



SATSANG



Bhagirathi River at Gangotri, Uttarakhand, India

Yatra with the Master

Gangotri Yatra

- Bela Mahendru

With a flutter in the heart and much anticipation we embarked on the journey to Gangotri and Gaumukh. We had no idea what to expect in the coming few days, yet the whole existence appeared to be rejoicing. There was every reason for us to be overjoyed. After all, it was no ordinary thing that we had been allowed by our most revered Master, Sri M and his wife, respected Sunanda Ji, to join them for this epic 'Yatra'.

We have always felt a unique peace and joy in the lap of nature. These feelings were multiplied many folds because of the resonating love for Himalayas and the Holy river that Sri and Sunanda Ji exhibited. The drive along the upper Ganga canal up to Haridwar was also very pleasant and heralded the wonderful days ahead. We started feeling a high as we gained height after leaving Haridwar for Uttarkashi. The green cover of the mountains, the gushing water of Ganga and many a waterfalls on the way took our breath away.

After resting for the night in Punjab & Sind Kshetra, an old Ashram on the banks of Ganga, we left for Gangotri early in the morning. The narrow road wound its way to greater heights and the beauty and the grandeur of the peaks became more and more overwhelming. The coniferous forests provided a great contrast to the shiny snow covered peaks peeking through the mountains. After surmounting a big traffic jam (which became worse later during the day), we reached the quaint little town of Gangotri which centers around the ancient temple of Maa Ganga (dated back to 18th century) on the banks of river Bhagirathi, at a height of almost 3000 meters.

The river makes lovely music gliding over small rocks and meandering around the big ones. The chill in the wind, the freshness in the air, the blue of the sky, the innocence of the local people and the faith in the eyes

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Q & A

TWO QUESTIONS FROM ORCHHA
RETREAT, 8TH OCTOBER 2003

Sri M : Yesterday at the end of the satsang, Mrs. S asked a question. That question was, 'What is *Anāhata Nāda*?' And I said, *Anāhata Dhwani*. Same thing. Or, *Anāhata Śabda*. They all mean the same.

In its practical sense, it is said and it is also experienced by yogis when they go into deep state of meditation, especially in the *Ājñā Chakra* or in the *Hridaya Chakra*.

You know that there are seven centers of consciousness in the psyche. The lowest is called the *Mulādhāra*. Then we have the *Swādhīsthāna*. Then we have the *Maṇipura Chakra* or the *Kundalinī Chakra*. Then you have the *Anāhata Chakra* at the heart center. Not the physical heart, but in the center of the chest. Among the Sufis, in the center of the chest there are three centers, while the Yogis concentrate on the central one which is called *Anāhata*. *Kabir Panthis* meditate on the left side. And the *Jñānis* - like *Ramaṇa Maharishi* and so on, meditate on the *Brahma Chakra*, which is on the right. So we need not get into any controversy over which center is right and which is wrong. The whole area is full of centers.

The central one is called the *Anāhata Chakra*. And this one at the throat, is the *Vishuddha Chakra*. All things to do with sound, voice and also absorption of *Prāṇa* from the atmosphere, is done through the *Vishuddha*. And then the *Ājñā Chakra*, which is a very important center. That is the point where Lord *Śiva*'s third eye is supposed to be located. When the physical eyes are closed, the third eye opens which is *Jñāna Drishti*. In fact you find a very veiled mention of it even in the Bible. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus suddenly says, 'Therefore if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light'.

In reference to *Jñāna Drishti*, when you are in a deep state of meditation, and you begin to meditate, especially on the *Ājñā Chakra*, first you begin to see some lights. And as one goes deeper and deeper into that, one begins to hear sounds. These sounds are not the sounds of the outside world. They are not sounds produced by the outside world. So therefore, they must be sounds internal. Now these sounds are not produced by striking one object against the other, like for instance if you hit a drum you get the sound because two objects touch each other. Or when you ring a bell, the gong touches the rim, or

when you clap your hands. Now this is the sound of 'clapping with one hand' as the Zen masters say. You cannot normally clap with one hand. Therefore it is called the '*Anāhata*' - that sound that comes without '*hata*', without hitting, without striking.

That takes place in deep meditation, in the deeper layers of your consciousness. You begin to hear this sound. But the first *Anāhata Śabda* you hear is probably as you go from the grosser to the subtler. First you hear the sound of your own heart beating like a drum. In really deep absorption, you begin to hear '*dhum dhum*' beating of the heart like a *nagāra*.

Actually all these sounds and lights have been imitated in the temple, when you perform the *pujā* - all these. Even the lighting of incense which produces a beautiful smell you experience in a deep state of meditation. It is not outside. It is inside.

The olfactory organ, which normally gets excited only through outer irritation or outer stimuli, gets automatically stimulated and begins to produce smells. This is the first lighting of the incense. And then, the *Garbha griham* - *garbha* means the womb in which God sits in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple - is in the heart. When you come nearer to that, the lights begin to appear first - the *Ārati*. And then, you begin to hear the sounds - the gongs, the bell, everything. Until they all stop in the end and you are merged completely in the deity. This *Śabda*, which comes without external interference, is known as the *Anāhata Śabda*. Or *Anāhata Dhwani*. Or *Anāhata Nāda*.

And in the deeper state of meditation, you hear a range of sounds. It depends on the person, what kind of sound comes. But it can start first with the sound of crickets at night - *Chim Chim Chim*. Or it can start with the sounds like anklets - *Gring Gring*. There are people who hear the sound of the flute being played - *Bansi*. Or you can hear the sound of drums - distant drums. Or the blowing of the conch. You can also hear the sound of a beautiful *Veenā* being played somewhere. Actually these are all sounds. Real sounds coming from somewhere. But they are not from this world. So therefore, the acid test to find out if in meditation you are really hearing this sound, is to

plug your ears. Other wise, you may hear, distantly, somebody playing on loudspeaker, '*meethi meethi bāṭon say...*' and you may think you are hearing it inside!

Q : What is meant by *Mokṣa*?

