु सान्दीपनि के चरणों में बैठे। भगवान राम के गुरु वसिष्ठ थे जिन्होंने उन्हें उपदेश दिया। प्रभु यीशु ने जॉन से जार्डन नदी के तट पर दीक्षित होने के लिए उन्हें खोजा था। देवताओं के भी बृहस्पति गुरु हैं। दिव्य आत्माओं में से सर्वाधिक महान भी गुरु दक्षिणामूर्ति के चरणों में बैठे थे।

नव-दीक्षित के लिए प्रथम दैहिक गुरु होना आवश्यक है। वह प्रारम्भ में ही भगवान को गुरु नहीं बना सकता है। उसका चित्त शुद्ध होना चाहिए। उसमें नैतिक पूर्णता होनी चाहिए। उसे पूर्णरूपेण धार्मिक होना चाहिए। तभी वह भगवान को अपना गुरु बना सकता है।





AMRIT LAHARI

- WAVES OF NECTAR -

SRI SWAMIJI'S CENTENARY BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

We are pleased to announce that Rikhiapeeth will host a series of events throughout the year 2023, as tribute to pay homage to the life and teachings which Sri Swamiji lived and inspired at Rikhiapeeth. These events will come to a grand culmination on 26th December 2023, when we will celebrate the 100th birth anniversary of Paramahansa Swami Satyananda. Furthering Sri Swamiji's vision for Rikhiapeeth and the mandates of Serve, Love & Give, the events will include medical camps for the villagers, workshops for the kanyas and batuks, kanya bhoj, as well as many different aradhanas and sadhana retreats, all being conducted as part of the year-long centenary celebration of 'Amrit Lahari – Waves of Nectar'. This series of events will conclude with the annual yajnas of Sat Chandi Mahayajna (13th to 17th December), Ananda Utsav (19th & 20th December) and Yoga Purnima (22nd to 26th December).

For further information on 2023 events and retreats please visit our website: www.rikhiapeeth.in

For any queries please contact us at: rikhiapeeth@gmail.com



मेरे गुरु ने दिखा दी मुझे राह।
उन्होंने माँगा मेरा तन,
सहज ही कर दिया उसका अर्पण।
उन्होंने माँगे मेरे प्राण,
निर्द्वन्द्व भाव से कर दिया मैंने दान।
उन्होंने पूछा- क्या दे सकोगे अपना मन भी?
मैंने कहा- वह तो सदा के लिये है आपका ही।
अब, मैं रह गया अकिंचन,
रिक्त और एकान्त।
चन्द्र तारक खचित नील निरञ्च नभ
बस रह गया मेरे पास।
तभी अकस्मात् -
सूर्य ने छेड़ दिया अपना संगीत
आकुल सागर की लहरों ने कर दिया मुझे अभिसिक्त,
गरजता मेघ बरस पड़ा मुझपर,
और नाच उठे हिमधवल राजहंस।
मेरे नेत्रों के आगे
बिजली की चमक ने आलोकित कर दिया
मेरी आत्मा को।
पुनः पधारे गुरुदेव हमारे
और पूछा- क्या दे पाओगे अपने संस्कार,
जिन्हें जन्म-जन्मान्तरों से संचित कर रखा है तुमने?
मैंने उनकी भूरी आँखों की गहराइयों में झाँका,
लगा, वे तो युगों से खडे हैं मेरे सामने।
मेरी आँखों के सामने सबकुछ विलीन होने लगा,
विगलित और तिरोहित होने लगा।
अन्दर और बाहर में रहा केवल एकत्व,
जो मेरे गुरुदेव की करुणा थी,
जिसने मेरे 'मैं' को मिटा डाला
और कर लिया अपने में आत्मसात।
मेरे गुरु ने दिखा दी मुझे राह।

- स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती -



REAL SANNYASA

Sri Swami Sivananada Saraswati

Sannyasa is real internal transformation;
It is not mere "taking Sannyasa from somebody";
And wearing orange-colored robe,
Shaving the head and bearing Kamandalu;
"Taking Sannyasa is no Sannyasa";
There must be complete change in the mind.

That mind is free from lust, desires and egoism,
Raga-Dwesh, jealousy and vanity;
It is free from outgoing tendencies;
It has no attraction for sense-objects;
It is free from ambitions and planning;
It always moves inwards-Antarmukha Vritti.

It is filled with Sattvic qualities;
It is free from Karta Bhokta Bhava;
It has renounced all work with desire;
It has relinquished the fruits of all actions;
It rests in its own Satchitananda Swarupa.
This is real Sannyasa.

Rikhiapeeth Website: www.rikhiapeeth.in

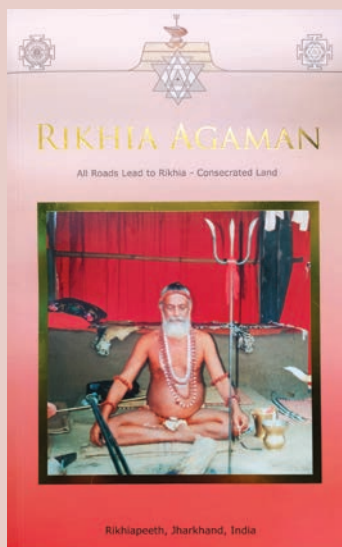
The Rikhiapeeth website serves as a haven for spiritual seekers, offering a timeless connection to the profound teachings of Swami Sivananda, which are not just preached but lived at Rikhiapeeth under the timeless mantra and mandate of 'Serve, Love, and Give'. Explore and immerse yourself in the enriching experience of satsangs, delve into the knowledge about the tradition, and discover the heart and soul of Rikhiapeeth.



Rikhia Agaman

NEW RELEASE - Available on website

'Rikhia Agaman' unveils the historic moments surrounding Swami Satyananda's arrival at Rikhia on 23rd September 1989. This book weaves together the rich tapestry of that auspicious moment of Rikhia Agaman, offering an immersive journey into its past, the mandates that shaped its destiny, and the pivotal moments of inception of the spiritual haven that is Rikhiapeeth today. Through vivid narratives, 'Rikhia Agaman' illuminates the profound impact of Swami Satyananda's arrival at Rikhiapeeth. A tribute to history, spirituality, and the power of a single moment to shape destinies. This book captures the essence of Rikhia's founding moments and its enduring legacy.



Amrit Lahari - Waves of Nectar

Sri Swamiji's Centenary Birth Anniversary

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