



SHARANA PATHA

Vol. 25, No. 2

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**JSS MAHAVIDYAPEETHA
MYSURU**



The 108th Jayanthi Celebrations of Jagadguru Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji was inaugurated by Sri Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister of Karnataka, in the gracious presence of the Swamis of Suttur, Adichunchanagiri, Siddhaganga and Pejawar. Sri Tanveer Sait, Dr. H.C. Mahadevappa, Sri Pratap Simha, Sri T.S. Srivatsa and Sri Shivakumar were present. (Aug, 29, 2023)



H.H. Jagadguruji blessed and honoured Sri Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister of Karnataka, when he visited Sri Suttur Kshethra to offer his devotional respects at the shrine of Adi Jagadguru Sri Shivarathreeswara Shivayogi Mahaswamiji. (June 10, 2023)

SHARANA PATHA

Vol 25 No. 2

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A Half-Yearly journal devoted to religion, Sharana Philosophy, history, culture, literature and their comparative studies and practice.



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Jagadguru

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Frontispiece: HH Jagadguruji felicitated Sri Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, on July 12, 2023, during his visit to Lucknow.

Contributions for publication, exchange of journals, books for review, letters need to be addressed to the Editor, Sharana Patha, JSS Mahavidyapeetha, Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Circle, Mysuru 570 004 or e-mailed to: editorjsssharanapatha@gmail.com

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From the Editor's Desk.....

Disagreements, discord, differences in perceptions and controversies on problems and issues political, geopolitical, religious, social, racial, economic, cultural, territorial, linguistic et al have been the bane of modern societies at the national levels of countries. They cannot be simply brushed aside since most of them end up in misunderstanding or hostility. Fighting and fisticuffs, verbal barb, blaming and calling names to hurt or harm opponents rule the roost. When situations like that go out of control they end up in large scale unrest, destruction of public property and even death mostly of innocents. Such acts often get committed brazenly, deliberately enough to hurt or harm the society. When the news gets publicity that only aggravates the situation. But people as spectators witness the mayhem only to feel disenchanted with the perpetrators acting in the guise of leaders, who ironically enough claim to be upholders of values. The truth is that most of them are self-seeking or self-serving begots. Such ones don't see the reason or deliberately debunk it, only they know! All this put together is a grave threat to the future of human civilisation.

However, the greatest paradox is that those involved in the crime know intuitively that they are wrong and their actions too! But then it is their survival kit; they defend themselves, they have contempt for everything good, except to disagree and find pleasure in seeing people bleed and suffer. They and their leaders need to necessarily know that there is no problem or issue that cannot be amicably resolved in the world. The first step in this direction is to come together, sit and talk, talk sensibly. Apart from the many gifts given to man by nature, it seems, it is the tongue that has been put to utmost misuse or not used properly. Fortunately enough animals and birds and other living beings don't have speaking tongues!

Today most of the talks or debates between the warring groups end up in disagreements or stalemates. It is mostly because they try to promote their personal agenda or of the party or organisation or ideology or belief. Wars have been fought when talks failed. Talks fail because they don't know the value of good words spoken in good faith with good intentions. Good talk breaks the ice between individuals and nations, they should know.

Good talk enhances the quality of individual's persona. A leader who speaks good and acts good is loved more. Our great poets like Tiruvalluvar in Tamil, Vemana in Telugu and Sarvajna in Kannada have espoused the merit of the spoken word and its impact variously in their poetry. Sarvajna in one of his *tripadis* observes,

*Good talk results in goodwill and warmth, the other way is illwill and death
Good talk makes one affluent, for the world
Good talk is like the lustre of rubies, Sarvajna.*

Prof. Chandrasekharaiah

Guru-Vāṇi

At no time in the known history of mankind, historians point out, there was complete peace on the globe, but war or wars raged and fought on it at one place or the other resulting in killing and bloodshed. Figuratively speaking, earth continues to be soaked or shall we say, luxuriate in the ritualistic bath, *abhishek*, of human blood? The loss of human lives in wars may far exceed the number of deaths due to epidemic or natural disasters. Modern times have already witnessed two world wars apart from the numerous intencine ones which together have taken away billions of lives leaving behind a trail of infinite sorrow, misery and destruction. But inspite of his timeless wisdom and sagacity man has not realised that wars are mutually destructive – kill and get killed!

Presently two wars on two different locations on the globe are being fought. One is between Ukraine and Russia. This one is going on for over a year. In about a couple of months it will celebrate its second anniversary! The other one is between Israil and Hamas, still in its infancy! Who knows how long the two wars will continue to be fought? Nobody. End is not in the sight. The dead ones can never be brought back. May be the countries need a couple of decades to rebuild the man made infrastructure lost on either side. And at what cost?! What about the loss of natural resources which cannot be recreated. War means loss, nothing but loss.

A Western humanist named Jason Sear says, 'The vast majority of humans wish to live their lives in peace and handle conflicts with respect and without aggression. Violent interests and behaviours are often the results of past trauma and a victim mentality. Thus intending to cause trauma is the direct cause of future violent interests and behaviours.' These words hold a mirror to the world's present state of affairs that they don't need elucidation or interpretation.

The present world is riddled with divisions and fragmentations which are of geopolitical, political, religious, communal, ethnic, economic, cultural, regional, racial and social in nature as never before. These divisions or fragmentations speak volumes about distrust, misunderstanding, resulting in animosity and hatred among nations. Powerful countries are getting weaponised more and more threatening the very concept of survival, peace and tranquillity. Amid all this the shadow of the ugly wings of terrorism in one form or the other for one wrong reason or the other are spreading fast stubbornly believing that killing innocent men, women and children alone will settle their score. What a pathetic condition that the mankind has led itself into? How mankind can escape from being sucked into this ever widening quicksand? How to save the globe, mother earth, from being destroyed by unimaginably powerful bombs which will also see that the killer too gets killed?

Long back, T.S. Eliot, a great British Poet, foresaw this after the world war I and wrote his famous poem *The Waste Land* in which with his usual anxiety and anguish, his characteristic disbelief in man's goodness, bemoans the loss of human wisdom and of the futility of man's material and civilisational progress. And yet the poet was not sceptical or pessimistic. He hoped man's wisdom will ultimately prevail. To find solace and solution to the ills and evils that afflict modern man he turns to the eternal wisdom contained in the *Upanishads*. His poem ends with a quote from the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* which says Datta, Dayadvam, Damyata. They are the words of the thunder, meaning, give, sympathise, control, followed by the words of the Vedic wish *shanthih shanthih*.

Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji

Shatsthala Vachanas of Allama Prabhu*

In English Translation with Commentary

Continued

26

*In the middle of the village was seen
The woods where five corpses lay.
Countless were the relatives who often came
and cried.
Neither the corpses were burnt, nor the
fire doused.
Only the bier was burnt out, Guheshwara.*

PURPORT

'Village' means the expanse of maya, the universe endlessly spread. 'Woods' means the visible world. In this visible world there are 'five corpses', namely five sense objects – sound, touch, form, taste and smell. Countless are the 'relatives' means the Jivas who come to this world again and again and cry for them. Most of the Jivas who descend to this world lose their life for these five objects of pleasure. But the surprising thing is that these corpses i.e., objects of desires are not burnt out and disposed off; the visible world does not disappear either. Only life is burnt out.

COMMENTARY

In the middle of the village was seen the woods.

Out of the power of maya manifests a cluster of tattvas – sakala (the twenty-five

principles – five organs of cognition, five motor organs, five vital airs, five sense objects, four anta%akaraGas and the Atma) – sakala-asakala (Eleven principles – five sadakhyas, five kanchukis and maya) and asakala (Shivatattva); the great universe consisting of the gross and subtle principles – this is the village. In the middle of this village there lies the fascinating world of sense-pleasures – this is the woods.

Five corpses.

Corpses = Sense objects.

The five sense objects are sound, touch, form, taste, and smell.

Countless were the relatives who often came and cried.

The relatives, i.e. Jivas, who love objects of pleasure are innumerable. They come again and again to the world. They cry for these five objects of pleasure. They crave for them. Struggling to have them they toil and moil. They hanker after them.

Neither the corpseburnt out, Guheshwara.

The visible world did not disappear; objects of pleasure also did not burn out fully and vanish. Only the life of those who

* Translation and exposition of the Vachanas of Allama Prabhu was done by a group of scholars guided by Sri Siddheshwar Swamiji of Jnanayogaashrama, Vijayapura

hankered after them came to an end. For Jivas to be freed from grief, and find contentment and peace, the fire must cease; the corpses must be burnt. Maya sees to it that the fire is not doused, corpses are not burnt and Jivas fail to find contentment. This is the miracle of maya.

27

*If a deer says it went to the place of a tiger
And returned safely after grazing,
I'd be surprised.
If someone says that he went to the house
Of an ogress, slept
And returned safely, I'd be surprised.
If someone says that he went to the house
of Death
And returned alive, I'd be surprised,
Guheshwara.*

PURPORT

If a deer goes to the place of a tiger, grazes there to its fill and returns safely, it is a matter of surprise. If a man goes to the house of an ogress, sleep there the whole night and returns safely, it is a matter of great surprise. If a man goes to the abode of Death and returns alive, it is a matter of immense surprise. Similarly, if a man who has become a slave to his greed, claims that by experiencing sensual pleasures he has attained contentment, it no doubt causes wonder. Ensnared in the web of infatuation, if he finds peace, it is certainly surprising. It is indeed surprising if a worldly man contends that he has experienced immortality on entering the mortal body which is in clutches of time, greed, attachment and the all-consuming Time. These three faces of maya, cause emotional bondage to Jiva. In the world of maya, there is no place, no time and no condition when these three are not found.

Jiva who has entered this kind of world of maya, cannot attain peace and freedom so easily.

COMMENTARY

If a deer saysI'd be surprised.

Tiger stands for greed, deer for Jiva. The meadow on which the deer goes grazing is the world filled with objects of pleasure. Driven by greed, Jiva is certain to graze the grass of pleasure. But due to insatiable nature of greed, he remains always discontented.

If someone says..... I'd be surprised.

The ogress may put on extremely attractive appearance, but her heart is filled with cruelty. She attracts the passer-by. Being lured by her, he accepts her hospitality and enjoys himself. But in doing so he loses all his freedom. Now he cannot come out safely at all. Infatuation is like an ogress. Coming under its spell, Jiva will never get peace.

**If someone says I'd be surprised,
Guheshwara.**

There is no one who having gone to the house of Death, has come out alive. All the bodies in this world are houses of death. Jivas enter these bodies, develop deep attachment for them. How is it possible for such Jivas to attain immortality?

Desire, infatuation and Time are the three aspects of maya, and this world is her creation. Jiva enters this world, becomes ensnared and infatuated by those three aspects. It is very difficult for Jiva to come out of the influence of maya and enjoy peace and freedom. If at all he comes out, it is a matter of amazement.

In this Vachana of Allamaprabhu, there is a marvellous description of maya and her creation, the world into which millions and millions of Jivas enter and get captured almost forever. He has made it clear how insurmountable is the power of maya.

28

It takes birth in the centre of heart.

It grows, spreads out and bears all kinds of fruits.

Gives various kinds of fruits to those who ask for them.

Those who ask for them fall into water.

Seeing all this, I'm laughing, Guheshwara!

PURPORT

Centre of heart stands for Mahalinga in which all the principles that will evolve later exist in their potential forms. It is here in this Mahalinga that maya made its appearance. It began to evolve and gave rise to all kinds of creative principles which formed this great universe containing all kinds of sense objects. These objects are not one or two, they are countless. Some of them are for the eyes to see; some, for the ears to hear; some, for the tongue to taste; some, for the touch organ to feel and the others, for the nose to smell. Jivas who came under the influence of maya desired sense pleasure coming from those objects. Maya created whatever they liked. Were they ordinary pleasures? No, they were very enticing. Most of the Jivas who tasted those intoxicating pleasures, got drowned in the ocean of worldly life. Seeing this captivating play of maya, Allama, who had subdued maya is laughing.

COMMENTARY

It takes birth in the centre of heart.

Centre of heart = Mahalinga.

The primordial cause of entire creation is Mahalinga, who is the great union of Shiva and Shakti. From Mahalinga, first there came out maya, the cause of all the later creations.

It grows, spreads out and bears all kinds of fruits.

Then maya evolved and grew into this great universe consisting of all kinds of principles. These principles combined in myriad ways and produced the objects of pleasure, the delight of the senses.

Gives various kinds of fruits to those who ask for them.

Maya created physical and mental bodies. The principle of consciousness that got reflected in those bodies came to be known as Jivas. In them, there developed pride and attachment for the body and desire for sense pleasure. They have different likings. Some go for pleasure of sound, some for touch, some for form, some for taste and some for smell. Maya gives them what they want.

Those who ask for them fall into water.

The Jivas who taste the fruits become pleasure-intoxicated. What's more, they fall into the highly captivating ocean of worldly life and get drowned. Few are those who escape from it.

Seeing all this, I am laughing, Guheshwara!

Witnessing this mesmerizing play of maya, Allama is laughing.

29

This earth is very vast.

I saw it swallowed by a headless body.

Seeing without head, I was astonished.

*When the realm of nine divisions falls apart.
Is there anyone who has seen the head,
Guheshwara?*

PURPORT

This vast universe extending endlessly in all directions is enveloped by maya in the form of ignorance. Under the care of maya there appears the 'head' meaning the knowledge based on the sense of duality. When seen through the vision of Shiva consciousness, one comes to know the whole nature of maya. The senses bring us the knowledge of the visible world full of differences. When one transcends the knowledge which the senses bring, then that 'head', or ignorance which makes one see the difference disappears.

COMMENTARY

This earth is very vast.

This universe is boundless.

I saw it swallowed by a headless body.

Head = Pure knowledge, self-awareness, divine knowledge. Headless body = Absence of self-knowledge, maya.

This maya has swallowed the whole universe, meaning, it has pervaded and covered the world of living and the non-living.

Seeing without head, I was astonished.

Head = The knowledge based on duality seen in the world of maya.

Allama has got rid of the sense of duality and attained the vision of Shiva-consciousness. He then sees the empire of maya and is struck with amazement.

When the realm of nine divisions falls apart

There are five vrittis (modifications of

mind) related to five external sense organs and four internal vrittis related to the four internal organs. Through these vrittis, we acquire the knowledge of gross and subtle worlds, in the three states of mind – wakeful, dream and deep sleep. The kind of knowledge generated by these nine vrittis is known as nava-khanda-mandala (Nava = nine, mandala = cluster; khanda = fragmented knowledge generated by vrittis). When one transcends the limits of this domain of knowledge the 'head' (maya, the differentiating knowledge) disappears.

Is there anyone who has seen that head, Guheshwara?

For the men of enlightenment there is no 'head', no differentiating knowledge, no maya. It just disappears.