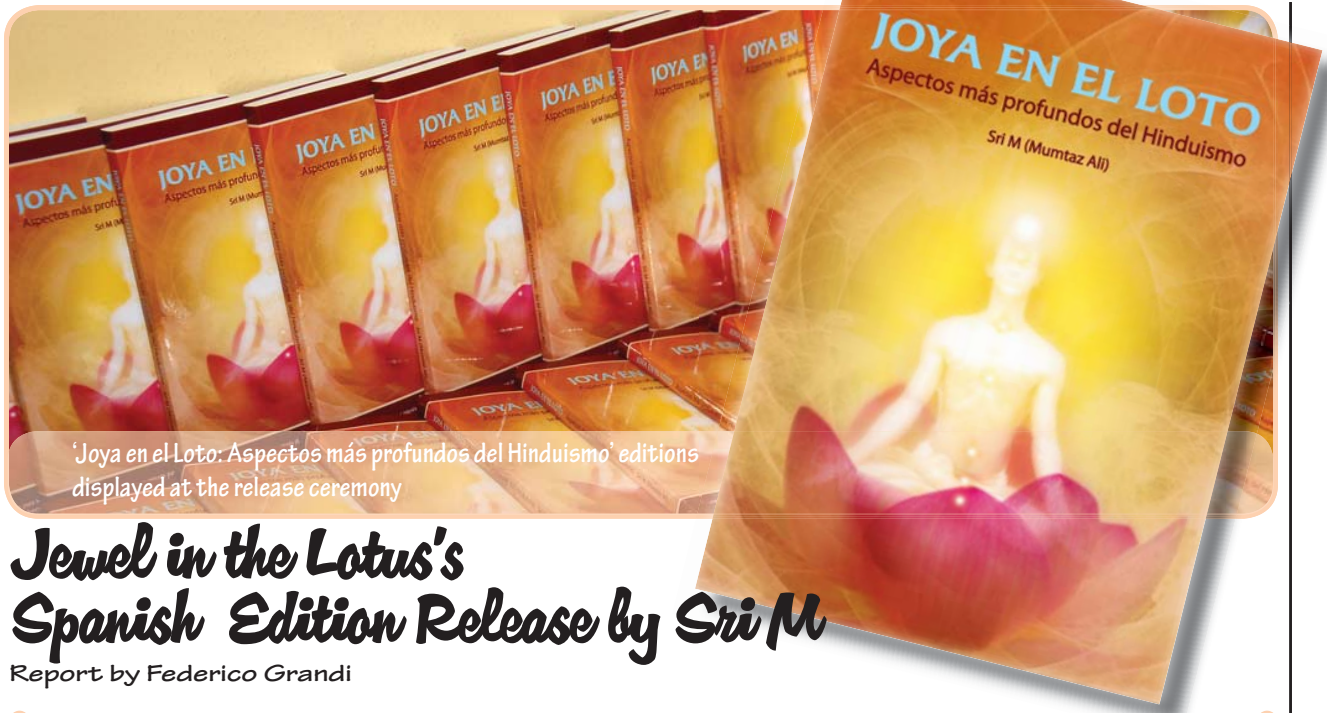
Sri M: *Mokṣa* means to be totally free, to be completely happy, without depending on anything in the outside world. This is *mokṣa* - not being caught by any desire. Therefore, naturally, the corollary to it is, since you are not interested or caught by anything in this world, it does not mean you don't eat or you don't drink or you don't go anywhere. That is not the meaning. You may have something, but if it goes away, that is ok with you. This is *Mokṣa*. In this state there is no conflict in the mind. Therefore, the corollary to it is, since you are not attached to anything in the world, you won't come back. That is what it means.

The other thing is, there is also the concept where great saints sometimes come back even after they have attained total freedom. They come back, this is if you believe in rebirth. I do. I can't prove it to you, but for me, it is a truth. When they come back, they come back voluntarily. They are not coming back because of any desire pulling them or any unfulfilled desire. They come back with a *Sukṣma Śarīra*, with a fine body, which afterwards has to get into a physical body, through the womb. They come back, knowing fully well, that to be born on this earth, is to have a physical body, have disease, have suffering, have sorrow, have everything.

Even the birth of a child is quite sorrowful. It is a tough thing to be pushed out of the womb, with your head coming out. That itself is quite tough. Knowing all this, one voluntarily comes, with the intention, that, 'since I have seen something wonderful, why can't I take some more people with me. Lead them on, towards this. Does not matter what is happening to me.' That can come only when one's mind is on a highly spiritual level, where one is not afraid of suffering for somebody's sake. So this is where the whole concept of compassion is.

In the *Mahāyāna* system, there is the concept of *Bodhisattva*, which is borrowed from the Indian system of some yogis coming back to help. They call it *Bodhisattva*. The person has almost reached nirvana - that means he has not yet reached. He knows he can reach nirvana. His one foot is there. The other foot is in the world. And he says, 'Let me come back.' This is the vow of the *Bodhisattva*, who says, 'Until all the innumerable people in this world attain nirvana, may I come again and again and help them towards it, no matter how much the body suffers.' This is

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'Joya en el Loto: Aspectos más profundos del Hinduismo' editions displayed at the release ceremony

Jewel in the Lotus's Spanish Edition Release by Sri M

Report by Federico Grandi

Last August, the Spanish translation of "Jewel in the Lotus: deeper aspects of Hinduism" (*Joya en el Loto: Aspectos más profundos del Hinduismo*) was released by Sri M in Argentina and Chile.

Spanish readers from all over the world now have access to the Spanish version of Sri M's book "Jewel in the Lotus: deeper aspects of Hinduism" (*Joya en el Loto: Aspectos más profundos del Hinduismo*) through www.joyaenelloto.com. The book was released by Sri M in Argentina and Chile in August this year.

Sri M's Latin American tour started in Buenos Aires. The book was first released in the Escuela de Estudios Orientales (School of Oriental Studies) of the Universidad del Salvador, a very prestigious University of Jesuit origin. The event had the support of the Embassy of India in Buenos Aires. More than one hundred people attended the presentation, which started with a sitar concert by a very talented local musician.

The Director of the School stressed on the open-mindedness of its founder, Reverend Father Ismael Quiles, a very prestigious scholar whose curiosity led him to enquire deeply into eastern philosophies, religions and thought and later started the school, the only one of its kind in Latin America. With that spirit of curiosity and enquiry, the school welcomed Sri M. The Director of the school and the audience were very excited to learn Sri M had studied in a Jesuit school back in Kerala. A very lively audience, mix of young students, professors and people from outside the academic circle interested in these matters, followed with deep interest and attention Sri M's speech. He focused on explaining the meaning of the title of his book, Jewel in the Lotus, and explained, in a nutshell,

the essential and deeper aspects of Hinduism and the spiritual search.

The second part of the tour took place in Chile, with three functions: Santiago, Valparaíso and Isla Negra. The events in Chile were organized and supported by the Embassy of India in Chile. H.E. Pradeep K. Kapur, Ambassador of India in Chile, who wrote the foreword to the Spanish version of the book, and his wife, Ms Kavita Kapur, provided an outstanding support that was key for the success of the book release in Chile.

The event in Santiago took place in the auditory of a beautiful Café Literario ("Literary Coffee Shop"), a mix of a coffee shop, a library, a bookshop and a cultural center located in a wonderful park. The audience, more than one hundred people, was a mix of ambassadors and diplomats, public administrators, yoga teachers and practitioners, and curious people from different walks of life. The introductory speech and official book release was done by the Major of Providencia, an avid speaker and prestigious politician, Major of the Municipality where the Embassy of India is located. H.E. Pradeep K. Kapur followed with an overview of Hinduism and the spiritual quest and an introduction of Sri

M and Federico Grandi, translator of the book and interpreter of Sri M during his Latin American tour. Sri M gave an outstanding speech, focusing on the deeper aspects of Hinduism and the search for our true identity. The program ended with a very lively Indian cultural program and a tasty Indian dinner.

In Valparaíso the event was hosted in the School of International Business Studies of the Universidad de Valparaíso. The auditorium was packed with more than one hundred and twenty students, professors and University authorities. The school Director stressed on the importance for International Business Students to understand the philosophies and thought of different cultures of the world, in particular of India, one of the most important emerging markets and economies. The young minds were thrilled at the approach of Sri M to philosophy and spirituality. Professors confessed that they had hardly seen the students so absorbed



Sri M and Federico Grandi, the translator

in a conference. The event ended with a very lively questions and answers session, with questions that ranged from the relevance of a vegetarian diet to the compatibility of business and spirituality, to mention just a few. Students cheered in excitement when a copy of *Joya en el Loto* was donated to the University's library.

Isla Negra, a beautiful spot on the Pacific Ocean, was the perfect setting to close the Latin American tour for the release of *Joya en el Loto*. The event was hosted in the headquarters of the Fundación Pablo Neruda, located in one of the

people that made this successful Latin American book release possible. In particular, the authorities of the Universidad del Salvador and the School of Oriental Studies in Buenos Aires, and the Embassy of India in Chile, headed by H.E. Pradeep K. Kapur. And of course, a big thanks to all the good friends that have helped during the different stages of this project.

We would like to finish by sharing the poem that Sri M composed in Chile and he offered as a closure to the Latin American book release tour in the Fundación Pablo Neruda:

*But I am still so sad, for I couldn't talk.
I was dumb founded and tongue tied,
for sweet Spanish I didn't know,
to give reply to the musical tones
and dancely gestures, so poetic.
But then I know one word, heard so often,
full of grace and beauty.
So I bow and say:
Gracias, gracias Chile,
gracias Pablo Neruda.*

(Note: Gracias means "thank you" in Spanish) ...Gracias Sri M!



Sri M, Federico and authorities of Universidad del Salvador

houses of the famous Nobel Laureate Chilean poet. This is the place where the mortal remains of Neruda and his wife rest, facing his beloved sea. The house has been turned into a museum and reflects the poet's fascination with the ocean, with big windows overlooking the Pacific waves as they break on the rocky shore. Wooden floors that make sound as you walk through narrow passages, combined with low roof doors, the sound of the ocean and a kind of decoration proper of a sailboat makes you feel for an instant you are sailing across the sea in a beautiful and immense wooden ship. The President of the Neruda Foundation gave an introductory speech, followed by a presentation of Sri M by Mr D.V. Singh, Second Secretary and Head of Chancery of the Indian Embassy in Chile. Foundation members and the audience, around one hundred people, followed with great interest Sri M's discourse, which focused on the meaning of *Joya en el Loto* and the essence of the spiritual quest. The event finished with an Indian cultural program by very talented Chilean artists. The book release in Isla Negra was covered by CNN Chile.

We would like to thank all the

*O Pablo!
O Neruda!
Deep I drank the wine you poured,
in stirring notes of poetic song,
though served in English glasses.
And in drunken ecstasy flew in one day
to the blessed land where you were born.
A chilly day it was in Chile,
but I was warm;
The special wine you brewed
coursed through my veins and kept me warm.
The snow clad mountains, sisters of the
Himalayas,
the rivers, the hills,
the dancing waves of the sea
that kissed the sandy beach.
Above all, the people so beautiful,
full of smiles and friendly glances,
took my ecstasy to the tip of the Andes.
And yet I was missing you,
in your home in Valparaíso,
in your home in Isla Negra,
in Bella Vista,
at some table, with a group of lovely friends.
No, I didn't find you.
But I found the essence of your Soul,
still shining bright.*



- 1 Federico Grandi, book translator and Sri M's Spanish interpreter
- 2 Sergio Bulgakov and Marcelo Giuggioloni, Argentinian musicians playing a Sitar in the book release at Universidad del Salvador
- 3 The audience at Universidad del Salvador
- 4 Book release at Fundación Pablo Neruda, Isla Negra, Chile. Sri M, Federico, and authorities of the Fundación Pablo Neruda and the Embassy of India in Chile.

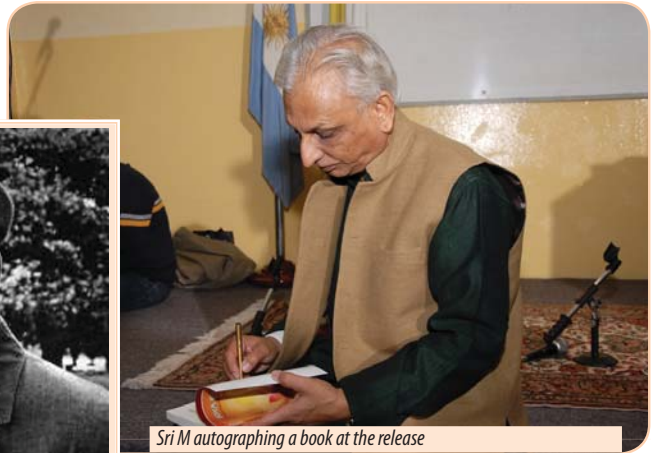
PERHAPS NOT TO BE IS TO BE WITHOUT YOUR BEING

*Perhaps not to be is to be without your being,
without your going, that cuts noon light
like a blue flower, without your passing
later through fog and stones,
without the torch you lift in your hand
that others may not see as golden,
that perhaps no one believed blossomed
the glowing origin of the rose,
without, in the end, your being, your coming
suddenly, inspiring, to know my life,
blaze of the rose-tree, wheat of the breeze:
and it follows that I am, because you are:
it follows from 'you are', that I am, and we:
and, because of love, you will, I will,
We will, come to be.*

*Pablo
Neruda*



Pablo Neruda (July 12, 1904 – September 23, 1973),
Chilean Nobel Laureate Poet, 1971, English Literature



Sri M autographing a book at the release



Sri M addressing gathering in Chile



UNIVERSIDAD DEL SALVADOR
ESCUELA DE ESTUDIOS
ORIENTALES
"Rev. Padre Ismael Quiles S.J."

Buenos Aires, August 12th, 2010

Sri M

Dear Sir:

It is a great honour for the community of the School of Oriental Studies "R.P. Ismael Quiles S.J." to have this unforgettable opportunity to listen to your exposition.

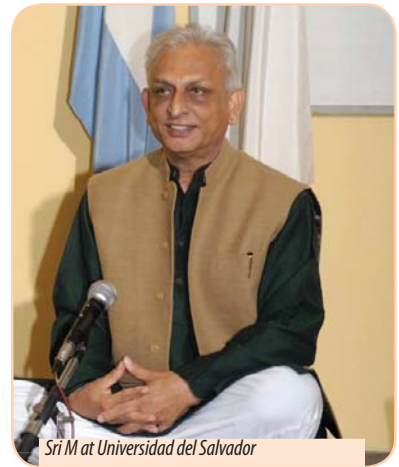
This School which was founded forty three years ago, has always been interested to share the thoughts of those personalities who improve our minds and enrich our spirits.

That is why your presence is so important for our professors and students.

Your speech will be discussed by them in our classrooms and in their conversations for long.

Thank you.

Prof. LUISA R. ROSELL
Prof. LUISA R. ROSELL
Directora
Escuela de Estudios Orientales
"R. Padre Ismael Quiles S.J."
Universidad del Salvador



Sri M at Universidad del Salvador



Sri M at Universidad del Salvador

...Gangotri Yatra,
Continued from page 1

of the pilgrims, all contributed to a very moving experience for us. We really felt blessed that we were in the sacred shrine with our revered Guru and were reminded of the *doha*:

*Guru Gobind dono khare,
kake lagoon Paon
Balihari Guru aapno,
jo Gobind diyo bataye*

In the afternoon, we headed towards a place called *Gauri Kund* and *Suraj Kund* in *Gangotri*. The natural beauty of the place was truly soul satisfying. The river *Bhagirathi* passes through the huge rocks splashing into a massive fall which weaves beautiful designs in the air and then finally falls into a basin before continuing its journey down the mountains. We could hear melodious sound of flute, being played by a *sadhu* sitting on a huge rock. This appeared to be a divine setting for the evening meditation for which we sat on the boulders.