30

*When a doll of wax catches fire,
Water suffers from thirst.
Dig, dig a well.
The one who digs the well dies, the well goes dry.
Hence all the three worlds
Go waste, Guheshwara.*

PURPORT

The 'doll of wax' is the impermanent body. It is caught by the fire of Time. Consequently, the body is slowly dwindling and wearing out. The mind in the body which is like 'water', is suffering from thirst for sense pleasures. The thirst is unbearable. Jiva who dwells in the body and mind is longing for peace and contentment. So, he is digging a well to get water of peace. He is putting in immense effort. By digging he gets exhausted but fails to get as much 'water' as he wants. He does not get happiness. This is the plight

of the Jiva everywhere. Seeing this Allama exclaims, 'Dig, dig a well, O Jiva.' The digger is surely going to die. The well dries up. The body perishes. The appearance of water called comfort evaporates. That's how the life of people of the three worlds is wasted away. Guheshwara, this is the play of your maya.

COMMENTARY

A doll of wax.

A doll which melts, the impermanent body.

Catches fire.

Fire called Time. As soon as the body is formed, fire of time catches hold of it. Moment by moment, this body goes on diminishing.

Water suffers from thirst.

Water = Mind.

Mind has unquenchable thirst for the objects of pleasure. By this thirst for pleasure the mind is continuously tormented.

Dig, dig a well.

To dig a well is to put in tremendous

effort to procure the water of contentment. Making effort not once, but even thousands of times cannot satisfy the thirst and give rise to a sense of contentment.

The one who digs the well dies.

The one who digs = Jiva who puts in effort to dig the well for pleasure.

Lifelong, he keeps digging. Still the water of contentment is nowhere to be seen; what he obtains, now and then, is just a handful of it. So, the digging effort does not cease. Water of happiness to heart's content is not obtained. The body on fire perishes completely and dies. Its owner, the Jiva, is also as good as dead.

The well goes dry.

The effort he puts in to dig the well does not yield much. Whatever little he gets, it also dries up.

Hence all the three worlds go waste, Guheshwara.

Thus, the life of gods, goddesses and people is wasted away. This is the miraculous play of maya.

Many religions predict that the world will be destroyed by natural disasters incurred by many travesties which have invited the wrath of God. The Agni Purana describes the end of mankind in a global drought after man has depleted the earth's resources. In Hindu cosmology *Prakriti Pralay* (flood) happens, caused by divine rain, after Agni consumes the world and the ashes of civilisations have been dispersed. When Shiva opens his tresses and unleashes the primordial waters, the fury of the Himalayas will wreck destruction. Pilgrim, look for it, not by making a booking Airbnb, but by travelling within, to touch the essential Hindu within us all.

• **Ravi Shankar**

(in The Indian Express)

Homage to Sri Basava

- Smt. Prema Nandakumar

Great religious teachers have appeared in this sacred land down the ages and constantly sought to regularise the cultured way of life for the Indian which has included language, literature, religion and spirituality. They have untiringly kept the innumerable spiritual systems alive and in the process sought to elevate the way of social and political life for their devotees. Historical recordation, helped by art and architecture and inscriptions, has been of help since the 12th century and today we realise that we are the beneficiaries of all this experience and knowledge.

By the 12th century, the hymns of the "Sixty-Three" Nayanmars, referred to generally as Purathanas in Karnataka, were probably translated into the local language and recited by devotees of Shiva when they travelled together to holy places associated with Shiva. The Purathanas sang of bhakti to the Divine as Shiva alone. Within four hundred years, Sri Basava could give us an unforgettable experience:

*"I am a poor person with no bhakti.
I begged in Kakkayya's house
Also begged in Chinnayya's home,
And in Dasayya's residence;
With the bhakti that the Purathanas
Poured, my vessel got filled:
O Lord Kudala Sangama!"¹
("Bhakti Illadha Badava Naanayya")*

Bhakti is one divine instrument which crushes to smithereens all dividing lines constructed by caste and creed. When one reads about the Bhakti Movement that began to flow from Tamil Nadu, moved via Karnataka, Bengal and Orissa to Gujarat, and encompassed the whole of India, one is amazed that singing with a minimal instrument or two in hand keeping time, travelling together, contemplating upon the hills and dales, bathing in the waterfalls roaring down and rivers that flow constantly donning meaningful and beautiful names as Tambraparni, Narmada, Krishna and Tungabhadra, India's devotional world had knit the land firmly. Feelings of divisive living in terms of caste, considering women as a weaker sex that is not capable of achieving anything worthwhile was another factor that prevented a society from moving forward. A great guru like Sri Basava, despite disappointments, did his best to remove such debilitating distinctions from his people's psyche. His services to people in this matter should be remembered by us with gratitude.

I was born in a Tamil Srivaishnava home when the house echoed to the vachanas of Sri Basava. For those were the years (1939-1940) when Professors. S. Basawanal and my father, Professor K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar were writing *Musings of Basava*. The book

* Smt. Prema Nandakumar, Mudhal Tirumaligai, 152/91, South Chitra Street, Srirangam - 620006.

was published and in the following years I used to repeat my mother's singing of the simple prayer to Lord Kudala Sangama: "vachanadalli naamaamrutha thumbi." For the following two decades I was absorbed in my academic studies. My doctoral thesis was on the epic poem of Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol*. The work brought me close to the study of the various religious ways that had been co-existing in India. It has been an enriching experience beyond description. Even today, when I take down a book from my personal library, I feel my mother's gentle voice when holding me as a child, an ineradicable memory on the art of cultured living. The passage of eight decades in between has vanished!

*"May my speech be full of the nectar
Of your name;
May your form always be present
To my eyes;
May my mind be filled with
Thoughts about you;
And my ears be filled
With your fame.
O Lord Kudala Sangama!
May I always remain enclosed
In your lotus-feet."*

Though Sri Basava had all the blessings that one desires for in this world (wealth, honoured service in a royal court, wives and sister who were devoted to him), he was restless when he watched the divisions in the society in the name of caste that even led to armed rivalry among friends and relations. When he sought to teach people the need for patience and compassion, there were not many prepared to listen to him. And the nagging doubts against new converts to the Lingayat way of life was not easily overcome. One can hear the deep anxiety in this prayer asking for Shiva's

loving welcome to such a newcomer:

*"Who do you think, this is,
To whom does he belong to?
He is ours, he is ours,
Consider him as your own,
Who has come to your house.
O Lord Kudala Sangama!
Accept him as the son of your home."
("Ivanaarava, ivanaarava")*

Sri Basava, of course, faced an almost impossible task. Naturally, a new formation with idealistic views regarding the eradication of existing customs that have become outmoded and often inimical to progress. The education of women, for instance. As early as the time when the Vedas were set down, women had received high education and were equal to men in the matter of scholarship. Swamini Atmaprajnanananda Saraswati has listed more than ninety of these significant women poetesses who have left their stamp on Indian culture. Many of the names listed by her include Goda, Aditi-Dakshayani and Surya-Savitri. The marriage-hymns in the Rig Veda describe the equal position held by women in the Vedic times. But the position of women had been weakened in the following centuries due to many reasons that include the terror of invading armies ever since the fall of the Hindu kingdom of Sind in the 8th century. But the coming of dawn also could not be denied.

Such was a dawn that came in the wake of Virasaivism in the 11th century followed by the heroic personality of Sri Basava. Dr. S.C. Nandimath lists 213 poets and has given names of highly respected poetesses like Udataditya Mahadeviakka. Her life-story is highly moving but her self-confidence has never failed to make us proud of womanhood. She lived in Kalyan

for a long time and took part in the discourses held by Virasaiva scholars under the presidency of Prabhudeva. She spent the latter part of her life in Srisailam and seems to have lived in the dense forests close to the hill-top temple of Sri Mallikarjuna Swami. Today, with the place all cleared and despite powerful lights beaming on the entry to the caves to show us the glorious sculpted stones, one is still somewhat hesitant to enter and cannot escape the thought: From where did the frail lady get the strength of mind to live here all alone at a time when it was deserted and overgrown with bushes and mammoth trees! The answer is simple: a rare faith in the syllables: Om Namashivaya.

Only one immersed in the name of her Lord, Mallikarjuna Siva of Srisailam, could project a perfect verbal photograph of the Srisailam Forest a millennium back. We can visualise her standing at the entrance of her cave watching the greenery and the divine birds spreading beauty everywhere, spilling musical sounds that reach Akka Mahadevi's ears to give this immortal vachana:

*"Ye, parrots singing
In mirthful ease;
And, oh ye swans,
Frolicking near the lake;
and ye, joyous cuckoos
piping full-throated;
and ye, proud peacocks
strutting up and down in glee
over hill and dale –
Tell me, oh tell me,
Ye one and all,
Did you ever chance to see,
My lover,
My own Chennamallikaarjuna?"*

*(Translated by S.S. Basawanal and
K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar)*

Such silent reformist zeal has always been an important aspect of the bhakti Movement which sought to break down the barriers of caste, education and riches among the people.

Coming from various castes and creeds, the Nayanmars entered the amazing world of devotional singing tirelessly about Shiva. Among them were Brahmins, Kshatriyas, kings, women (Lady of Karaikal) and people from depressed classes and the group of people known as "untouchables". Akka Mahadevi's stay in Srisailam and devotion for Chenna Mallikarjuna Swami is easy to understand because the three Nayanmars, Appar, Sundarar and Jnanasambandar had travelled in this holy space in 9th century and gifted us elevating poems on the presiding deity in the Empire of Mother Nature:

*"Bathing in several rivers,
Rushing with flowers in hand,
As the denizen of Heaven
Hail you through sounds of drums,
The parrots praise you with sounds
In tune with the buzz of honey-bees,
Here is the Sri Parvata
Where the water-falls too sound
Like the beats of the drum."*

*(Sri Parvata is the Tamil form of
Srisailam. Translated by
Prema Nandakumar)*

Finally, Sri Basava's certainty is that Shiva loves one who is a sincere devotee. In the song "Nadapriya Sivanembaru", he states that it is not one who plays music nor one who recites the Vedas who is dear to Shiva. He had no interest in saving Ravana despite the king's musical art nor did he stop from plucking out a head of

Brahma though the God was an expert reciter of the Vedas. Only a person who is

full of devotion for Him is dear to Shiva. Well, Shiva is everything says Sri Basava using the simplest words to describe this togetherness of Shiva and His devotee:

*"You are father, you are mother,
You are relation, you are my friend,
I have none except you,
O Lord Kudala Sangama!"
("Thande neenu thaayi neenu")*

Such at-one-ment is not easily achieved, for the pull of the world is too strong. But the achievement is not impossible either. Sri Basava, Akka Mahadevi and great devotees like them have managed to achieve such a life of being the drop of water on a lotus leaf. For they live in the divine, in Shiva though their physical body is on earth. One goes on reading and singing and trying to understand the vachanas of Sri Basava or Akka Mahadevi. Suddenly one realises that these devotees were stating universal truths in simple terms so that even the most illiterate or ignorant person can understand all about himself and his connectivity with the Divine. Here we pass even beyond religion and enter the world of mysticism: mysticism that chastens, leads us to understanding by our own reaching out into our hearts to understand the meaning of existence. To conclude:

"Of course, it is not everyone of us that can hope to transcend our intellectual faculties into mystic apprehensions of the soul or intuitions of the self. The mystic's experiences though lived in this very world are of a nature very foreign to its general currency. .. It is clear from the foregoing that Ultimate Reality is one and not many. And true mystical experiences are, in essence, identical. But the very intensity and ineffability of their other-worldliness strain the limits of the wordable; and hence the mysticism unable to describe their experiences in lucid clarity are obliged to resort to images."²

If the religion of Lingayats forms today a very important part of India's religious culture, the images that have blossomed in the Vachanas of Veera Saivism remain an immensely rich portion of India's sacred bhakti poetry. Come now to meditate on one of them:

*The world of Heaven and the world of Hell
Are not different: Listen.
Speaking truth is the world of God
Speaking untruth is the world of Hell.
Habits of pure living is Heaven;
Following impure ways is Hell.
O lord Kudala Sangama!
You stand witness to this truth.*

*("Devaloka mrityuloka vembudhu
Berilla kaaneero")*

Like the silk worm
Which weaves its home
And dies cocooned over
By its self-spun silken thread
I wish for this and that
And I burn and am consumed
Chennamallikarjuna
Put an end to my mind's endless avarice

• **Akka Mahadevi**

(Tr. Dr. D.A. Shankar)

Categories of Understanding – Western Philosophical Perspective

- Dr. H.L. Chandrashekara

Any category for that matter is the most fundamental and universal concept that can be affirmed of anything in the world. For the first time in the history of western philosophy, we see the theory of categories being propounded by Aristotle (384 B.C – 322 B.C) in his work *Logic or Organon*. According to Aristotle it is impossible to think of anything except as belonging to one category or another. We have a tendency to categorize the objects. However this does not mean that categories are merely subjective in nature. It is not that they are in our minds. According to Aristotle they form the basic feature of the real. It is because these categories constitute the indivisible part of the external objects, we think of them as belonging to certain categories. In this sense Aristotle is a realist. That means, according to him the locus of these categories is not the internal mind, but the external objects. Whether we see them or not, they exist in their own right in the objects.

Aristotle enumerates ten such categories. They are substance, quality, quantity, relation, space, time, position, state, activity and passivity. We can speak of a thing as what it is (man: substance), how it is constituted (white: quality), how

it is related (greater: relation), where it is (in the college: space), when it is (yesterday: time), what position it assumes (sits: position), the condition it is in (armed: state), what it does (burns: activity), and what it suffers (is burnt :passivity).

All the above put together means that the objects of our experience exist in space, and place, can be measured and counted (number), are related to other things, act and are acted upon, have essential and accidental qualities. The substance is the bearer of all these categories. All other categories depend upon the substance, but the substance does not depend upon anything. We can predicate other categories of the substance. But we cannot predicate substance of anything. For example morality may be predicated of an individual namely Socrates, but it is meaningless to predicate Socrates of anything else. Hence substance is the most important of all categories. Others exist only insofar as they can be predicated of the substance.

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

The next philosopher who deals with the doctrine of categories is **Immanuel Kant**. The doctrine can be found in his

* Dr. H.L.Chandrashekara, # 31, 'Simhadri', Behind Ashwini Kalyanamantapa, Nityananda Enclave, Srirampura, 2nd stage, Mysuru 570023

magnum opus “*The Critique of Pure Reason*”. The work has two parts namely Transcendental Aesthetic and Transcendental Analytic or Logic.

In the first part Kant speaks of how sensations become organized into percepts. According to him all knowledge begins with sense experience. Any experience has a content or object or ingredient. These ingredients are called **sensations (sense-qualia)**. Sounds, touch, colors, tastes and smell are sensations. These sensations are organized by mind in terms of two things namely **space** and **time**. What differentiates Kant from Aristotle is that space and time do not belong to the objective world. According to Kant space and time are inherent in the subjective mind and not in the objective world. They cannot be perceived as belonging to some object. They are prior to perception and hence are apriori in nature. Kant calls them **Forms**

of Intuition. Kant does not attach any religious or spiritual implication to the term “Intuition”. By intuition he means **sense perception**. Thus the sensations of the external world are organized by mind in terms of space and time which are inherent in mind. The sensations so organized are called **Percepts**.