The following day we packed our backpacks and fixed our trekking shoes and started our trek to the source of the river *Bhagirathi* – *Gaumukh* at the height of 3,753 meters. *Bhagirathi* joins *Alaknanda* at *Deoprayag* to form *Ganga* which is the life stream of millions of people. The source of this mighty, Holy river lies in *Gangotri* glacier which is about 30 kms long and surrounded by peaks like *Bhagirathi* peaks, *Shivling*, *Meru*, *Chaukhamba* etc. The terminus of this glacier takes the shape of a cow's mouth and is thus called *Gaumukh* which is 18 kms from the town of *Gangotri*. On the way, we camped at *Chirbasa* and *Bhojbasa* camping grounds.

The trek (which is the most inadequate word to express the journey) was the most special experience of our lifetime. We were trailing behind our Master with our '*dhyān*' focused on his feet - truly our life's desire - to live close to him, his teachings - walking slowly, carefully, sure-footed with *japa* on our lips, humility in our hearts and attention focused on the source from where we come. The beautiful snow covered peaks, the river and the lofty mountains making us realize as to what a minuscule part of the creation we are and constantly reminding us of our real journey, our true goal for which God has created us.

All of us are born with a natural quest to know 'The Truth' - which is mostly sidelined by the struggle for survival and misplaced 'goals of life' ... but for sure, each one of us has faced life situations which pose a dilemma and a big question as to 'how do I act

now?' Being close to a living master and observing him is the biggest blessing in this light as we find a reference point in life. He teaches us through example ... his simplicity, his compassion, his humility, his flexibility, his overflowing love for everyone, his sense of humour and ability to laugh like an innocent child and at the same time, his absolute clarity of thoughts, logical mind and objectivity ... the list could go on and on and on ...

The trek had come to an end. Our guide *Dhiraj*, Our cook *Praveen* and the porters had made our trek very comfortable and served us with love and affection. *Dhiraj* our guide was elated when, at the time of parting, Sir offered him his jacket and shoes. He was a good soul and truly deserved the warmth, comfort, blessings and protection of master's personal belongings.

The Yatra was coming to an end and with a heavy heart we bid adieu to snow peaks the cedars and pines, the mountains, the waterfalls and the river to come back to hum- drum of cities and the hectic activities of life. But we only have to slow down for a moment to be transported back to the eternal beauty of the great yatra and the great experience.

Thank you Sir ! Thank you *Sunanda Ji* !

“There is a Supreme Reality which pervades this universe and into which finally this universe will go back.”

— Sri M



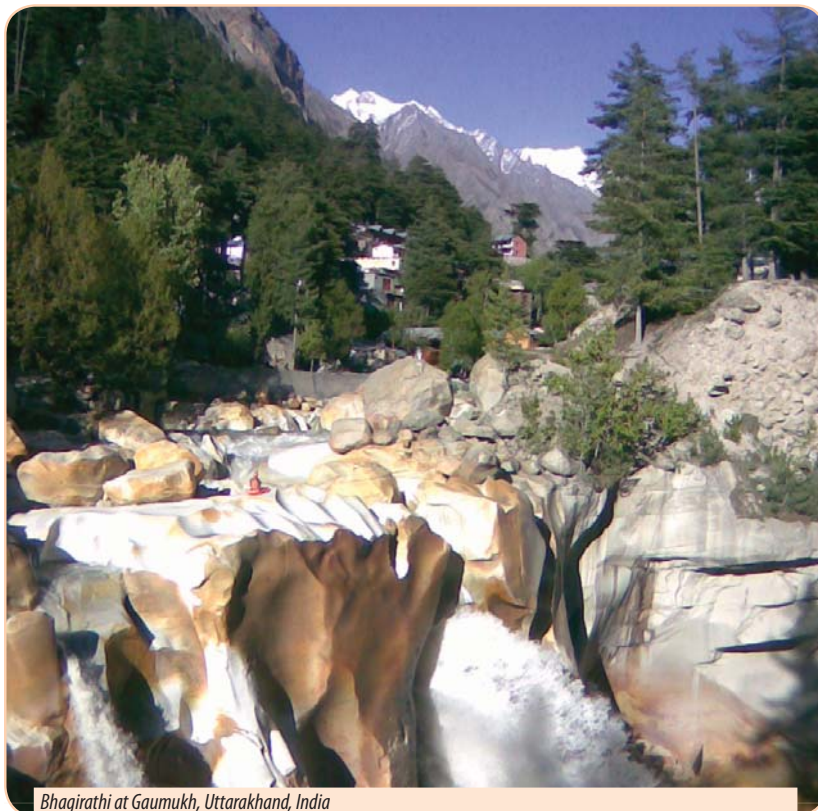
Mother Ganga Temple, Gangotri



Yatris en route Gangotri



Himalayas as seen from Gangotri



Bhagirathi at Gaumukh, Uttarakhand, India

FEATURED MOKSHA TALK

Kundalinī

TALK ON WORLD SPACE RADIO

- SRIM

Today I am going to speak on a subject, which is indeed quite fascinating. It is a magic word kind of and used everywhere in most occult books and every now and then you hear of people trying to practice something, which would suddenly and immediately boost their spiritual awareness. That magic word is 'Kundalinī'. In the occult books on the subject it is called *Kula-Kundalinī*.

What is this *Kundalinī* which is talked about so much in most occult books, books on yoga and so on. Let us look at this very, very carefully.

Kundalinī is considered by the *tantras* as the manifestation of the infinite Supreme Energy called *Para-Śakti* or *Bhavāni*. It is said to reside in potent form – not kinetic, not active but in inactive form – at the base of the spinal cord of all human beings, coiled like a spring. Or in the *tāntrik* symbology, as a snake, turned 3 ½ times around itself, waiting to be awakened by the spiritual practitioner.

So, a snake has been the symbol of *Kundalinī* for many hundred years. It is because it is also the symbol of wisdom. It is the symbol that you find on the head-dress of the Pharaoh for instance or in the legends of the *Nāgās*, who are supposed to be snake gods and therefore representing wisdom. Śiva the great Lord of yogis wears the snake coiled around the knot of matted hair on this head.

Because the snake is the symbol of wisdom, it is on the great snake called, *Anantha*, the five hooded serpent, that *Mahā-Vishnu* who incarnates in the ten *avatāras* of the hindu pantheon, sleeps.

Mahārishi Pātanjali, the founder of *Ashtānga Yoga* or *Rāja Yoga*, is depicted as half snake and half human. So this snake has been a symbol of wisdom from early times. It is when Adam and Eve caught the wisdom of the snake that they began to distinguish between good and evil.

I think that in ancient times, when there were no watch springs to be shown as example, the snake was an ideal example of the coiled up *Kundalinī* which remains inactive and sleeping in most human beings at the bottom of the spine.

When awakened by the practice of yoga, which includes exercises, breathing techniques and chanting of special sounds – *mantras* – then the sleeping snake hisses and raises its head and begins to travel up the

spine, through the central channel in the spine, which according to yogic anatomy, is called the *Sushumāṇā Nādi*, or the channel of *Sushumāṇā*.

When the sleeping energy, the great *Kundalinī*, is awakened by resorting to the proper means, guided by a proper teacher, then it awakens and begins to move up the *Sushumāṇā* channel, touching six centers, as it ascends, until it reaches the top most center, which is known as the thousand petalled lotus, the *Sahasrāra Chakra*. This is, actually located at the crown of the head. And when the *Kundalinī* energy reaches there, then it merges with the supreme reality who is called *Śivam*, and when both are merged, the yogi enters *Samādhi* or a high super-conscious state where he realizes his own identity with the Divine all-pervading supremely peaceful Being.

As the *Kundalinī* ascends, along the *Sushumāṇā*, center by center, through the six centers, the yogi's vision or the yogi's internal vision expands and he gains access to realms and dimensions which are beyond the reach of the ordinary senses.

Finally, when the *Kundalinī* merges with the *Paramātmā*, which is the blissful Being at the crown center, the yogi is absorbed in an ecstasy which far exceeds the ecstasy that any ordinary human being has ever experienced before.

That is the link between *tantra*, which basically is the subject of the arousal of the *Kundalinī Śakti* and sex.

The theory of *tantra* is that sexual energy, for all human beings, given food, and shelter is the most enjoyable experience. It is that same energy, the sexual energy, which is sublimated to travel up in the upward direction instead of the downward direction. Which is why so much stress is laid on gathering your sexual energies and keeping them together at the lowest center where the *Kundalinī* sleeps. Which is known as the *Mulādhāra* – the root foundation, if you literally translate it.

However, the ecstasy that one experiences when the sexual energies are gathered together and made to awaken the *Kundalinī* and when that *Kundalinī* reaches the *Sahasrāra Chakra* which is at the crown of the head – is a multiple orgasm which no human being has experienced anywhere in any one of his lower centers.

The experience may be called the supreme orgasm but it is nothing to

do with the sexual centers. It happens throughout the body, especially with its center in the *Sahasrāra Chakra* or the thousand petalled lotus. Before that it also happens in the heart center which in yogic terminology is called the *Anāhata Chakra*, and is in the center of the chest.

The rising of the *Kundalinī* therefore is a rising of consciousness from the gross to the subtle and to the subtler and subtler levels until it reaches the highest stage in the *Sahasrāra Chakra* and the yogi enters into a deep trance which is an altered state of consciousness. I would say a Super Conscious state where the yogi no more is identified with the little body that he or she has, but with his Supreme Self which is Supremely Ecstatic, full of Supreme knowledge and Supremely peaceful.

At this point, it is a good idea to go through at least a cursory study of the anatomy of the yogic *Chakras*.

The centers through which the *Kundalinī* travels, which lie in the *Sushumāṇā* are called *Chakras*. *Chakra* means a wheel – that which moves – which rotates. And therefore, it also happens to be the meeting point between the *Pranic* energies of the human body and the energies of the psychic world which flow in from outside.

When both combine and begin to move or rotate, then it is called a *chakra*. These *chakras* are almost like whirlpools. The energies are always moving. They never stop, that is, when the *Kundalinī* touches the centers. Otherwise, they are usually asleep.

The *Hatha Yoga Pradeepikā* and the *Shatachakra Nirupaṇa*, the two important authoritative text books on the *Kundalinī* and the *chakras* say that basically there are three *Nādis*.

The *Idā*, the *Pingalā* and the *Sushumāṇā Nādis* are the channels through which life energies or *prāṇa* operates. The *Idā* is on the left side of the spine. The *Pingalā* is on the right side of the spine. And the *Sushumāṇā* of course is in the middle of the spine. All the three start from the *Mulādhāra chakra* – or the root foundation center which is at the bottom of the spine.

While the *Sushumāṇā Nādi* goes straight up and joins the *Sahasrāra chakra* on the top or on the crown of the head, the other two *Nādis* go on either side of the *Sushumāṇā*, cross each other at the center of the eyebrows, which is called the *Bhrūmadhya* or the *Ājñā Chakra*, and then go and join *Sahasrāra Chakra*.

So the yogis say that the joining or the crossing together is the *Sangama* of the *Varuṇā* river and the *Assi* river – that is the *Idā* and the *Pingalā* at the *Bhrūmadhya* which is the *Ājñā Chakra* or center between the eyebrows. The *Bhrūmadhya* is known as the holy city

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of *Vāranāsi*. The meeting place of the *Varunā* and the *Assi* rivers.

According to *tantras*, *Śiva* the supreme being resides on the *Sahasrāra Chakra* with his legs let down and touching the *Bhrūmadhya* or the center between the eye brows.

The point at which the *Sushumanā* enters the *Sahasrāra Chakra* is known in the *tantras* and in the yogic scriptures as the *Bramha-Randra*. Which means the hole or the gateway to *Brahman*, the Supreme Being. And, it is interesting to note that the *Bramharandra*, if you compare with present day anatomy, sort of coincides with what is known as the center of the limbic system, where the pituitary gland and the amygdalae and the thalamus and so on, exists in the brain.

Which is almost the center of the brain. The limbic system is that which takes care of our feelings. If the limbic system did not work, we would have no feelings. Therefore, in the raising or awakening of the *Kundalinī*, emotion or feeling plays as much part as the technique of *Prāṇayama* and the chanting of the *Mantras*.

According to the *tāntriks*, any feeling which is very deep can in some way awaken the *Kundalinī*.

But first let us go through the different centers called the *chakras*.

The first one, which is at the bottom of the spine is called the *Mulādhāra*, as I said before. It is represented by a triangle with its apex down and color associated with it is yellow. Which is the color of the earth and triangle is placed in the middle of a square. A yellow square. This represents *Prakriti*, or the material earth, the solid earth, which means energy at its grossest level of vibration.

The next center or *padma* - *Chakras* are also called *padmas*, because they are like a lotus which blooms. The centers also bloom when the energy touches them. They are also called *padmas* or lotuses. The next lotus or the next center is called the *Swādhishthāna Chakra*. It falls between the *Mulādhāra*, which is the lowest and the *Manipura Chakra*, which is at the navel. The color of *Swādhishthāna* is silvery like the moon. Like moonlight and symbol of it is a crescent moon. You will find this crescent moon on head of *Durgā*. You will the crescent moon on *Śiva's* head touching his locks. It is a great *tāntrik* symbol of the astral world and subtle worlds and it is represented by the *Tattva* or the principle of *Āpas* or water principle.

The first *chakra*, the *Mulādhāra* represents *Prakriti* or the solid earth or solidity. The next one, we discussed, the *Swādhishthāna*, which is silvery and which is shaped or symbolized by the crescent moon, represents the water *tattva* or the *Āpas Tattva*. Also called the *Téjas* or the Dream *tattva*.

This is because the energy called the *Kundalinī* is ascending from the gross to the subtle. So from solid state, to the liquid state. It is a great symbol - which means it is becomes subtler and subtler.

The next center, which is at the navel is known as the *Manipura Chakra*. It is also known as the *Kundalinī Chakra* and is represented by a triangle with its apex upwards. The color given to it is the color of fire. As red as fire. Like a red hot burning fire. A flame. And, this is the central part of the *chakras* where combustion takes place or heat energy. Great heat of the *Kundalinī* is symbolized here. When the heat of the practice of *Kundalinī yoga* emanates from the *Manipura Chakra*, then the *Kundalinī* rises further up from solid to liquid and from liquid to gaseous state. Passing through the heat center of the *Manipura Chakra*.

The next center, is the one called *Anāhata Chakra*, which is in the center of the chest. It is represented by what is called the *Star of David*. Two triangles are inter-twined or put together - one equilateral triangle pointing upwards, the other pointing downwards. The *Anāhata Chakra* is colored sky blue which means it shows still subtler energy which may be in the physical world compared to the gaseous state. So from solid to liquid to gaseous. The energy has become subtler and subtler and the consciousness has moved from gross to the subtle.