In the second part namely **Transcendental Logic** Kant speaks of how these percepts are reorganized. Mind does not stop at that, organizes the percepts into **concepts**. This organization is done in terms of certain other things present in the mind called **categories**. Like space and time, these categories are apriori in nature. That means they cannot be perceived. But they presuppose all knowledge. Without them, knowledge is not possible. Kant differs from Aristotle in that according to him these categories are not objective, but subjective in nature. That means they are

Kant recognizes twelve such categories, classified under four groups.

Sl.no	Category	Judgment
•	Quantity	
1	Unity	We think of a thing as one.
2	Plurality	We think of the things as many.
3	Totality	A whole rack contains books on Indian Philosophy.
•	Quality	
4	Reality	We affirm about a thing as having certain qualities.
5	Negation	We deny a thing of certain qualities.
6	Limitation	We speak of a thing as limited by another object.
•	Relation	
7	Inherence and subsistence	We think two things as related either inherently or accidentally.
8	Causality and dependence	We speak of two things, say A and B, as related respectively as cause and effect or as A being dependent on B.
9	Community and reciprocity	We speak of two things always co-existing or mutually related with each other.
•	Conditions or Modality	
10	Possibility - Impossibility	There is possibility or no possibility of my getting this book in this book stall.
11	Existence - Non-Existence	A is existent or Non-existent.
12	Necessity-Contingence	The sum total of two plus two could not have been other than four; yare your performance on the stage could have been better.

inherent in the human mind. **They are the ways of understanding the things.** We speak about a thing in terms of these categories.

3. C.S. Pierce (1839-1914)

C.S.Pierce is an American philosopher and he has his own doctrine of categories. According to him a category is a universal, belonging to a phenomenon. Whatever that is given to our experience and is capable of being verified by observational methods is called a **Phenomenon**. Hence his Philosophy is called "**Phenomenology**". According to Pierce, more than one category may be present in a given phenomena and one category may be more prominent than the other in it. According to Pierce three categories are sufficient to explain a phenomenon. These can be stated as follows.

(a) First one is **Quality**. It is also called category of **firstness**. This comprises such qualities as red, bitter, hard etc. According to Pierce qualities represent a continuous system or series without demarcations.

(b) The second category is known as **Fact**. It is also called the category of **secondness**. While qualities are universal and potential, facts are particular and actual. Pierce calls facts "**brute**" because they cannot be resisted (changed) by our wills. Matter as directly perceived through sense organ is a brute factuality.

(c) The third category is called **Law**. It is also called the category of **thirdness**. It explains the collection of facts. It not only explains the actual facts, but also those that are going to be. That means it explains all things which are both actual (present) and possible (future).

4. Samuel Alexander (1859-1937)

According to **Samuel Alexander**, a British Philosopher, categories are not subjective. In this sense, he is different from Kant and resembles Aristotle in that his doctrine of categories is realistic. According to him categories are the primary features of nature. They are the essential qualities of whatever that is experienced. They can be empirically discoverable. These categories are **nine** in number namely identity, diversity, existence, relation, substance, causality, quantity, intensity and motion.

Thus categories are the ways of understanding the things. Whatever be their number and whatever be their locus - subjective mind or objective world - understanding them will help in classifying the things and knowing the things in precision. Swami Vivekananda said that all understanding is nothing but classification. Mind according to him is full of pigeon-holes. It has a tendency to fix the things to these pigeon-holes. If this fixing is correct, then our understanding of thing is said to be correct, otherwise it becomes erroneous. Mind has a tendency to categorise a particular thing under a universal, universal to broader universal till we reach a stage that we cannot categorise this universal under any other universal. Thus we reach a level of **super-universal** comprising many small universals, each small universal comprising mini-universals and each mini-universal including particulars. This psychological process of arriving at a particular from the universal and vice versa are respectively designated as deduction and induction.

□

Basaveshwara

A Saint, Centuries Ahead

- Prof. R.S. Lekkad

Eternal, universal, humane values of life enunciated by a great saint of twelfth century, Mahatma Basveshwara and his followers in the form of Vachanas(verses) in Kannada literature, have been acclaimed rich on all counts, social, cultural, educational, ethical, democratic, humanitarian in India and abroad.

Popularly known as Basavanna(1105-1168 A.D), The Founding father of Lingayat Religion-Sharanadharm/Vachanadharm of Karnataka, India visualized universal brotherhood irrespective of caste, colour, community, creed, culture, status, sex and the like. He advocated vigorously individual freedom, equality, fraternity, integrity on thoughtfull scientific logical lines as against blind beliefs and dead habits. He endeavoured to emancipate the weaker sections viz. women and the downtrodden from ageold bondage so as to help them enjoy dignity of self, especially womenhood and profession(work). Kaya(body), Kayaka(profession-work) as heaven. Work is worship. Focusing on Kayaka and Dasoha each one as a sacred duty to fellowbeings i.e society with earning livelihood and sharing to the satisfaction of sharanas constituting a society.

Dignity and Division of labour, service motto have been enshrined in the teachings of Basaveshwara aiming at welfare state(Kalyana raj). Kayaka and dasoha are the ends; truth and non-violence are the means. Selfrealization in the context of society at large would be the result.

The roots of democracies of the world are to be traced in the teachings of Mahatma Basaveshwara as a result of which he is looked upon as the Founding Father of World Democracy by men of wisdom and vision like the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modiji and a host of others here and abroad. Basaveshwara is increasingly being regarded as a universal perasonality. He is centuries ahead.

Basava Jayanti is being celebrated all over the world. Statues of Basava have been installed on the banks of river Thames in London, Dubai and elsewhere. Vachana literature being published in major languages of the world is appreciated everywhere.

The Constitution of India, in a way, is the replica of his teachings because the cardinal principles enshrined in the preamble part third, fundamental rights

* - Prof. R.S. Lekkad, Basavavijaya, near Chandreshwari Temple, Kamatagi, Hungund Tq, Bagalkot Dist 587120

part fourth, directive principles of state policy part 4 A, fundamental duties owe in spirit to the teachings of Basaveshwara incidentally. Similarly the concept of Parliament is to be traced to Anubhava Manthapa of 12th century as referred to by our P.M Shri Narendra Modi while laying the foundation of new Parliament Bhavana

recently. Many a foreign thinker studied vachanas and wrote volumes admiring Basveshwara's contribution to mankind.

Education is the core of all-round development of mankind and the teachings of Basava, in view of education, have a lasting influence which I will take up in the next article.

An ideal student is but one who remains grateful to the institution that trained and educated him, to his father and mother and to the nation of his birth.

• **Jagadguru Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji**

In 1991, the University of Utah Flay's experiment detected the highest energy cosmic ray ever observed. Dubbed 'Oh-My-God particle', the ray's energy shocked astrophysicists. Nothing in the Milky Way had the power to produce it, and the particle had more energy than was theoretically possible for cosmic rays travelling to Earth from the galaxies. Simply put, the particle should not exist.

The Telescope Array has since observed more than thirty ultra-high-energy cosmic rays, though none approaching Oh-My-God level energy. No observations have yet revealed their origin or how they are able to travel to earth. 'Their particles are of so high energy', they shouldn't be affected by galactic and extragalactic magnetic fields. You should be able to point to where they come from in the sky' says John Mathews, Telescope Array Co-spokesperson at the University of Utah and Co-author of the study, adding, 'But in the case of the Oh-My-God particle and this new particle, you trace its trajectory to its source and there is nothing high energy enough to have produced it. That is the mystery'.

• **Source: University of Utah**

Are There Actually Seven Chakras

- Sri Sadhguru

Sadhguru: We need to look at the seven chakras, and how yoga evolved out of that, in a certain context. We have always referred to yoga as a science and a technology because we are working with the existential. In today's world, a whole lot of people wrongly refer to yoga as philosophy. A philosophy can be made up – it need not have anything to do with reality. Most of the time, philosophies are fantastic explanations about things that you know nothing about. Everyone can come up with their own philosophy, because anyway, there is no one around who knows anything about it. Philosophies have endured in many societies for a long time.

Codified, not Captured

What is unique about yogic culture is that there is no philosophy of any kind – philosophies are scorned. Some people are trying to raise a debate, saying, “Do you have scriptural validation? Which scripture validates what you know?” What most human beings do not understand is that scriptures are a product of the realization that happened in yogis and sages. Yogis and sages are never a product of a scripture. What an individual human being knew and what he spoke, expressed, or transmitted in some way, the people around him who did not know, tried to record and codify into a book. It may have a few gems here and there; the rest is ignorance – sanctified ignorance.

Gautama and Anandatirtha are a classic

example – what we know about Gautama is only because of what Anandatirtha noted down. Everything that you know about me through YouTube is only because of the videographers' recordings. I trust them because they cannot put their mind into the camera and record it the way they want it. But if they wrote it down, they would put their mind into it. As they grew more confident, they would put more and more of themselves into it, because a lot of things that an enlightened being says do not make sense to a whole lot of people. So someone codified what they said the way people like it.

Whatever the nature of someone's experience, even something as simple as seeing the full moon, no one else can ever capture it. When even a basic experience cannot be captured, how will you capture an experience that is phenomenal? You cannot capture that – so people only codify it. So people will say that the moon means you see a round object and you feel good. And reading this, different people will see different things, depending upon their own consciousness. Footballers will see a big ball out there. Those who are hungry will see a ball of butter – as Indian children were always told.

Discernment and Intellect

These seven dimensions are not a philosophy, but a little bit of classification. Fundamentally, any classification of life is

* Sri Sadhguru, a yogi, mystic and visionary, Isha Foundation, Coimbatore.

wrong, but this classification is done for the sake of understanding. The seven chakras are not to be understood as seven segments. Life is happening as one big whole. But the intellect needs classification. Without classification, your intellect cannot perceive. The nature of the intellect is to discern. Without the ability to discern, your intellect is a useless piece of machinery.

Discernment is a very important instrument to survive in the world, but it is not at all a good thing if you want to swallow the cosmos, which means you want the cosmos to become a part of you or to disappear into you. If you are discerning, which planet would you like to leave out? Discernment is about what you want and what you do not want, what you like and what you do not like; what is good and what is bad; what is high and what is low; what is god and what is devil.

Enlightenment is when you light up everything in such a way that everything looks the same to you. You do not want to discern anything. Light and darkness are the same experience to you. There is no distinction for you. Enlightenment means that you are lit from inside, so you cannot see darkness anywhere.

Beyond Color

We are talking about a dimensionless dimension, but for the sake of the intellect, we are categorizing. You should not start taking positions, in the sense of, "I'm the Anahata kind," or, "I'm the Vishuddhi kind," like people say, "I'm a coffee person," or, "I'm a tea person." Or when they wake up in the morning, they say, "I'm a morning person." This is not about getting identified. If you want to do specific things, you can discern different qualities. But if you want to know the very nature of existence, there is a dimension called vairagya or vairaga. "Vai" means beyond,

and "raga" means color. Something that is beyond color is colorless. The word "colorless" in English has negative connotations, such as being lifeless or lacking vibrance, but vairagya is not colorless in that sense.

We are talking about colorless as being beyond color. That which has no color is transparent. Transparency enables you to see. It is colorless air that sustains you. Suppose the air turned blue, you would not be able to see anymore. You may like the blue color in the air for some time, but then you would want to clear the blue and see again. Becoming colorless, or being beyond color, means to have a clear vision. Your vision is not clouded by colors. There are many things which are referred to by their color – rivers for example, such as the Blue Nile, the Yellow River, or the Red River. This does not mean the water as such is blue, yellow, or red – it is the soil that it carries that makes it appear as being of a certain color.

If you are beyond color, you fit into any place perfectly well, because you yourself are colorless, without attributes. Now, if there is a blue background, you turn blue; if there is a red background, you turn red. You will not be felt anywhere as a resistance. You are absolutely merging with whatever is there at any given moment. So we are talking about seven dimensions that are like seven colors. There is nothing wrong with refracting the light, but if you are in refracted light all the time, you will have a distorted vision of life.

Sadhguru : Ranked amongst the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a Yogi, mystic, visionary and a New York Times bestselling author. Sadhguru has been conferred the Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India in 2017, the highest annual civilian award, accorded for exceptional and distinguished service. He is also the founder of the world's largest people's movement, Conscious Planet – Save Soil, which has touched over 4 billion people.

Social Awareness of Allamaprabhu

- Dr. C.R. Yaravintelimath

Allamaprabhu reached the Aikya state very early in life, and stayed in it for long. But he realized that as long as one possesses body one owes an obligation to the society in which one lives. He also realized that one's spiritual perfection should not be confined to the individual only, and that it should benefit the society as a whole. Though he did not live among the masses, unlike Basavanna, he did support all the welfare projects launched by Basavanna. As the President of the Anubhava Mantapa, he stood by Basavanna in his total revolution meant for the upliftment of mankind.

He was with Basavanna when he pleaded the cause of woman's freedom and equality. The Vedic religion had treated woman inhumanly, depriving her of all the opportunities to develop herself socially as well as spiritually. It had treated her as an impurity and kept her outside the sphere of all religious activities. Considering her Maya, it thought she would be an obstacle to man's spiritual progress. Again it was the Vedic religion that denied her status on a par with man. Allamaprabhu thought that woman was not Maya; it was man's own desire that dangled always before his mind. So he said:

*"They say gold is Maya,
Woman Maya and land Maya .
But gold is no Maya, neither woman is Maya,
nor land Maya.
The desire dangling before
one's mind alone is Maya,
Look, O Guheshwara!"*

It is neither gold, nor woman, nor land that comes in the way of man's spiritual progress. It is, in fact, the desire that possesses and pollutes the mind. This new thinking about woman paved the way for improving her lot by giving her freedom of speech; freedom of thought and action, and freedom of practicing the religion of her choice. During the Vedic period and down the ages, woman was denied the sacred thread which was a mark of purity and sanctity and a license to pursue the study of religious texts. The Lingayat religion opened the door of opportunities to woman by allowing her to undergo Linga initiation. Thereby women got the right of getting invested with the Ishtalinga and were allowed to seek salvation through spiritual practice. As a result of this innovation in the field of religion, a large number of women reached the highest stage in the scale of spiritual perfection. Most of them were from the downtrodden and deprived class. They rose to such a spiritual height that women like

Mahadeviyakka and Muktayakka could even challenge Allamaprabhu, when no man dared to do. But for the whole-hearted support of Allamaprabhu, the socio-religious revolution would not have been successful.

In 12th century Karnataka, superstition, which was rampant, was a menace to both individual and society. Allamaprabhu had no patience with superstitious persons. So he mercilessly lashes at them, whenever he gets an opportunity. And he does it with the heart of a compassionate father, intending to redeem them. He criticizes the worshipping of mud, stone, tree, winnowing pan, visit to places of pilgrimage, observance of vows and rigid rules (*Sheela*). He argues that when God is in the body, and is worn on the body in the form of Ishtalinga and is worshipped on the palm, there is no need for worshipping the idols installed in temples. When the courtyard of a devotee is as sacred as a holy place, there is no need to undertake a pilgrimage to so-called holy places.

*"It is like villagers offering rice and oil,
saying –
'O Mother Mari, come and save my son's
head.'
They call him a Bhakta who worships
the Ishtalinga in his hand
with wild leaves and flowers.
But he is no true Bhakta.
He alone is a true Bhakta who
worships himself as Linga,
with his own heart-flower,
O Guheshwara."*

The common run of people and fake devotees toil and moil during the day for eking out their daily bread and for appeasing their passions at night. They hardly find any time for thinking about

God. They blindly imitate others in doing perfunctory things. Some even practice the Six-fold Sthala, not knowing its right path. Also they resort to superstitious practices like getting one's head shaved, and taking a dip in the so-called holy ponds.

*"They toil and moil throughout the day
for food.
They toil and moil throughout night
to appease their passions.
On seeing those who eat, they too eat.
They visit holy places and talk of
the eight-fold offering and the sixteenfold
service.
But not knowing the secret of
getting the hidden treasure ,
all those well-versed in the Six-fold Sthala,
passed away, O Guheshwara."
(L.O.C., V.1604)*

Allamaprabhu dislikes observance of vows and rigid rules and criticizes the blind practitioners of vows and rigid rules as they are bound to go to hell:

*"They do not know how
water came to be discriminated
as river water, well water and tank water.
How can those who are sheela-bound and
are born blind, and observe vows and rules
one after another, besides uttering swearing
words,
know You, O Guheshwara?"*

Allamaprabhu further ridicules such ones as keep vows of milk, ghee, gram, water, flower, etc., and says that these false devotees are going to be born next time as cat, horse, frog, and honey bee respectively:

*He who observes
the vow of offering milk,
will be born a cat.
He who observes*

*the vow of offering horse gram,
will be born a horse.
He who observes
the vow of offering holy water,
will be born a frog.
He who observes
the vow of offering flowers,
will be born a bee.
These practices are outside
the scope of the Six-fold Stage.
Guheshwara does not like those
whose devotion is not true."*

Worshipping of petty deities like Mari and Masani, supposed to be graveyard goddesses, was quite common when religion had become a dark house of superstitions:

*"Here and there people talk
each naming one god:
god of fire, god of burning coal;
goddess Mari, goddess of the graveyard,
and begging god, O Sir.
By worshipping You I became
Child-less and birth-less, and
falling into the Void of voids,
I lost myself,
O Guheshwara."*

Allamaprabhu pities those who are wasting their life, which is a precious gift of God. People are after material things, not knowing why they are brought into this world. They are after such things -- gold, woman and land—as lead one to perdition. Their greed for such things knows no bounds. Millions of people lay down their lives for the sake of material wealth. But there is hardly any time left for them to think of God. There is not even a single person who is willing to die for the sake of God, who is their saviour.

*"Millions died, desiring worldly things;
millions died, being victims of temptations;
millions died for woman's sake;*

*millions died for land's sake.
But none do I see that dies for Your sake,
O Guheshwara."*

Knowledge without action is useless. People become literate and read tomes after tomes of knowledge, and acquire abundant knowledge. They read holy scriptures, learn them by rote. Also they are proud of their acquisition. But they do not know what true knowledge is. Not knowing what it is, they talk of it, and even debate over it non-stop. Mere talking philosophy will not lead one to salvation. Those who boast of their dry as dust knowledge are ruined by their pride and fake knowledge.

*"They are puffed up with pride
of having known all Shastras.
They use their elder's instruction
of Monism in learned debates.
But they do not know their gain and loss.
They do not know what is true devotion
and right way to deliverance.
And yet they enter into debate over devotion,
the right way to deliverance.
They become a prey to Mari,
O Guheshwara!"*

Educating the youth, it seems, was a problem in the past too, as it is in the present. From age to age moral norms and values are seen falling gradually. As such, the bond between Guru and Shishya (disciple) has shockingly changed from bad to worse. Through the ages moral values have deteriorated. In the Kritayuga, a disciple used to look upon his Guru with awe and reverence and serve him with utmost humility. If a pupil committed any mistake, he would be corrected by his Guru using the cane, and it was the practice of the time. Such corporal punishment by the Guru was regarded by the disciple as a matter of great grace. In the Tretayuga,

Guru gave instruction to his pupils by chiding them. Guru's chiding was regarded as a great grace. In the Dwaparayuga, the Guru taught lessons to his disciples by brow-beating them. The Guru's brow-beating the disciple was taken in the right spirit, and it was indeed a great grace. But coming to the Kaliyuga, we find altered relation in an altogether altered situation. It is the disciple who enjoys the highest privilege, and instead of the disciple saluting the Guru, the Guru has to salute his disciple! It is the effect of the Kaliyuga in which moral values have totally deteriorated and turned turtle. The situation is worst. The Guru has lost his esteem and position. If a teacher chides a student, let alone beating him, complaint is lodged against him by the student and parents. It is made a public issue. Allamaprabhu is pained to notice such altered situation in society. So he deplors the loss of moral norms and values:

*"If in the Kritayuga, the Guru used cane
to teach wisdom to his pupil,
I deemed it good grace, O Sir!
If in the Tretayuga, the Guru scolded his pupil
to teach him wisdom,
I deemed it good grace, O Sir!
If in the Dwaparayuga, the Guru offered threat
to his pupil
to teach him wisdom,
I deemed it good grace, O Sir!
If in the Kaliyuga, the Guru bowed down to
his pupil
to teach him wisdom,
I deemed it good grace, O Sir!
I wondered at the instructions
You prescribed from time to time,
O Guheshwara!"* (L.O.C., V.52)

In modern times, teachers themselves are greatly responsible for the deterioration of moral values, as they have lost their high

image which, in the past, used to command respect. They have failed to set high models before their pupils through their own examples. For that, they needs must be free from blemish, which, unfortunately, they are not. For any society to develop, its members should be men of sterling character. They should maintain their character by remedying their defects in the form of the six-fold enemy: desire, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and envy. There is a triple town of demons in our body which needs must be burnt before attaining salvation:

*"When there is a triple town called body,
mind and wealth,
what is it that you call 'sheela, sheela'.
Unless your body is smeared with ashes
By burning the triple town,
There is no sheela, look,
O Guheshwara."*

Allamaprabhu laughs at the Sheelavantas whose devotion is not genuine. A true devotee does not bother about *sheela*. What is most important is his integral devotion. Just as a woman, who is denied true conjugal happiness turns into a harlot, a devotee, who is not sincere in his piety, turns into a Sheelavanta. Allamaprabhu lashes at such fake devotees in the following Vachana:

*"A woman, who does not know
true sexual pleasures,
became a harlot.
A devotee who does not know Linga
became a worldly ritualist.
Is there happiness for this harlot?
Is there any goal for this ritualist?
Look, O Guheshwara,
how these perished."*

Allamaprabhu criticizes those learned

scholars whose inner conduct is not in keeping with their knowledge and garb. They are well-read, no doubt. Outwardly, they look devout, but they are actually beggars, who beg at the doors of rich people. In fact, they are no more than door-keepers at rich persons' door. They are Laxmi's watch dogs:

*"Those who are well-read
in Veda, Shastra, Purana and Agama, and
don the outer garb of Vibhuti and Rudrakshi,
are elders observing rules rigidly.
They are like the mud doll that waits
at the door of those
who give them food and clothing.
If you ask why, it is like this:
"The elders versed in Veda, Agama, and
Shastra
are servants waiting at the door of him
who is elderly in wealth," it is said.
So all elders are door keepers at Goddess
Laxmi's door,
O Guheshwara!"*

Allamaprabhu does not like those who find fault with the thing given to manage.

Whatever task is entrusted, he should complete it without complaining and without grudging. He, who cannot ride a given horse, can never manage any job-horse. So in Allamaprabhu's eyes he is good for nothing; he cannot accomplish anything in life.

*"Those who do not know how to ride
the horse that is given, but ask for another,
are neither brave nor bold.
The three worlds labour and sweat
carrying the saddle on their back,
O Guheshwara."*

Allamaprabhu's social awareness speaks of his genuine concern for community development. There is no point in arguing that he, living in isolation, did not care for the society around him, as his sole object was self-realization. The fact that he toured around the country to redeem mankind is enough to prove that he was genuinely interested in the welfare of common humanity.

He who has greed
Will be subordinate to others;
He who knows the apex
Of his greedy mind,
Assures our oarsman Choudayya
Abides beyond the reach of Kailasa.
As long as greed persists
One cannot but rely on others.
Such a greed is irksome
Greed itself is serfdom
Freedom from greed is lordship
To weigh the odds between the two
And remain free from greed
Is lordship indeed, O Urilinga
Peddipriya Vishveshvara

• **Urilinga Peddi**

(Tr. Prof. Armando Menezes)

The Idea of Sharana in Christianity and Islam

- Dr. Uma Ram and K.S. Ram

A *Sharana*, as the very word suggests, is a refugee – a spiritual refugee. He is a person who has taken refuge in Shiva. The *Sharana* has no will of his own; he is subservient to the Will of Shiva. The *Sharana* has unreservedly surrendered to Shiva's Will. This is not a helpless surrender; it is a matter of conscious choice and informed acceptance. The *Sharana* revels in the fact that he is a refugee. Shiva may shower upon him joy or sorrow: the *Sharana* accepts both without demur. The *Sharana* does not plan and provide for his future; he trusts Shiva to take care of that. Whatever the future will unfold is simply the Will of Shiva. How can the *Sharana* have any issue with that? In living always faithfully in the Will of Shiva – the *Sharana* practises true religion.

This way of life for a seeker is not limited to any particular faith. It belongs to every true faith, every true religion. The seeming differences are merely superficial. The differences in nomenclature either for the Supreme Lord or for the devotee, are irrelevant. The essence remains the same. The idea of *Sharana* belongs as much to, say, Christianity and Islam, as to Veerashaivism. Let us briefly examine this, considering just the two basic prayers of each of these two religions.

The fundamental prayer of Christians is what is popularly known as the Lord's Prayer. It was given by none other than Jesus himself to his followers. It appears in two of the four Gospels in the Holy Bible. In the Gospel according to Matthew, it appears as 6:9-11, as part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. In the Gospel according to Luke, it appears as 11:2-4. There are minor differences in the two versions, as also in the versions used by some denominations of Christians. The version according to Matthew is more commonly used. It is included in the school prayer in most Christian Mission schools in India. The prayer is brief, but every word is loaded with significance. It begins with, 'Our Father, which (who) art in Heaven...' and ends with, 'Amen!' It could be quoted in full here:

*Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
And the glory, for ever. Amen.*

The line most relevant to our purpose here, is: 'Thy Will be done!' This is just what any true *Sharana* would say: May your Will prevail, O Lord! Thy (implying, 'your; not mine') Will be done! The *Sharana's* duty lies in joyously accepting God's Will with a bowed head, uttering just one, soft word: Amen! This word is Hebrew for 'So be it!'

It is not for a *Sharana* to question the Will of Shiva. It is not for him to raise queries of 'if' and 'but'. If a *Sharana* does so, he betrays that he is still unripe, immature. His devotion is still conditional. He betrays the fact that he will accept the Will of Shiva, provided it is in sync with his own will! In other words, he calls himself a *Sharana*, but in fact likes to impose his will on God! This is gross error. It verges on sin.

All that has been said above with regard to God, applies to the Sadguru as well. Because, as the Vedas declare, a devotee must hold God and the Sadguru at par.

Another interesting line in the Lord's Prayer, is, 'Give us this day our daily bread'. Two points relevant to *Sharanas* are contained in this. One, the devotee is praying only for bread (which is essential for sustenance to pursue the true purposes of life) and not for any other comfort(s) and luxuries. This is minimalism, the hallmark of a *Sharana*. Secondly, even with regard to bread, the devotee is praying only for the 'daily bread', nothing more than that. This implies living from day to day, without stocking up for future. This is *aparigraha*, another hallmark of a *Sharana*. Stocking up food for the future implies a lack of faith in Shiva's provision. Such existential fear (*bhava bhaya*) is unwarranted in a *Sharana*, and would amount to insulting Shiva.

Jesus exhorts his followers not to indulge in 'repetition' and 'much speaking'

when praying. He says this is the way of hypocrites. Prayer should be private, and there should be no drama and no petition to God for grant of things of the world, because, as Jesus puts it, 'Your Father (God) knows what your needs are even before you express them. Prayer must be simply quiet communion with God, to recall His glories and to thankfully praise Him for that. This advice would be apt for a *Sharana* as well. It would be pertinent in this context to quote the great *Sharana*, Sarvajna's picture of a hypocrite:

*If a liar stands facing a shrine,
Holding his head up, joining his hands high,
That's the height of his lies, Sarvajna.*

II

Akin to the 'God' in the Holy Bible, 'Allah' in the Holy Koran is the Supreme Power without a persona, without any attributes. He is what the Vedas would call *Shudha Bramhan*. He is *Satya Sankalpa*, True Resolve. He does not have to do any action; He simply has to say, *be it thus*, and it happens accordingly, instantly. All the glories of Allah of the Holy Koran and God of the Holy Bible apply to Shiva as well. The names differ, and that is irrelevant because all names belong to Him with equal perfection.

The gist of the Holy Koran is encapsulated in the invocation, called the *Al Fatiha*, The Opening. This is the fundamental prayer of Muslims across the world. It is also called the Lord's Prayer of the Muslims. As Pickthall observes, 'It is an essential part of all Muslim worship, public and private, and no solemn contract or transaction is complete unless it is recited.' It is brief but loaded with meaning, and may be quoted in full:

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

*Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds:
The Beneficent, the Merciful:*

Owner of the Day of Judgement.

*Thee (alone) we worship; Thee (alone) we ask
for help.*

Show us the straight path:

*The path of those whom Thou hast favoured;
Not (the path)*

*of those who earn Thine anger nor of those
who go astray.*

The very first line implies submission to the Will of God. In fact, the word 'Islam' in Arabic means submission to God's Will, which is the dharma of every *Sharana*. Four epithets are used for Allah here: the Beneficent, the Merciful, Lord of the Worlds, and, lastly, Owner of the Day of Judgement. Each of these applies to Shiva as well. This is not to draw the resemblance between two powers. Rather, it is to emphasize the Oneness of God, hailed by various names. There are no two powers. The next line, 'Thee (alone) we worship' is not to proclaim allegiance to a particular God; it is to emphasize the Oneness, *ananyata*. Sarvajna mocks the habit of some people who install wayside rocks and worship them. The last line refers to the 'Straight Path'; *Sharanas* may like to call it the *Sharana Patha*. Islam categorises its followers into three types: those on the 'straight path' who win the grace of Allah; those that defiantly tread the path of inequity and earn God's wrath; and, lastly, those that are deep in error and take paths that lead them astray.