The next *chakra* is the one that is at the throat. This is known as the *Vishuddha Chakra*. The *chakra* of purity. I forgot to mention that the *Anāhata Chakra* is also called the *Anāhata* because when the mind is fixed on this center, one hears the sound which is un-struck. Which means the inner sound which is sound of *Aum* or the *Prāṇava*, vibrates within this *chakra* when the mind or consciousness ascends to it.

The *Vishuddha Chakra* which is the throat center is symbolized by an oval and the color is indigo. The *tattva* is *Ākāsha*. Or the ether. Or that from which the *Ākāsha Tattva* according to the *Sāṅkhya* philosophy and the *tantra*, is that from which everything else comes. All forms are created and that into which all forms merge at the end. This is *Ākāsha*. In English it can best be translated as ether but then ether that is just a translation.

The energy, the *Kundalinī* as come up to the, let us say the *Vishuddha Chakra*. Therefore, consciousness has risen from the gross, from solid to liquid to still subtler gaseous and then to the level of *Ākāsha* which is the ether.

From here, the next two *chakras* - one being between eyebrows which is called the *Bhrūmadhya* or the *Ājñā Chakra*, is symbolized as a pure white two petalled lotus with a small white, milk-white *Lingam* at the center. And

that is the center which kind of opens the door ways to the highest levels of consciousness.

If you see figure of a *Śiva* - Lord *Śiva*, the Lord of the yogis, who is only deity who sits in cross legged posture and meditates himself - you see that he has a third eye. That third eye is a very important is a very important center. A very important *chakra* called the *Ājñā Chakra* or the *Bhrūmadhya*.

There is a story in Indian mythology, in the *Śiva Purāṇa* about *Kāma Deva*, the god of love, the god of sex, the god of emotion, the god of desire. *Kāma* can best be translated as desire. It could be any desire. Sensuous or non-sensuous. Desire as such.

Kāmadeva, the god of desire is supposed to shoot arrows of flowers at us, at human beings and even the gods. And they fall under his power. This *Kāmadeva*, poor guy, once went to *Śiva* and tried to shoot his arrows of desire on him. *Śiva* the mighty Lord of Yogis, who had conquered all desire and who was supreme and peaceful is supposed to have just opened his third eye, which is the eye of the knowledge and *Kāmadeva* was burnt to ashes in no time. Which means that when the third eye or the center which is known as the *Ājñā Chakra* is activated or opened, which happens when the *kundalinī* energy reaches the *Ājñā Chakra*, then the mind understands the reality behind all illusion. Therefore, all illusions are burnt to ashes. It also means that one arrives and achieves supreme satisfaction and unlimited bliss and happiness and therefore, has no other desire left. And that happens when the *kundalinī* reaches the *Ājñā Chakra*, which is the last but one.

It is the doorway to the highest which is complete merging with the Supreme Being which happens in the last topmost the highest *chakra* at the crown of the head. This is known as the *Sahasrāra Chakra* or the 1,000-petalled lotus. 1,000-petalled simply means infinite. It is symbol of the infinite. The color associated with the *Sahasrāra Chakra* - there is no one single color. It is technicolor. All colors flow out of this *chakra*. In fact, if one is clairvoyant, if one can see and looks at the *Sahasrāra Chakra*, what is seen is a fountain which seems to come out from the crown of the head and flow in all directions around the body in different colors. Multi-hued colors. Colors which are so bright and lively that one may not see such colors on this earth.

Each of these *chakras* starting from the *Mulādhāra* to the *Sahasrāra* also have their sounds which are known as the *Bijāksharas*. The seed sound. The lowest which is the *Mulādhāra Chakra* is associated with the sound '*Lung*'. It is not *Lung*, it is not *Lam*, but somewhere in between. So *Lung* is the sound which is associated and which is the *Bijākshara* of the

Mulādhāra Chakra. When the yogi fixes his attention on the *Mulādhāra* and continuously chants 'Lung', the energy is supposed to activate or awaken.

The sound or the *Bijākshara* of the next *chakra*, which is the *Swādhishthāna Chakra* is 'Vang'. Vang - Vang - Vang.

The next which is the *Maṇipura Chakra* is 'Rung'. Rung - Rung. The sound of *Aruna* or the fire. Rung.

The *Bijākshara* of the *Anāhata Chakra* is 'Young'. Young - Young - Young. *Anāhata Chakra* which is in the center of the chest is activated by the sound of Young.

The seed sound or the *Bijākshara* of the throat *chakra*, the *Vishuddha Chakra* is 'Hung'. It is the great *Bijākshara* of the Buddhist *Mantra*. Most of the Buddhist, Tibetan Buddhist mantras have the sound of 'Hung'. The sound of *Vishuddha Chakra* or the *chakra* of purity. *Vishuddha*.

And, for instance the famous mantra, 'Aum Maṇi Padme, Hung!' - 'Hung' is the sound.

Then the *Ājñā Chakra* which is between the eyebrows and the *Sahasrāra Chakra* are together covered by the *Prāṇava* - 'Aum'. When you chant, 'Aum' it covers both the *Ājñā* which is the eyebrow center and the *Sahasrāra Chakra* or the crown *chakra*.

These are *Bijāksharas*. When we chant it from the *Mulādhāra* upwards it is 'Lung', 'Vung', 'Rung', 'Yung', 'Hung' and 'Aum'.

There are many techniques and many ways to awaken the *kundalinī*. Which are given in the *śāstras*. For instance, there is what is known as the *Sri-Vidyā Upāsānā*. Which the followers of the *Samaya Mārga* use to awaken the *kundalinī* energy.

The *Soundarya Lahirī* purported to be written by *Adi Shankarāchārya* celebrates the ecstasy of movement of the *kundalinī*, here called *Bhāvānī*, all the way up the *Sushumānā* until she merges with her lord *Śiva* in the *Sahasrāra chakra*. The *Soundarya Lahirī*, the *Lalitā Sahasranāma* and other *tāntrik* texts contain certain *Bijāksharas* or seed sounds which actually have no meaning by themselves. But which are vibrations which would awaken the *kundalinī* and make it move up the spine till it reaches the *Sahasrāra Chakra* and unites with the Supreme Lord.

To be continued...



जो कुछ है सो तू ही है

ALL IS YOU OH! DIVINE

Obeisance to the Masters who reveal the sublime Truth in simple lyrics and beautiful songs which vibrate at the very core of an aspirant's heart.

Our Master sang this song and initiated us in realizing the mystery of the universe in such a profound intimate relationship with the Supreme Being that pours out in these melodious stanzas — "All is you Oh! Divine. Only you are mine. To You I bow!"

On April 22, 1886, Sri Ramakrishna was recuperating at Kashi Garden. Hirananda, a classmate of Swami Vivekananda and another devotee from Sindha came to meet him. In the presence of all, Swami Vivekananda sang this *ghazal*¹ since this was a favorite of Sri Ramakrishna.