Before closing this article, it would be relevant to recall the Muslim practice of using the caveat, *insha'llah*, whenever they make any statement or commitment. The term simply translates as, 'God-willing'. A

true *Sharana* may not utter this term aloud, but in his thought he has it always. There is an interesting background to how this caveat became an essential part of Muslim speak.

The Holy Koran consists of sections or cantos called Surahs. These were revealed in instalments to the Prophet Mohammed by divine spirits in the holy month of Ramzan. Prophet The Jewish rabbis felt that these inspired surahs were picked by the Prophet from their ancient texts, and being passed off as divine revelations to himself. They knew that Mohammed was illiterate. Nonetheless, they suspected him of plagiarism. They were keen to expose him. A 'test' was therefore planned. The Prophet was queried about a story of some youth who entered a cave. This was a story in an obscure Jewish scripture. The rabbis were confident that the Prophet could never have access to this text. The query was raised, and the Prophet, in a rare instance of presumption, agreed to narrate the tale the following day, without adding the caveat, *insha'llah*, God willing. However, the expected revelation did not happen, neither the following day nor for several days. Finally, when it came, it came with an admonition, never to presume the grace of God when making commitments.

The above story would apply in toto to any *Sharana*, as to all seekers - never to take the grace of God or the Sadguru for granted.

He who cannot look upon all others as equals is not fit to be a saint. A true saint does not belong to any caste or religion.

• **Jagadguru Dr. Sri Shivarathri
Rajendra Mahaswamiji**

Adi Shankaracharya

- Sri G.K. Nambiar

Adi Shankara was born to Kaippilly Shivapura Namboothri and Aryamba Antharjanam at his mother's house Melpazhur Veliyanad area. He was moved to his father's house Kaippillymana in Kaladi after three years. Shankara lost his father at his early age. According to British historians he was born in 788 CE and attained liberation in 820 CE. Kanchi Mutt records say that his birth was in 4th Century CE.

By the age of 8, he knew all the Vedas by heart. Shankara was longing to take Sanyasa at that tender age. But his mother, was against that idea. Once while taking bath at Periyar river, along with his mother, a crocodile caught him on the leg. He requested his mother to allow him to take Sanyasa so that the crocodile would release him. Mother permitted him to become a saint, He promised his mother that he would come back at the time of her departure and went to north in search of his Guru.

Shankara met Govinda Bhagavatpada, disciple of Gaudapada, on the banks of river Narmada who accepted Shankara as his disciple. Three years he stayed with his Guru and learned all the scriptures. Govinda Bhagavatpada advised Shankara to write commentary on *Brahmasutra* and propagate the Advaita doctrine.

Then he went to Kashi. While going to Kashi Vishvanatha Temple a person appeared to be low caste came with four dogs from the opposite side. Shankara's disciples asked the man to move away. The so called low caste man asked as to who should move away, whether this perishable body or the imperishable Atma? At that moment Shankara realized that the man was Lord Shiva himself and the four dogs with him were the four Vedas. Shankara prostrated to Lord Shiva and chanted five verses extolling Shiva namely *Manisha panchakam*. As instructed by Lord Shiva, in the form of a Jyothy he went to Badari and wrote commentary to Brahmasutra. He renovated the Narayana temple at Badari and established a proper ritualistic worship system there. He appointed a Namboothri family from Kerala as the priest of the temple known as *Ravaljis*. Later on he established a Peetha at Joshi Mutt (Jyotir Mutt) and installed Thotakacharya as the head of the Peetha.

Adi Shankara went to Kumarila Bhatta, a renowned scholar, for philosophical debate. Kumarila Bhatta had studied Buddhism from his Guru without disclosing his identity and intention. In order to atone for the sin he consigned himself to death by slow burning in the smoldering heap of husk. Kumarila Bhatta advised Shankara to meet his disciple

Mandana Mishra at Mahishmati of Bihar and hold the debate with him. Shankara engaged in a debate with Mandana Mishra for fifteen continuous days. When Mandan Mishra conceded defeat his wife Ubaya Bharati asked Shankara on *Kamasutra*. Shankara did not have any answers to those questions. Ubaya Bharati advised him to return after acquiring experiences in this regard. Shankara advised his disciples to protect his body for one month. And his soul entered the dead body of a king and lived with his queen and gained experience in *Kamasutra*. Then he came back and continued the debate with Ubaya Bharati and won the debate. Ubaya Bharati allowed Mandan Mishra to take Sanyasa who took the name as Sureshwaracharya and became Shankara's disciple. Shankara then travelled to Maharastra, Srishailam, Gokarna, Kollur and Shringeri. At Gokarna he converted Ganapathya's to Vedic mode of life. At Kollur he made dumb boy as his disciple and restored him the name Hastamalakacharya. At Shringeri he established Sharada Peetha and installed Sureshvaracharya as Peethadhipati. He travelled all over India and Nepal and propagated the doctrine of Advaita. He entered into debate with those who believed in different doctrines of Hinduism as well as Buddhist monks and Jain Munis and won them over and made them his disciples. In Sourashtra he visited the temples at Jimar, Somanath and Prabhasa and spread the Vedic philosophy. He reached Dwaaraka and established Dwaraka Peetha and installed Padmapadacharya as the peethadhipati. He also established Govardhan Peetha at Puri and installed Hastamalakacharya as the Peethadhipati. Shankara then defeated Bhatta Bhaskara of Ujjain in debate who was the proponent of Bhedabheda philosophy. Then he defeated

the Jain saints at Sahalika and Navagupta at Kamarupa. Then he went to Kashmir and defeated all the scholars at Sharada Peetha temple (in Present Pakistan) and ascended the Sarvajna Peetha.

True to his promise he came to his mother at Kaladi before her death. He composed *Matru Panchakam* at the time of her death and conducted her last rites. Adi Shankara attained the Samadhi at the age of 32 years, it is commonly believed that he disappeared walking to the snow clad mountains at Kedar in the Himalayas. There is a Samadhi Mandira of Shankara at Kedar. However the people of Shankara Math at Thrissur of Kerala believe that Adi Shankara attains samdhi at Vadakumnatha temple at Thrissur. The people of Kanchi Shankara Math believe that Kanchi Shankara Math was his base camp and attained Samadhi there.

Adi Shankara is also known as Shanmatha Sthapaka- Six forms of gods for worships - Shiva, Vishnu, Devi, Ganesha, Kartikeyan and visible god Surya. He was against animal sacrifice in Devi temples. He reduced the anger of Kali by installing "Srichakra". He suggested to perform the sacrifice symbolically by using white Pumpkin.

Adi Shankara's story is not written down by anybody. It is recreated based on his books and records of the Peethas established by him and on the legend, He has written down commentaries on *Prasthantrayi*, *Brahmasutra*, *Bhagavadgeeta* and *Dashopanishad*, *Vishnu Sahasranama*, *Sanal Sujadiyams*, *Viveka Chudamani*, various *stotram* etc., To get respect and acceptability many books are added to the list supposed to have been written by him. In the same way many irrational and superstitious rituals and Tantrik practices of certain sects were attributed to Adi Shankara to get

respectability and acceptance. One should be careful and reject that claim if it is not rational.

There are mainly four different schools of philosophies in Hinduism. They are Dvaita, Vishistadvaita, Advaita and Dvaitadvaita. Madhavacharya was the exponent of Dvaita, Ramanuja of Vishishtadvaita, Adi Shankara of Advaita and Basaveshvara of Dvaitadvaita. The sum and substance of these philosophies can be summarized as follows. Dvaita believes Atma and Paramatma are different. Even on getting Mukti Atma remains as a separate entity in Vishnuloka. Vishistadvaita says Atma and Paramatma are different but on getting Mukti Atma will merge with Paramatma. Dvaitadvaita is a combination of Advaita and Vishishtadvaita. It is also known as Shakti Vishishtadvaita. They do not believe that Atma and Paramatma are same and universal. Jeeva is created by Shiva using his special power known as Prakruti. It is potentially not Shiva or Paramatma but on getting Mukti Jeevatma will merge with Paramatma. They do not believe in caste and varna. They do not have the temple culture, they believe in the equality of woman. They do not believe in the Maya Theory of Shankara. Prakruti is also known as Maya which prevents Jeeva from knowing the ultimate truth. One can overcome the Maya and realize the truth only with the blessings of Shiva.

Advaita believes Atma and Paramatma are same and universal. The average life of a man is based on Dvaita. Therefore Dvaita and Vishistadvaita are the stepping stones to reach Advaita. Shankara realized the importance of Dvaita for the common man and approved the same. The Dvaitites do not believe in Advaita but an Advaititee

believes in the importance of Dvaita philosophy. Advaita is like wave and ocean or Khadakasha and Mahakasha. Water in the wave is same as water in the ocean. Akasha in the pot and the sky is same. When the wave subsides it becomes ocean. Wave is one of the attributes of the ocean. Whatever is there in the wave is there in the ocean. But whatever is there in the ocean is not there in the wave. Sky in the pot and Mahakasha are same. Once the pot is broken Khadakasha becomes Mahakasha. Nirguna Brahman, the pure energy without any shape or form, becomes saguna Brahman, qualified consciousness with shape and form. Saguna Brahman has two parts Purusha and Prakruti which coexist like two sides of the same coin. They are inseparable. Purusha is invisible where as life force or creative force prakruti is visible.

The visible universe is not created by Brahma but it is prakruti, the part of it, the saguna Brahma itself. A second entity is required for Brahman to create something. When there is no second entity Brahman cannot create anything. Therefore the visible universe is also part of Brahma.

All the Mahavakya's state the same thing. *Sarva Akhilam Brahman* -everything is Brahman. *Ekameva advitiam* - Brahman is single and incomparable and without a second entity. *Ayam Atma Brahman* - All the visible objects are Brahman. Creation and comparison is possible only if there is a second one. Therefore there is no creation. All visible and invisible world is Brahman. *Aham Brahmasmi* - I am the Brahman. *Tatwamasi* - what you are looking for is within you. *Yidam sarvam yadaya Atma* - Everything is Atma. *Prajnanam Brahman* - Knowledge is Brahman. *Brahma veda Brahma why Bhavati*. Those who realise Brahman will become Brahman.

Philosophers on the Dynamics of Right Knowledge

- Dr. G.M. Tungesh

Basavanna

The proper use of philosophy (*darshana*) is to put an end to pain or suffering. The path which leads to the end of suffering is nothing but acquiring 'right knowledge'. The *Philosophers* of the western world and the *Darshanikas* or social reformers of the east, first raised many important questions about right knowledge and wisdom. In one of his *Vachanas* (*divine songs*), Basavanna regards the importance of right knowledge in human life as follows:

Jnanadabaladindaajnanakedu nodayya

*Jyotiyabaladinda tamandhada kedu nodayya
Satyadabaladinda asatyada kedu nodayya
Parushadabaladinda avalohadakedu nodayya
Koodala sangana sharanara anubhaavadinda
Enna bhavadakedu nodayya.*

Basavanna

The paraphrase of the text is: the power of knowledge drives the ignorance away; appearance of light drives the darkness away; truth drives the untruth away; the touch of the alchemic gem turns away metal into gold; with exposure to devotee's experience and mysticism, the materialism goes away.

In the process of gaining knowledge, we

seek to examine ourselves and must go beyond ourselves. There are so many fountains of wisdom and plenitude available to the mankind. It is said that man / woman usually thinks and acts from their perimeter or fixed patterns. Great philosophers suggest that the man's aim in philosophy is to understand life from greater wisdom, that is, to go beyond the fixed patterns of thinking or from their perimeter.

The word *anumana* means inference. It is defined as using reason to draw a new conclusion and truth from one or more observations and prior truths. An example of *anumana* is noticing smoke and assuming there is fire. This is a legitimate and practical method of gaining knowledge in all but one of the Hindu philosophies. Indian texts describe the inference process as having three components: *pratijna* (hypothesis), *hetu* (a reason), and *drshtanta* (examples).

Vaisheshika school of Hindu Philosophy, explains the method of liberation or moksha, it also explains that root cause of pain is lack of knowledge, *moksha* implies complete freedom from pain, agrees that the nature of the universe as such. This school attempts to identify,

inventory, and classify the entities and their relations that present themselves to human perceptions. It lists six categories of being (padarthas), to which was later added a seventh, they are: Dravya or substance, the substratum that exists independently of all other categories, and the material cause of all compound things produced from it, such dravyas are earth, water, fire, air, ether, time, space, spirit and mind; Guna or quality, which in turn is subdivided into twenty-four species; Karma or action that explains both guna and karma inhere within dravya cannot exist independently of it; Samanya, or genus, which denotes characteristic similarities that allow two or more objects to be classed together. *vishesha*, or specific difference, which singles out an individual of that class. Samavaya, or inherence, which indicates things inseparably connected. To these six was later added **abhava**, nonexistence or absence. Though negative in content, the impression it makes is positive; one has a perception of an absence where one misses something. Four such absences are recognised; previous absence, as of a new product; later absence, as of a destroyed object; total absence, as of color in the wind; and reciprocal absence, as of a jar and a cloth, neither of which is the other.

Only a way to experience sat-chit-ananda, the true essence of God (truth) is to have an open mindedness to invite him to enter into our hearts. The first step is to look into ourselves what is already filled in our hearts. An individual is surrounded by the world with materialistic pleasures and with the pattern of materialism. An immediate need is to empty the soul which is filled with worldly pleasures and materialism. The man should experience the power of true knowledge first, which drives away his ignorance. The power of knowledge is

just like how light drives away the darkness, and the truth that erases untruth. The right knowledge is necessary to step out from the 'ignorance' which leads all sorts of misery and sadness. Reading and / or listening to the experiences of mystics and social reformers would help the seeker of the truth.

Kant on Knowledge

According to Immanuel Kant, German Philosopher, 'knowledge' always appears in the form of judgements, in which something is affirmed or denied, not every judgement is knowledge. Not all synthetic judgements give us knowledge, some are derived from experience, and they inform us that an object has such and such properties but not that it must have these qualities. The possibility of human knowledge must presuppose active participation from the human mind. Using systematically the synthetic a priori judgements, we can learn a great deal about the structure of the phenomenal world of ideas. Kant says, "**We see things not as they are in themselves but we see them as they appear to us**". He says that, knowledge proper is a joint product of sense and understanding. The material is supplied by the sense are ordered and synthesized into cognitive statements by the *a priori* form of the mind. He makes a sharp distinction between sensing and thinking or understanding. Sensing is passive, and understanding is active or spontaneous. Sense supplies the matter and understanding connects the discrete data into judgements.

Knowledge presupposes a mind. We cannot think without having something to think about, and we can have no object of thought unless it is given through the senses, unless the mind is receptive or has

sensibility. Knowledge would be impossible without sensation or perception and thinking or understanding. These two presuppositions of knowledge are fundamentally different, but supplement to each other. Percepts and concepts constitute the elements of all knowledge. Percepts without concepts are blind, concepts without percepts are empty. All that the intellect can do is to elaborate what is given by sensibility.

According to Kant, we cannot have universal and necessary or a priori knowledge of anything non-perceptible. Hence we cannot have a metaphysic that transcends experience, a metaphysic of things-in-themselves, a metaphysic that can offer us genuine knowledge of a non-phenomenal world- freedom of will, immortality of soul and God. But we can have a priory science of the phenomenal order.

People often confuse phenomena with noumena and this will lead to error and illusion involving principles of the understanding, Kant calls this 'transcendental illusion'. A careful examination of the arguments of metaphysics will reveal a lot of logical fallacies, equivocations and contradictories. We can never represent the idea of an absolute totality in the form of an image; it is a problem without a solution and these ideas have their value and use as guides to the understanding, they lead it onward in its pursuit of knowledge.

Hegel's Dialectal Method

According to Hegel, German philosopher, ultimate reality or the universe is an *absolute mind* or *spirit* which passes through stages of development in time, and becomes conscious of itself in the human reason. The absolute is timeless,

eternal, and all embracing and self-completed whole. His idealism is famous for its dialectal method, according to which the Absolute unfolds itself through the triple steps of thesis, antithesis and synthesis.

The structure of reality can be understood by analyzing human thought, the invisible dialectic aims to control both the conflict and the resolution of differences, and then lead everyone involved into a new cycle of conflicts.

Dialectic method is a philosophical method to explain a dynamic and evolving world. The dialectic method tries to explain this world of change and evolution in terms of unchangeable ideas. To understand this method, we need to reflect upon the first triad of Being-non Being- Becoming.

Buddha on right knowledge

Lord Buddha in *Dhammapada* says that, "blessed are they who speak in sympathy and gently to all, who do away with bitter words and never speak in anger or in hate!". Here, he stresses the need of right knowledge for better life.

The Buddha is neither a god, messenger of god nor a reincarnation of god. He is the one who has reached the pinnacle of spiritual life by his own self effort without the guidance of any teacher. He discovered the law of nature in all its dimensions. He is a torch bearer who could lead the entire existence towards the ultimate truth called *Nibbana* (liberation).

The Buddha told people to follow a special way of life called the *Noble Eightfold Path* if they want to understand the *Four Noble Truths*. These are:

1. Appropriate views: Know and understand the Four Noble Truths

2. Appropriate thought: Turn your mind away from the world and towards the Dharma
3. Appropriate speech: Tell the truth, don't gossip, and don't talk badly about others
4. Appropriate conduct: Don't commit evil acts, like killing, stealing, or living an unclean life
5. Appropriate livelihood: Earn your money in a way that doesn't harm anyone
6. Appropriate effort: Work to make your mind more good and less evil
7. Appropriate mindfulness: Remember the Dharma and apply it all the time
8. Appropriate meditation: Practice meditation as a way of understanding reality

Right speech, according to the Buddha, is, "Man should control his speech by right

resolve". Right speech means avoidance of false or unlikeable speech or criticism. Every man should avoid bad speech and adopt a good one. One word which calms the mind is better than innumerable meaningless words.

Considering the great visions of these philosophers, it may be said that in several philosophical traditions a common thought is, "that philosophy teaches us to consider our lives as if they are works of art and provide us with the methods needed to reform and fashion a life accordingly.

All these philosophical ideas of Basavanna and the philosophers of other faith systems on gaining right knowledge, and thereby leading meaningful life, are not contrary but complementary to each other, their ideas appear in various philosophical discourses available in the academic world. Those philosophical texts are waiting for the readers indeed.

Before us lies a chance for peace. If lost or wasted, the plotter against it will bear the curse of humanity, and the curse of history.

• **Anwar Sadat**
(Former President of Egypt)

For every beautiful painting,
There is the most wondrous creation called nature.
For every great tune composed
There are several melodious tunes sung by many a bird
For every great epic poem composed
There are scores of breathtaking life stories already led.
For every action done selflessly
There are trees, rivers and bees tirelessly working for nothing in return.
For every thought, creation or deed done is but
A poor copy of what already exists!
Pray, tell, what are we to be proud of?

• **Sri Shivananda**

The Dialectics of Vedanta Historiography

- Prof. V.N. Sheshagiri Rao

The word Vedanta means Upanisadic Philosophy. Veda means knowledge; anta means end or culmination of knowledge. Therefore Vedanta means the highest supreme knowledge.

In Hindu Philosophy there are systems of Vedanta like Advaita, Visistadvaita, Dvaita, Dvaitadvaita, Suddha Advaita etc.

The common text of all these Vedantic systems is the Prasthanatryi or the triple text viz. The Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavadgita. Shankara who popularized Advaita Vedanta, Ramanuja, Who rejuvenated Visistadvaita, Madhva (13th C) who founded Dvaita Vedanta, Nimitika (Dvaitadvaita) Vallabha (suddha Advaita) to have commented on the basis texts. But they have take different philosophical standpoints. All the systems are logical and cogent. It is a pleasant intellectual exercise to go through the polemics of those systems.

Shankara points the gist of Advaita Vedanta in a nutshell as under; Brahmas- atya jagan mithya, jiva Bhahmaiva na parah, (Brahman real is the world is an appearance and the individual self (Jiva) is essence, is the same as Brahman. It is not at all different from Brahman.

Brahman is sat, cit and ananda. It is non- dual consciousness. It is also called (Suddha

Caitanya) preconsciousness. Shankara would quote *Mandukya Upanishad* which testified to the Advaitic contention that consciousness is non-dual.

Shankara was an acute logician and was thorough rational. His refutation of the Samkhya prakriti-parinama vada is logical to the core. He refutes Pradhana as the material case of the universe. According to him world is maya; that is, it is neither Sat, not asat, but different from both. It is *Sadasat vilakshana* or *durnirupa*.

Ramanuja's system of Philosophy is called Visistadvaita. According to him Brahman is real. Jivatma is real and Jagat is also real. There are three real entities. Then how could it be Visista Advaita? He explains it by bringing in what is called Aprthak Siddhi or the inseparable relation between Brahman and Jivatma, on the one hand and Brahman and Jagat, on the other.

Ramanuja's polemical thought is really appreciable. To make his system logically strong, he turns his polemics against Advaita. His main objection is on the locus of Avidya, as contended by the Advaitic thinkers. Infact he has levelled against Advaita seven classical objections. It is really hard for the Advaitins to answer these objections.

Madhva's system of Philosophy is called Dvaita Vedanta. According to him the whole of existence can be classified into two: independent (Svatantra) and dependent (Paratantra). Only Brahman is independent: its Jiva and Jagat are entirely dependent on Brahman. Hence the system is called Dvaita. Madhvas polemics or dialectics against Advaita and Visistadvaita are worth considering. To consider some: (1) Madhva objects to the Advaitic contention that Brahman and Jiva are one and the same, and that there is no fundamental difference. This is untenable says Madhva, because Brahman is infinite whereas Jivatma is finite; Brahman is independent whereas Jivatma is dependent for its existence, knowledge and bliss. Brahman is ever free and is never bound; But the Jiva is limited and bound. Hence Brahman and Jivatma are different. In fact Madhva has postulated five-fold difference.

Again, Madhva objects to the Advaitic contention that Brahman is nirguna (attributeless). It is as good as dumb person coming before us and telling us that he is dumb. Even a small thing has qualities; then how about the mahavastu Brahman? It is full of infinite auspicious qualities. It is saguna and not nirguna. The world nirguna should be interpreted as being without qualities of prakriti.

Similarly Madhva objects to Visistadvaita conception of the invariable relation between Brahman and Jiva on the one hand and Brahman and Jagat on the other. The postulation of this inseparable relation makes Brahman imperfect and defective opines Madhva. Because the finitude and imperfection of Jiva and Jagat, will have to be shared by Brahman. Hence it is against the sanction of holy scriptures where always propound and propagate the

nirdoshatva (freedom from defects and imperfection) of Brahman.

Therefore Madhva thinks that the relation between Bhagavadgita and Jivatma is one of difference. But the postulation of difference does not mean that the Jiva and Jagat are left in the lurch. The Jivatma and Jagat are Ontologically different from Brahman, but being finites directly answer the control of Brahman or god.

It is said that and Indians did not have a sense of history. It is true. It is true in the case of philosophy etc. what made them, to be indifferent to history? Probably their contention is that philosophical ideal are more important than the "persons". Another problem with the ancients was that the art of documentation and presentation for the public did not, perhaps occur to them. In this sense Swamy Vivekananda says that the Vedantic truths and ideas are impersonal truths and it does not matter who spoke of them. Perhaps this devotion to truth, this sense of humility is at the back of the essence of history or historiography of the ancient Indians. Yet they preserved their writings on palm leaves and now history of philosophy is written on that basis.

Anyway the history of Indian Philosophy came to be written by many doyens like S.N. Dasappa, Radhakrishnan, Ranade and Belvalkar, C.D. Sharma, Mysore Hiriyanna, Datta and Chatterjee, Falcanberg, Max Miller, Deussen, Jadunath Sinha, D.P. Chattopadhyaya and many English knowing Sanskritists and Idologists.

No great has ever existed without a touch of madness.

• Aristotle

Lalleshwari : Her Eternal Message

- Dr. Shashi Rekha Niranjan

Lalleshwari also known as Lal Ded (folk name Lalla) is a renowned Kashmiri poet, saint and Shaivite philosopher and also renowned for being the first Kashmiri woman saint-poet famous for her widespread literary appeal among both Hindu and Muslim Kashmiris ever since her life time. She lived in the 14th century around 1320 to 1392.

This has been known to every Kashmiri due to the fact that Kashmiris quote the idioms and expressions Lalleshwari incorporated in her spontaneous Vakhs even today, after 700 years, which speaks volumes for Lal Ded's verbal finesse and spiritual prowess. Lalla is to Kashmiri language what Shakespeare is to English says B.B. Kachru in *A History of Kashmiri Literature*. But we can also more appropriately say what Lalla is to Kashmiri language is Akka Mahadevi to Kannada language.

In modern Kashmir we find her name and image immortalized as a saint-like figure akin to how Shirdi Sai Baba in South India. Despite living to a ripe old age of 72, the evergreen image of her in her youth is seen in names and boards of hospitals, institutions, and other establishments.

The main reasons for her popularity were her simple, yet expressive verses in Kashmiri, which could be easily understood and appreciated by the

common folk of Kashmir, even without much education. She had immense understanding of their day-to-day problems and wrote poetry about spirituality and the renouncing of fraud and deceit. Due to her exceptional talent her poetry was full of vernacular idioms, poetic expressions, which are flawless and simple.

Her ultimate goal was to search for truth as a teacher and a spiritual guide, not just from wise words and quotes, but from actions and lessons seen in her real life. To begin with a couple of her vakhs:

*What the books taught me,
I have practised,
What they didn't teach me,
I have taught myself.
I have gone into the forest and wrestled with
The Lion,
I didn't get this far by preaching one thing
and doing another.*

*Ideal Conduct is when thoughts, words, and
acts reflect righteousness.*

*One must bear the lightning flashes, and
thunderbolts,
One must bear with the night at the noon.
Endure the grinding of the millstones - ridding
you of your chaff
Contentment and peace will most certainly
attend you.*

*Prune the weeds from your heart's garden,
And the narcissus will bloom for you,*

*When you die, they will want your ledgers
and journals*

*Look out here comes death,
Chasing you like a Tax collector. (Vakh 69)*

*Pressed in winter paws, running water
hardens to ice*

*Or powders into snow, three different states
But the sun of wisdom, thaws them down to one
The world, all hands on board has sunk
without a Trace in Shiva.*

*(You are reading Lalla in the land of Kashmir,
full of lakes and snow) (Vakh 103)*

*Good & Bad, I am happy to welcome both,
I do not hear with my ears, I do not see with
my eyes.*

*A voice speaks inside my heart
My jewel Lamp burns bright even in
rampaging wind. (Vakh 91)*

Lalla's life and Message

Lal Ded's early life was spent in Kashmiri Shaiva Brahmin household as her father Cheta Bhat belonged to Tantrik Shaiva sect. During her childhood, she learned the ritualistic practice of devotion and austerities such Pranayama, Yoga and Shiva Dhyana were part of her daily life.

We glimpse this in her Vakh wherein she says :

*Kusha grass, flowers sesame seeds, lamp
water;*

*It is just another list for someone who is
listened afraid,*

Really listened to his Teacher.

*Every day he sinks deeper into Shambhu
frees himself from the trap of actions and
reaction.*

He will not suffer birth again

She got married when she was 12 years, to Nika Bhat from Pompore (erstwhile Padampore). He was also very young like her and he lived in a joint household with his parents. As is practice, Lalla used to go

to a stream nearby to fetch water for daily needs. She used to sit in solitude and watch the water flow for hours together after finishing her chores at home. The stories in folk lore about Lalla talk about her marital discord, torture by her mother-in-law who gave her little food and made her do long hours of work around the house. Lal Ded was very beautiful, talented singer and made her songs by herself. She exhibited patience, remained quiet and continued her Shiva Worship in an unorthodox way by addressing Lord Shiva as her confidante.

*The Lord has spread subtle net of himself
across The world.*

*See how He gets under your skin, inside your
bones,*

If you cannot see him while you are alive.

*Do not expect a special vision once
you are dead. (Vakh 105)*

Wrapped up in yourself, you hid from me.

All day I looked for you,

And when I found you hiding inside me

I ran wild playing now me, now you.

Over time, she found that the slander, suspicion and malice around her became unbearable - she was constantly accused of infidelity by her mother-in-law and husband and felt like she was treated like a commodity. The breaking point came when she was hit by her husband and then asked to get out of the house without her personal jewellery and her belongings. She, at once, decided to shock everybody around by walking out without her clothes, breaking all the norms of society and expectations from a woman

After bearing this unbearable ill-treatment, she decided to take up a quest to question the Lord about all her Tribulations. From the day one, as she

walked out she just sang loudly all her probing and pressing doubts. She had become an outcaste to Brahminical society as well as commoners who belonged to other castes and Buddhists around, but was still resolved in her righteous path.

Since her quest was for Nirvikara (The Invisible), Lalla felt no moral fright, fear or need to vacillate, and she moved on relentlessly.

She then went to consult a revered Guru of her times. While Hindu texts mention this Guru as Siddha Shrikanth, other texts call him Syed Boyou, a Sufi saint from the Sayyed clan.