तुझसे हमने दिल को लगाया
जो कुछ है सो तू ही है
एक तुझको अपना पाया
जो कुछ है सो तू ही है

दिल का मकां सबका मकीं तू
कौन सा दिल है जिसमें नहीं तू
हर एक दिल में तू ही समाया
जो कुछ है सो तू ही है

क्या मलायक क्या इन्सान
क्या हिन्दू क्या मुसलमान
जैसा चाहा तूने बनाया
जो कुछ है सो तू ही है

काबा में क्या और दैर² में क्या
तेरी परस्तिश हैगी सब जा
आगे तेरे सिर सभों ने झुकाया
जो कुछ है सो तू ही है

अर्श से ले कर फ़र्श जमीं तक
और जमीं से अर्श बरीं तक
जहाँ मैं देखा तू ही नजर आया
जो कुछ है सो तू ही है

सोचा समझा देखा भाला
तू जैसा न कोई दूढ़ निकाला
अब ये समझ में जफ़र के आया
जो कुछ है सो तू ही है

Listening to "हर एक दिल में तू ही समाया", Thakur pointed at his heart

1 Ghazal: A collection of independent two-line poems (sher), in which there are repeating common words in the end.

2 Dair Mar Elia (known in English as Saint Elijah's Monastery) is an abandoned Assyrian Christian monastery, the oldest in Iraq, dating from the 6th century. It is located south of Mosul, Iraq.

and spoke, "He is omniscient. He lives in everybody's heart". Hirananda told Vivekananda, "'I' has vanished and its only 'You' and 'You alone'".³

This *ghazal* was first referred in *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita* on March 11, 1885.⁴ Then on June 13, 1885 it was sung by Trailokya⁵. The *takhallus* or the pen name used in the *ghazal* is 'Zafar'. It is considered that this work does not belong to Bahadur Shah Zafar, but someone else, perhaps another poet with that pen name residing in Calcutta, however, who the Zafar is still unknown. By 1885, this *ghazal* had become so popular that Swami Vivekananda himself used to sing this for his Master.

This is a humble attempt to revisit the wordings of this *ghazal* and translate in to English.

All is you Oh! Divine

My heart is in love with thine
All is you Oh! Divine
Only you are mine
All is you Oh! Divine

Dweller in every heart
Which heart holds you not
Every heart is thine
All is you Oh! Divine

What of angels What of humans
What of Hindus What Muslims
All are made to your design
All is you Oh! Divine

What of the Kaba or the Dair
Your worship is everywhere
All heads bow before your shrine
All is you, Oh! Divine

From the heavens to the earth
From the earth to the heavens
Everywhere the vision is thine
All is you Oh! Divine

I thought, I paused, I sought
None in your likeness did I find
It is only now that Zafar defines
All is you Oh! Divine

3 "Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita", Udbodhan Karyalaya, Kolkata, First Edition, 22nd Revision, p. 1054

4 Ibid., p. 776

5 Ibid., p. 853

Translation: Brijesh Kumar

...Continued from page 2

called the oath of the *Bodhisattva*.

This is not easily possible. Here, we want to be free ourselves - *Apna khayāl*. That requires a totally different dimension of thinking, where one actually begins to understand that one is not the body really. Only when that concept comes, is one not afraid of coming back. Otherwise there is always the fear that if you are born, you have to become big and then you have to go through so many trials and tribulations. You have to grow up. Who knows what is going to happen? You have disease. You have suffering. You have pain. Then you are dead - death of the physical body.

In Indian philosophy, in Indian systems of thought, there have been great sages like that, who taught that the salvation of the other is more important than themselves going to hell, if necessary. The great *Rāmānujāchārya*, who came after *Ādi Śankarāchārya*, was the founder of the *Vishishtha Advaita* system - where there is more stress on devotion rather than philosophical abstractions. What happened with *Śankara*, was that very soon people got too caught up in intellectual speculation - *Vedāntic* intellectual speculation. And that is the time, when *Rāmānuja* came. He introduced what is called, qualified non-dualism. *Śankarāchārya* said that there is only one Supreme Being, that there is no other thing. Everything else is *Maya* - appearance. Only one Supreme Being. There is no *jīva*, there is nothing, everything is *Maya*. *Rāmānujāchārya* came and found that people were just talking about it. Nobody could understand what the real experience is. So he said, 'Let us modify it. Man is not ready to understand it.' So he said, 'The human being is a part of the Divine. The

divinity is all - pervading and we are a spark of That.' And he described it like this. He said, 'The whole universe is like a huge being called *Nārāyaṇa*. He called it *Sriman Nārāyaṇa*. And just like there are cells in the human body, all the *jīvas* are cells in the body of *Nārāyaṇa*. Now you can neither say that they are different nor can you say that they are the same. They are one body. This is called *Vishishtha Advaita*. There is one *Nārāyaṇa* - *Sriman Narayana*. He called it *Nārāyaṇa* for devotional purposes.

He illustrated it very beautifully, when he said, 'Everything is like water. Let us consider *Sriman Nārāyaṇa* to be the whole thing called water- *Jala*. Chemically it is the same everywhere. A cup of water before you is the same as the river that is flowing. Intrinsically, quality-wise, there is no difference. But you cannot run a steamer on this water. You can only run it on the river. There is a difference. And yet there is no difference. That is called *Vishishtha Advaita*.

This great *Āchārya*, *Rāmānuja*, was born in the south, in a place called *Sri Perumbudur*. In that place, when he was a young man, he was taught the great mantra - *Om Namoh Nārāyaṇa*. It is a mantra which you find in the *Bhagwad*. It is a great mantra- *Om Namoh Nārāyaṇa*!

His guru initiated him after all the trials that are necessary to ensure that one is ready for it. He initiated him into the mantra, '*Om Namoh Nārāyaṇa*'. And then the master told him, 'This mantra is to be given only to those who are *Āptas*' that is who are capable, who are qualified to receive this.' And he gave him a description of those who are qualified to receive it. And whoever takes this mantra, will reach *Vaikunta* and will be face to face with *Sriman Nārāyaṇa*. There is no doubt about this, if you have faith. But do not give it to a person who is not ready for it, or

who is not qualified for it, who is not a *brāhmaṇa*. What he meant by *brāhmaṇa* is one who has brahmanical qualities.

Now the young disciple asked him, 'Sir, what happens if by mistake, I give it to someone who does not have this qualification?' The teacher said, 'You will go to a hundred hells. *Rāmānuja* said, 'What about that person?' 'He will definitely reach *Vaikunta*,' said the Master. 'Ok, Sir', said *Rāmānuja*. He did *praṇām* to his teacher and went to a nearby hill which is still there in *Perumbudur*. And he said, 'All of you come. It does not matter who you are. Come, I have a great mantra with me, which will take you to *Vaikunta*.' He told everybody to chant this mantra.

So everybody told the Guru, 'Something is wrong with your disciple. This is what he is doing.' The Guru then called *Rāmānuja* and said to him, 'What are you doing? You will go to a hundred hells.'

He said, 'I can go a thousand times to hell. Let them all go to *Vaikunta*.' Such a heart! And then the guru said 'He is my real disciple.'

A Gift...

AND MEMOIRS

BY SREELAKSHMI

FROM PEEPAL GROVE SCHOOL

Each student here at PGS, when they leave, will carry back with them a gift - something they have either learnt or improved upon, during their stay here. For me, the gift will be Music. In many ways, PGS has proved to be, at least for me, an experience that has greatly helped me expand my horizons in so many areas. In the area of Music however, it was more than an explosion.

It's difficult to explain the lure of Music. It has its intangible addictive quality to it - enticing you without your knowledge, and once you're completely drawn in, only then you realize the intensity with which those soul-stirring melodies have affected you.

So, too, it was for me. It started as far as I remember, as an innocent-enough session of singing whatever the latest songs were, in the dormitories, every Saturday and Sunday evening. As times went, I discovered a couple of other girls who seemed to be interested in the same kind of music as I was - and from there it took off.

One of us happened to be an instrumentalist - she played the keyboard. She also happened to possess a flair for notes - the musical kind. Coincidentally, the other girl happened to have a voice beautiful enough to bring life to tunes we churned out. And me? I just went on doing what I was best at - waxing lyrical!