One thing to note is that all of Lalla's poems were passed down as utterances quoted by commoners who witnessed her singing as she moved on seeking her Shiva, place to place, never stopping till she reached Bijbehara (Ananth Nag district) near River Jhelum (Veshaw in Kashmiri).

This meant that a lot of these works were modified over time, based on interpretations of contemporary and later philosophers, most of whom were of Islamic origin. Right back in 1320, before her birth, there mass killings and purging of Hindus by Zulecha - A Tartar chieftain who plundered the Land and set fire to dwellings, Islamization had started in Kashmiri society. Hence we must look at interpretations of Lalla's works with this lens in mind too.

Lalla refers to her Guru in this verse :

*When Siddhanath applied lotion to my eyes,
The cataracts that covered them dissolved.
I saw an astonishing sight.
Wherever I looked and whatever I beheld.
I saw my own self, I saw God.
Wherever I looked, I saw my own self!
O Lalla, this is true seeing. (Vakh 93)*

Lalla has extended a profound influence Kashmiri religious life. She is regarded as a foundational figure by Rishi Order of Kashmiri Sufism which was initiated by Nund Rishi (Sheikh Nuruddin Wali), who is seen by many as Lal Ded's spiritual son and heir. She was around sixty when he was born. There is a folk story (mostly symbolic) that he was fed by her breast milk when he refused to stop crying and was not accepting his own mother's milk. Here too, we see Lal Ded's impact in inspiring spiritual though in the common people, from small infants to elders.

Rishi culture was unique culture which was a syncretic traditional offshoot of Kashmir Shaivism and Islamic systems. Rishis chose to lead celibate lives, abstained from meat, avoided injuring animals or plants, and secluded themselves in caves or forests. These Rishis employed an eclectic vocabulary drawn both from Sanskrit Texts and Persian Sufi Texts.

As Lal Ded moved all alone in valley, pastures. forests, she was driven closer to nature and five elements (Panch Bhutas).

She reached Bijbehara where there is Vijeshwara Kshetra, an ancient land of seven lakes, Ghats of different Hindu names and the Temple of Rudra Shiva where a Linga is bejewelled by Rudraksha like growth all over almost Sahasra Akshas (eyes). During the rule of Sikander - this Linga was sacrilegied and broken, yet it is worshipped even today. Unfortunately, no account is found of the last abode of Lal Ded. One possibility is that this history was lost when Sikander ransacked the region, vandalizing the holy city of Vijeshwara.

The only account we get is that until her last breath, Lal Ded was pining for union with Shiva.

Book Review

- R.S. Purnananda

Three Gems of a Saint

Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji

Publisher

Jagadguru Sri Shivarathreeshwara Granthamale
Mysuru 570004

BEFORE INTRODUCING the above classics to the readers, it is better we introduce to them the publisher, JSS Mahavidyapeetha, the temporal arm of Jagadguru Sri Shivarathreeshwara Mahasamsthana Math, located at Suttur, near Mysore. The Math, with a thousand year history, was started by Adi Jagadguru Sri Shivarathreeshwara Shivayogi, who is believed to have averted an impending war between Ganga and Chola kings. Built on the edifice of non-violence and brotherhood it is a Veerashaiva monastery, commanding love and respect from all communities. It has so far been guided by 24 pontiffs, the prominent among them being H.H. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji, under whom the Math has opened up to serve the cause of education, health, agriculture, social upliftment, in addition to its regular religious activities. Now it has over 300 institutions – in India and abroad – run under the visionary leadership of H.H. Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji. JSS is thus a brand name in

South Karnataka, and, has mainly been instrumental in the overall development of the region.

JSS Granthamale is the Publication Wing of JSS Mahavidyapeetha, which has so far published more than 350 valuable books in Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, English and French. The theme of these works includes Veerashaiva Religion and Culture, Art and Architecture, and Religion and Spirituality of all denominations.

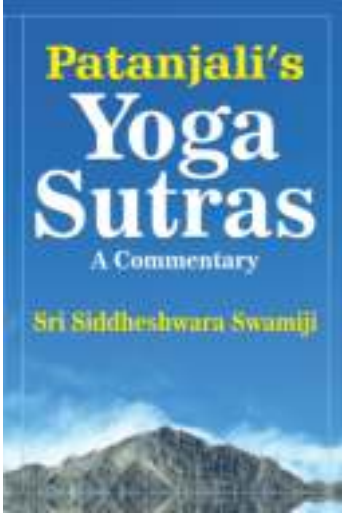
The author of the three masterly treatises detailed hereunder is Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji, Jnana Yogashrama, Vijayapura, Karnataka, who passed away in January 2023. Trained in the spiritual domain by Vedantha Kesari Sri Mallikarjuna Shivayogi, who was an exquisite renunciant with incredible saintly qualities and was known for his spiritual discourses in Karnataka and Maharashtra. The abstract sacred texts would get profound simplicity in his down-to-earth speeches. The nuances of eastern and western philosophies are blended beautifully in his exposition of the Eternal Truth. His speeches were effective and heart-touching because he lived what he had preached. He had a wonderful ability to make his audience feel even the tough philosophy look so simple. *Vachana*

(a prose-poetry literary form in Kannada that evolved in the 12th century Veerashaiva Movement), Upanishads and other sacred texts had equal proportions in his unbiased and focused teachings. We just introduce these books, and this is not a review, in the strict academic sense.

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras

ISBN 9788193476321)

Price : Ord. : ₹ 300 Spl. : 500



Patanjali, a great seer and a renowned yogi, made a deep search into the human mind. He is wellknown in India and even in far-off places where this knowledge is adored and appreciated. He has put his findings in the form of *sutras*—brief, clear, suggestive, scientific, and well-measured sentences. His aphoristic treatise, *Yogasutra*, is divided into four parts.

In the first part, Yoga is defined as the perfectly controlled state of mind, profound and serene, wherein the seeker sees his true nature, the Consciousness of Eternal Existence! He speaks about *kleshas*, the thoughts that cause misery, that make one forget one's true nature and hold one

world-bound, which causes great suffering in the long run. The yoga prescribes *dhyana* or meditation for human redemption. Meditation begins with concentration and ends in total absorption.

In the second part, the seeker gets to know about enlightenment through the eight-fold yoga (*astanga yoga*). It begins with the cultivation of virtues, develops through the physical, vital, and sensory taming, and culminates in *samadhi*, Self-Realisation.

In the third part, the mind is explained as a great storehouse of mysterious powers. When cultivated through *samyama* or sustained control, concentration, and meditation, these inherent powers are released. The yogi can see anything in the world; no barrier of time or space affects him. He can even read the minds of others and penetrate into their dreams as well.

In the fourth part, the perfect silence of the mind without the waves of feelings, thoughts, desires, and decisions is explained. In this silent depth, enlightenment happens; the yogi realises his true Self and experiences spiritual *Aloneness*.

Yoga is a unique science and a wonderful art too. It is a discipline that leads to the experience of one's own divine nature. It makes one realise the endless existence and never-fading beauty of calmness.

There are only two realities in the world—Matter and Non-matter; *Prakriti* and *Purusha*. One is *Drasya* (the Seen), and another *Drasta* (the Seer). Both are real and eternal. Whereas *Prakriti* has changing dimensions—Time and Space, *Purusha* is the spiritual principle—Atman—whose essential nature is Pure Consciousness. He

has no material dimensions nor can he be described. No force on earth can bring about any change in Him. He is the Light of Knowledge; he is the silence of the phenomenal world. He is always the subject of knowledge and will never become an object.

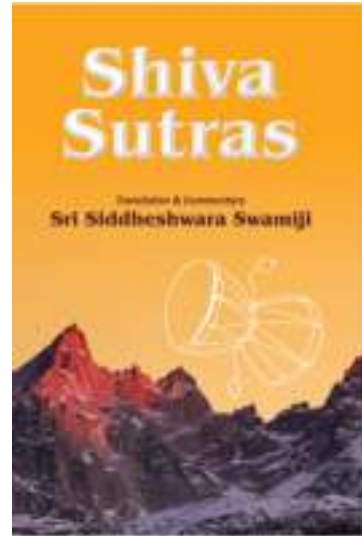
A human is a combination of Matter (*Prakriti*) and Non-matter (*Purusha* or *Atman*). The body-mind system is a product of matter. The body is gross in its very nature, whereas the mind is subtle and dynamic, and, is capable of reflecting the Atman, the Light of Consciousness. As long as the mind exists, reflection is bound to be there. This reflection is *Jiva*, the *Drasta*, and the real nature is Atman, Pure Consciousness. People are subjected to suffering from ailments and worries, losses and perturbed relations. Ignorance, ego, attachment, aversion, and fear are afflictions that keep a person bound to the world. One needs to be freed from emotional bondage and suffering. Patanjali suggests yoga as the only panacea to overcome this problem. It is a state of deep silence where the mind is waveless, free from dreams and desires, feelings and thoughts. In this yogic state of profound serenity, the *Jiva* realises its true nature. Dissociating oneself from mind and body, one remains established in one's real Self, Atman.

All the above points are graphically explained in this book. It has a message by Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sri Narendra Modi, dated 7.3.2015; and the text went on getting fine-tuned till 2020, which shows how much arduous and painstaking effort the author has put into this work. The book is also appreciated by Yoga Guru Swami Ramadevji, Patanjali Yoga Trust, Haridwar.

Shiva Sutras

ISBN 9788195028221

Price : Ord. : 200 Spl. : 400



'Shiva Sutras' is an aphoristic treatise that contains seventy-seven sutras (small sentences) which are divided into three sections, *Sambhavopaya*, *Saktopaya*, and *Anavopaya*. 'Upaya' is a synonym for yoga, the spiritual discipline. The purpose of yoga is to realise one's own Divine Nature and experience the eternal freedom that lies in us, unexplored. Every person should live in this world without being emotionally bound to anything, living or non-living.

The book begins with *Anavopaya*, which primarily dwells on how to purify the mind and make it calm and steady. Certain techniques are explained to achieve this end; for example, listening to the cosmic sound, concentrating on the meaning of a mantra; fixing the mind on the life-energy or breath that always flows in and out, and so on. Through such techniques, the mind becomes calm, clean, and well-balanced, and enters a state of calmness called *dhyana*. *The Anava Yogi* then realises that the knower (*jnatr*), the object of the knowledge

(*jneya*), and the knowledge (*jnana*) – are the three inter-related aspects of the same Consciousness. This helps the *Sadhaka* to ascend to the next stage, called *Saktopaya*.

Sakti is the unique power that has resulted in the manifestation of this world, and, also its dissolution. This power has no separate existence and is inseparably related to Shiva (Shambhu), the self-existent Absolute Reality. Shambhu is the void, the Eternal Silence, while Shakti is a very subtle vibration in that silent void. The *Sadhaka* now gets the grand '*Sakta*' vision, where he can visualise the power at play everywhere, in the subtle as well as in the gross creation. He experiences his identity with that Divine Power and rejoices within himself. All his action, will, knowledge, bliss, and consciousness become instantly divinised.

At the end comes *Shambhavopaya*. Shambhu (the Eternal Reality) is an ever-existing Supreme Consciousness. Being boundless, He is both immanent and transcendent. Being timeless, no change takes place in Him. He is an Indefinable Reality, an Indivisible Principle, the very Absolute Truth. This yoga is related to Shambhu, and hence called *Shambhava Yoga*.

In *Anava Yoga*, there is an effort to discipline the mind. In *Sakta Yoga*, there is contemplation that the Self is not different from Shambhu, the Eternal Silence. In *Shambhava Yoga*, there is no effort, no contemplation; simply an awakening to one's own divine nature. Any distinction between the Self and Shiva fades out in that plane. The purpose of this treatise is to make the spiritual aspirants realise their divine nature and always live freely and peacefully.

Vasugupta, who lived about eleven hundred years ago, is believed to be the

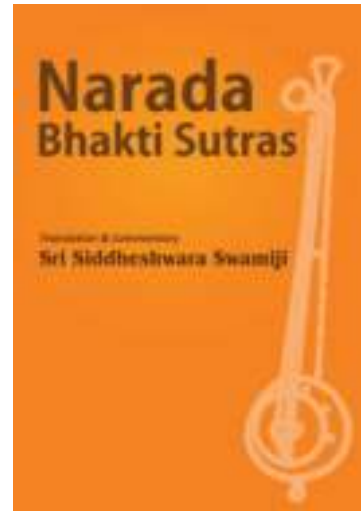
author of this esoteric work. He lived in the beautiful terrains of Kashmir. He was a philosopher, a mystic, and a saint, who is said to be a staunch advocate of Kashmir Shaivism.

Generally, people are after worldly pleasures and possessions, power and prestige. As their desires are endless, they always remain dissatisfied, sorrowful, and restless. If this dissatisfaction has to go, its cause, the desire, must be controlled and transcended. *Shiva Yoga* cleanses and calms the mind; thereafter the mind slowly enters the deep state of Shiva contemplation. The individual self becomes aware of its divine nature and the *sadhaka* experiences oneness with Shiva. There remains only the never-ending, boundless Bliss!

Narada Bhakti Sutras

ISBN 9788195028290

Price : Ord. : 200 Spl. : 400



Narada, a great devotee of God, spread the fragrance of devotion, and, this treatise of devotion is his wonderful creation. It contains eighty-four aphorisms. Unlike many other Sutras, this text is simple and beautiful, crisp and clear. Narada is a

shining example of devotion to the Divine. The profound, unmotivated, and unending love is believed to be the easiest path to God; hence many *sadhakas* prefer this route. Great rishis like Vyasa, Shuka, Shandilya, Garga, Valmiki, and others have tread joyfully on this path, realised the Divine Truth and merged into it.

The love of the Divine brings about a multifarious and life-changing stance in the devotee. Devotion is like nectar; the very moment the devotee drinks it, he is freed from all worries, fears and unwholesome desires. He always remains calm and contented. Worldly things cannot trouble a sincere devotee. All his physical and mental activities are divinised and consecrated. He is not interested even in the fruits of his benevolent services to people and society.

Wherever such a devotee lives, that place becomes holy; whatever work he does becomes sacred, whatever he utters becomes scriptures. He spreads peace, piety, and unconditional love everywhere. It is possible because he is a great lover of God and His creation. God is not confined to a particular place or time. He is immanent and transcendent. He is visible and also non-visible. His presence in saints and seers is felt by all, who see no difference between God and his men. The devotee always feels, in such a state, the holy presence of God in all beings. He will

not differentiate between caste, gender, worldly achievements or shortcomings. Free from all kinds of emotional bonding, he always lives in peace and experiences Eternal Bliss.

The present-day world needs devotion very much because it is suffering greatly from evils such as ego, greed, and hatred, which are causing disturbances everywhere. There is no dearth on this planet. There are rivers and oceans, plains and forests. The land produces enough food for all of us. There are numerous valuable minerals too. But, unfortunately, humans are always discontented. If they have to live peacefully, they should tread the path of devotion. Narada guides a seeker till the latter merges with the Divine.