What helps about the atmosphere of PGS is this freedom that is given to you to explore. We're encouraged to



Sunset at the Peepal Grove School, Sadum

question stereotypes and barriers... and so we did.

Focussed on variety, on being different, and inspired by the love for what we were doing, we each used our own special gift to create something unique, something we would hold close to our hearts for the rest of our lives. Three strands, three vivid colours intertwined together to form one brilliant braid - and as the braid grew longer and stronger, so did our friendship.

PGS proved the setting where I found one of the greatest loves of my life. PGS provided the atmosphere and encouragement required for this love to grow into a full-blown passion, a considerably healthy addiction. And PGS also provided me with two of the closest friends I could ever have found - partners in practice, with whom I shared the simple, yet priceless joys that music brings.

My legacy - music. And along with it memories and friendships to bring me happiness, for the rest of my life, wherever I go and however long I live.



Peepal Grove School, Sadum

“That is complete. This is complete. When you take out this completeness, only completeness remains. It can not be reduced because something is taken out. In fact nothing can be taken out. When it is recognized that this completeness is within us, then we are complete. In Nature, there is a certain constant. Whatever happens, that constant remains.”

— Sri M

The Satsang Vidyalaya Madanpalle provides free education to rural children from the tribal areas of Sugali Thanda.

The school runs a sponsorship programme whereby education of children can be sponsored at an annual cost of ₹7,500 per child.

For details contact Jayasri Achuta Rao (090-0878-7117), C.N. Bhushan (093-4125-4570), or write to: satsang.foundation@gmail.com

A HYMN BY KABIR DAS JI RECORDED IN SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB

*Awal Allah noor upaya, kudrat ke sab bande
Ek Noor te sab jag upjaya, kaun bhale, kau mande
logaa bharam na bhulo bhaae ||
khaalak khalak khalak meh khaalak poor rehio sarab thaaee ||1|| (Rahao)
Maati ek, anek bhaant kar saaji saajanhaare ||
na kachh poch maati ke bhande na kachh poch kumhare ||2||
sabh meh sacha eko soee tis kaa kiya sabh kachh hoee ||
hukam pachhaane so eko jaane banda kahiye soee ||3||
Allahu alakh n jaayi lakhya gur gurr deena meetha ||
Kaho kabir meri shanka naasi sarab niranjan deetha ||4||*

First, Allah created the Light;
then, by His Creative Power, He made all mortal beings.
From the One Light, the entire universe welled up.
So who is good, and who is bad? ||1||
O people, O Siblings of Destiny, do not wander deluded by doubt.
The Creation is in the Creator, and the Creator is in the Creation,
totally pervading and permeating all places. ||1||Pause||
The clay is the same,
but the Fashioner has fashioned it in various ways.
There is nothing wrong with the pot of clay
- there is nothing wrong with the Potter. ||2||
The One True Lord abides in all;
by His making, everything is made.
Whoever realizes the Hukam of His Command,
knows the One Lord.
He alone is said to be the Lord's slave. ||3||
The Lord Allah is Unseen; He cannot be seen.
The Guru has blessed me with this sweet molasses.
Says Kabir, my anxiety has been taken away;
I see the Immaculate Lord pervading everywhere. ||4||

Kailashpati

*I
It was a cold and rainy night at the mountain
The tents were pitched
Just below where Thy abode Is my Lord.*

*Under Thy watchful eye we slept
And awoke to Thy silent call at dawn
Coming out we saw the splendid morning
And thee with thy golden brush
Colouring the peaks which lay in
the arc of thy iridescent brush!*

II

*Thy first lovely sight
Across the mountain range
O Lord
Was so beautiful
It made this life worthwhile
Then I knew that all thy creation
And all thy manifestations are true
That you are near and yet are far
In far you come near.*

III

*The blue above and blue below
The Cobalt, the Prussian, the lighter hue
The purplish blue and the sombre cue
The stretch of water against the sky
Interspersed with blue and white crags so high
A scene which a painter may never try
O holy Lake was it thy loveliness
Or some Other Presence
Which made you appear more than just a picture ?*

IV

*Not knowing how we will make it
Yet with a quite confidence
Connected to thee
We set out, each one.*

*You held our hand and led us across
You gave us rest when we thought
we could walk no more.
You saw each one to the shore.*

*Lord we wished to see your form in
the abode of Light
Not knowing that the quite flame burning
in my heart and all the hearts
is thine.*

Poem By Gagan Ahluwalia

HEART TO HEART

I Wonder

BY BHAVANI

This is the first of the series 'Heart to Heart'. The purpose of this column is to provide an avenue for people to express themselves and write about their heartfelt experiences as part of The Satsang Foundation. This is a column where feelings/experiences/observations are expressed and no offence is meant towards anyone. The views expressed herein are entirely those of the author.

I wonder about Master often. I wonder whether I will ever know him completely. As there is only 'me' and my own standards to use as a yardstick, how can I get a true picture? I do not know how to go beyond – how to see people AS THEY ARE. It is so true that we look at people and things as we have trained ourselves to... Highlighting what appeals, ignoring what we think is not important, rejecting what is unappealing etc; all, according to OUR OWN STANDARDS. So I find that I am only seeing or relating to 'Me' in others and missing out on the variety of The Lord's creation.

Master M – our kind, loving and gentle teacher... lives an 'ordinary' householder's life in an 'EXTRA-ORDINARY' way! He is a living example of a Karma yogi as described by Swami Vivekananda – He works unattached & free. Look at him... He is ever at rest yet never resting... He is FREE and ready to guide others to be free too!

I wonder how he functions. He is a friend – a friend we can speak to at anytime, whatever we feel like. How many calls would he be attending in a day? I wonder... Each call we make, every question we ask, every worry we off-load is absorbed completely leaving us lighter and happier... but what about him? I wonder.... This fountain of pure selfless Love, the effortless kindness that flows from him, his wisdom, his humility and his keenness to help as many as possible – NO MATTER WHAT – is a blessing bestowed upon us... but what about him? I wonder... how must he feel when we miss the point? When we CANNOT FULLY UNDERSTAND the import of profound statements dropped ever so casually and sometimes very seriously?

We cannot help bowing down to our Guru. Not just because we have been taught to, but the love & wisdom that emanates from him, fills us with gratitude and the desire to express it makes us want to put our head at his feet. He allows us to express ourselves whichever way we want... some like to kiss his feet... He allows it all... not wanting to hurt a single heart. But, then again, I wonder how he feels... he does not want DEPENDENT people grovelling at his feet... he points the way to 'TOTAL INDEPENDENCE'... but alas... we miss the point!

"My plate is full, but nobody is hungry." I wondered – there are so many of us attending the retreats, going on yatras, sitting and enjoying bhajans, satsangs or talks on the Gita and other Upanishads – is this not hunger?

Thinking further upon it, I questioned – What is it we are looking for? Are we seeking 'spiritual' intervention for our 'worldly' problems? What do we seek? Do we really want to know what life is about besides eating, sleeping etc? Then again I thought... the best way to gauge how serious I am in the search, is to look at what I am ready to 'give up' for it!! If the list is full of things of convenience – like pickle, papad, salad then hullo... how can I feel the hunger? Skipping meals will work but then again I wonder... what is the 'food' that I must deny myself to be 'hungry' enough to eat what Master wants to feed? So with a full stomach – I await THAT hunger! That – True Spirituality!



Sri M at Kathmandu, Nepal after return from Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, July 2009

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