All the above books are classical in nature, and, expect the readers to have some kind of training or discipline, before venturing into it. They should also be willing to know and understand the texts, in their genuine form and originality. These cannot be read as leisurely literature or coffee table books. These are compendiums that contain supreme knowledge, and, can be understood only by real devotees or *sadhakas*.

These books have also been blessed with an informative and illustrative foreword by H.H. Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji.



The Buddhas who have been and who shall be;
Of these am I and what they did, I do
And this, which now befalls, so fell before
That at his gate a king in warrior mail
Should meet his son, a prince in hermit weeds.

•**Buddha's words to his father at the latter's gate**
(from Milindapaha)

News Round-up

Rajendra Sri's Jayanthi Celebrations

The 108th Jayanthi Celebrations of Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji was celebrated with great fervour and devotion in over 350 institutions of JSS Mahavidyapeetha spread across the state and outside. Inaugurating the celebration at Sri Suttur Math, Mysuru, on August 8, 2023, Sri Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister Govt. of Karnataka, in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji and the Swamijis of Siddhaganga, Adichunchanagiri and Pejawar Maths, said that the life of Sri Rajendra Mahaswamiji was society-centric in which he found fulfilment. The result of the Swamiji's farsighted vision and the sacrifices he made to fulfil his mission has been the establishment of over three hundred educational institutions which revolutionised educational scene during his own life time, he observed. Continuing his talk, he said that the Swamiji established schools, colleges and hostels to support the children, mostly of the backward classes, poor and the depressed segments, with unbelievably strong will, love and dedication to his cause of educating the masses. In fact, this laid the foundation for today's mammoth Suttur Math and JSS Mahavidyapeetha, the long arms of which have crossed the frontiers of India in the service of humanity. He stressed on the popular saying that how long one lived was not important, but how lived was important. Rajendra Swamiji led a glorious life in the service of mankind.

Therefore, he is very much alive now and forever. His commitment to this noble cause has reincarnated in HH Deshikendra Swamiji whose work and vision has drawn the attention of the people in India and abroad, so saying he summed up his talk.

The Swamiji of Adichunchanagiri Math opined that Rajendra Sri has found himself installed in the hearts of millions that a saint like him takes birth rarely. He was and he is an exceptional example for emulation by the saintly ones. The Swamiji of Pejawar Math said that Mahatma is none but one on whose sacrifices and charity the society gets sustained. Rajendra Sri was a Mahatma who lived for others. Speaking on the occasion the Swamiji of Siddhaganga Math said that Mysuru, no doubt, is proud of its palace, but Suttur Math is an exclusive domain of service. Further he said that Suttur Math came to be established long back for peace, harmony and social service and today in addition to it, its contribution to spread education is revolutionary. For all this Rajendra Sri was instrumental, he added.

Minister Dr. H.C. Mahadevappa said that Rajendra Swamiji was an incarnation to save mankind from ignorance and illiteracy. The Swamiji's services were purely selfless, he observed. An epic poem *Rajaguruthilaka* was released by Sri Pratap Simha. A special issue of *Prasada* was brought on the occasion. Sri Tanveer Sait, Sri T.S. Srivatsa, Sri H. Vishwanath, Sri K. Harish Gowda, Sri Ganesh Prasad, Sri Darshan Dhruvanarayan, Sri Niranjan

Kumar, Sri K. Somashekar, Dr. Yathindra Siddaramaiah, Sri Shivakumar and a host of other dignitaries were present. Sri Pradeep Kumar Hebri was honoured on the occasion.

Sphoorti Utsav at Akshardham Temple

Participating at the of Sphoorti Utsav on 8.9.2023 as a prelude to Swaminarayan Akshardham to be built at Robinsville, New Jersey, America, HH Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji of Sri Suttur Math, Mysuru, said that humanity should lead a peaceful, happy and contented life as decreed in the great religions of the world which alone can bring fulfilment of life's purpose. Swamiji further observed that the Swaminarayan Samstha continues to build grand temples all the world over which are now holy centres of peace, contentment and spiritual gratification. They are not just that, but are sources of trust, love and fellowship among people irrespective of their religious leanings. And thus they have been the mediums connecting and strengthening the bond between God and devotee. It was Pramukh Swamiji, the 5th spiritual head and guru of Swaminarayan Samstha who was the spirit behind the present day's worldwide fame that the Samstha has accomplished. We are glad the present head Sri Mahanta Swamiji is upholding its rich past and tradition as never before, the Swamiji observed. Sri Eshwaracharan Swamiji, convenor of BAP's sadhus, Sri Amitab Mittal, Dr. Suresh Desai, Sri Balavanth Patel, Sri Bhoumik Rokadiya, Sri Tyagavallabh Swamiji, Sri Machael Adam, Sri Mario Chamaras, Sri Harish Goyal, Dr. Goutam Shah, Sri Bikku Patel, Sri Chandan Patel and scores of others took part in the programme.

JSS Spiritual Mission's Temple

In the gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji work for the construction of a Temple Complex at JSS Spiritual Mission, Maryland, America started on September 21, 2023. The work commenced after performing pooja and other rituals in the presence of devotees from different parts of America and India. For the construction, ground-breaking ceremony was performed on August 28, 2022 itself, the 107th Jayanthi of Jagadguru Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji. But construction was postponed due to delay in the receipt of permission from the concerned departments of the Government there.

The proposed temple houses the divine idols of Ganapati, Shiva, Chamundeshwari, Balaji and of the nine planets. Built with a spacious auditorium the complex will have dining hall, library, facility to learn yoga, dance, music, Sanskrit and to learn local languages in addition to scope for familiarising Indian literature, culture and arts with halls and rooms for each study. The complex will have 35 thousand square-foot utility space and it is expected to be ready for use in about two years.

Students and the Competitive world

Students everywhere must prepare and equip themselves to meet and face the challenges of the present day competitive world, observed HH Jagadguruji while gracing the inauguration of the college's Kannada Sangha and felicitating to the newly elected law makers at H.K. Veeranna Gowda First Grade College, Maddur, near Mandya. Proficiency in one's mother tongue is not enough nowadays. Since the world has become small, but the languages

spoken by are many, students need to know as many languages as possible, so that interaction will be made easy. This is one of the means to compet, observed the Swamiji. Minister Sri N. Cheluvarya-swamy said that the contribution of Suttur and Adichunchangiri Maths to education, health and social change is immense. They are like two eyes of Mysuru and Mandya districts, he added. MLAs Sri Prakash K. Koliwada, Sri K.T. Srikantegowda were felicitated. Prof. Jayaprakash Gowda delivered felicitation address.

Adapting the Messages of Great Ones

People need to adapt the messages of great ones in their life in words and deeds. If done life gets automatically Transformed into a meaningful way of living, said HH Jagadguruji while gracing the Basava Jayanthi Celebrations at H.D. Kote on July 16, 2023. Instead of man assuming that the world is by him, better if it is understood he is but an infinitesimal being in the scheme of creation. That knowledge will lead him to think that he is too small before the great ones, Jagadguruji observed. Speaking on this occasion minister Sri Eshwar Khandre said that the reforms thought of and brought about by Basaweshwara in 12th Century are a model even today to be implemented in letter and spirit. The Swamiji of Devanur, minister Dr. H.C. Mahadevappa also spoke. MLA Sri Anil Chikkamadu and Sri Darshan Dhruvanarayan were felicitated on the occasion. Sri Srishaila gave a lecture. The Swamijis of Bidugalu, Hanchipura, Dadadahalli and also Sri M. Shivanna, Sri Motta Basavarajappa, Sri U.S. Shekar, Sri D.G. Shivaramu and Sri Pradeepkumar were present.

Hamsalekha visits Sri Suttur Math

Renowned music composer Sri Hamsalekha who visited Sri Suttur Math, Mysuru, before he inaugurated the world famous Dasara Procession at Mysuru, on October 14, 2023, and offered his salutation to H.H. Jagadguruji saying that it was his good fortune to have his darshan and blessings. Mysuru Dasara is a symbol of the State, Language and culture of the Kannadigas, he said after inaugurating the Dasara Celebrations atop the Chamundi Hill. I feel really fulfilled in life to have this opportunity coming the way of an artist. I am coming from the background of the theatre of yester years and now I am serving in the film field. This is because of the blessings of all Kannadigas. Music is also akin to science for a serious student of music. Apart from that if one is decisive, committed and interested one can achieve his or her goal in life. But our society has to encourage those who are talented in any field, Hamsalekha observed.

Speaking on the occasion H.H. Jagadguruji said that Hamsalekha's contribution to music is immense and truly great in enriching the Kannada Cinema in general. Many Utsavs and celebrations are held in the world. But Dasara in Mysuru is unique that attracts visitors form abroad also. Such a celebration in getting inaugurated by a renowned artist Sri Hamsalekha who is both musician and film-writer. It is befitting that such a personage is invited to inaugurate the celebrations, added H.H. Jagadguruji who also released a video 'Harappa Heritage Hub', a conceptual presentation of Sri Hamsalekha.

PHOTO GALLERY



A delegation from Australia headed by the Speaker of its Legislative Assembly, Hon'ble Smt. Michelle Roberts, visited Sri Suttur Math at Mysuru along with the Leader of the Opposition Dr. David Honey, Law Makers Dr. Jagadeesh Krishnan, Smt. Cassandra Rowe, Sri David Skype and others had a wide ranging talks with HH Jagadguruji and was honoured. The delegation was in India on an official study tour (June 1, 2023)



'Unnati – 2023' A National Seminar on Neurology organized by JSS Ayurveda Medical College and Hospital, Mysuru, was inaugurated by Dr. Eshwar V. Basavareddy in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji. Dr. Veena G. Rao, Sri R. Mahesh, Dr. C.G. Betsurmath and Dr. Sarbeshwar were present (June 8, 2023).



'Border Region Cultural Festival' was inaugurated in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji at Talavadi organized by Karnataka Border Area Development Authority in association with JSS Mahavidyapeetha, Mysuru. Smt. Dakshayini Kumar, Sri Prakash Mattihalli, Sri Vishwanath P Hiremath, Dr. C. Somashekar, Sri B.S. Puttaraju, Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy, Smt. Ratnamma Kalanaika, Smt. M. Bhagirati and Sri Kalanaik were present (June 21, 2023)



Sri A.K. Sai Saravanan Kumar, Minister for Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Puducherry, visited Sri Suttur Math to receive the blessings of HH Jagadguruji (June 25, 2023).



Sri G. Parameshwara, Minister for Home, Govt. of Karnataka, visited Sri Suttur Math, Mysuru, with his family members to have HH Jagadguruji's darshan and receive blessings, they were felicitated (July 1, 2023).



HH Jagadguruji after the darshan of Ramlalla at Ayodhya viewed the construction of Ram Temple there. Industrialist Sri Saurav Sharma, Sri S.P. Manjunath, Associate Secretary of VHP's Central Committee Sri Gopalji, Swamijis, officers and officials of JSS Mahavidyapeetha were present (July 12, 2023)



HH Jagadguruji honoured and felicitated Sarasangchalak Sri Mohan Bhagwatji and Sarakaryavahak Sri Dattatreya Hosabale in the All Bharath Prantiya Pracharak Bhaithak held at JSS Public School, Ooty, Tamilnadu. (July 14, 2023)



HH Jagadguruji felicitated NCC Cadets at Sri Suttur Math, Mysuru, who won prizes in the Inter-Directorate Shooting Competition held in Kerala. Sub-Maj. Sri Govindappa, Prof. M.P. Vijayendrakumar, Col. Sri Maneesh Prasad, Prof. B.V. Sambashivaiah, Lt. Dr. L. Vijaykumar were present (July 20, 2023).



A special postage stamp and cover were released by HH Jagadguruji in the presence of Sri Siddhalinga Swamiji of Sri Siddhaganga Math in the function arranged by Veerashaiva Lingayath Mahavedike at Bengaluru to commemorate 116th Jayanthi of Dr. Sri Shivakumara Mahaswamiji of Sri Siddhaganga Math. Sri Prashanth Kalluru, Sri Vinay Kulkarni and Sri L.K. Das were present (July 28, 2023)



A month long Pooja and discourse programme in connection with the month of Shravana was inaugurated by Sri Sandeep Patil, Inspector General of Police, Karnataka State Reserve Police, at Sri Suttur Kshethra, in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji. Sri Nanjunda Swamiji and Smt. Seema Latkar were present. (August 16, 2023).



A month long Pooja and discourse programme in connection with the month of Shravan was inaugurated at Sri Suttur Math, Mysuru, by Dr. K.V. Rajendra, Deputy Commissioner, Mysuru District, in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji. The Swamijis of Hosamath and Mariyala, Dr. P.K.M. Prashanth, Vidwan Sri Kru. Ramachandra and Dr. K. Anantharamu were present (August 17, 2023)



HH Jagadguruji inaugurated one-day seminar on 'Sunnyasampadanes' and Basavajyanthi at Sri Basaveshwara Centre for Social Change, Research and Extension, Manasagangothri, University of Mysuru, Mysuru. Prof. Chandrasekharaiah, Prof. A. Murigeppa, Prof. Vijayakumari S. Karikal, Smt. R.M. Ramya, Smt. V.R. Shylaja and others were present (Aug. 17, 2023)



HH Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji is giving his benediction in the 'Spolti Utsav' organised in connection with the inauguration of Akhardham at Robinsville, Newjersey, America. Sri Bob Hugin and Sri Eshwaracharan Swamiji were present (September 8, 2023).



Vice-Admiral Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, General Surgeon of United States visited the JSS Spiritual Mission at Maryland, America, along with his parents Dr. L.N. Murthy and Smt. Mythreyi Murthy, they were honoured by HH Jagadguru. Sri Shivamurthy Kilara was present (September 17, 2023).



A special pooja was offered in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji to start the work for the construction of the temple-complex at the JSS Spiritual Mission, Maryland, America. Devotees from various parts of America and India were present. (September 21, 2023).



In the 259th Moonlight Music Concert held at Sri Suttur Math, Mysuru, Vidwan Sri Abhiram Bode gave vocal performance accompanied by Vidushi C.V. Shruti on violin and Vidwan B.S. Prashanth on mrudanga (September 29, 2023).



Sri Bhadresh Das and others are seen with HH Jagadguruji during his visit to the Akshardham Mandir, Newjersey, America, when it was nearing completion (Sept. 8, 2023)



HH Jagadguruji called on Chief of the BAPS Sri Mahanth Swamiji during his participation in the 'Spoorti Utsav' in connection with the inaugural function of Akshardham, Robinsville, Newjersey, America and enquired about the Swamiji's wellbeing, (Sept. 8, 2023)

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A panoramic view of the yoga demonstration given by the students of JSS Residential School, Suttur organized by the Yoga Department of JSS AHER in association with Vistara news channel. (June 21, 2023)



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