



FULL
DEPENDENCE
LEADS TO
JOY

N U P U R 2 0 0 6

NEW UNDERSTANDING OF PURE UNIVERSAL REVELATIONS

NUPUR

Summer 2006

New Understanding of Pure Universal Revelations

Commemorating
Swami Nityatmananda's 113th Birthday
On the Ganga Dussehra, Tuesday, 6th June 2006



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Preface

New Understanding

This edition of NUPUR¹ carries a meaning which I never realized all these years since 1994, when respected Mataji (Mrs. Ishwar Devi Gupta) inspired me to bring out a commemorative booklet on Swami Nityatmananda's birthday every year.

My attitude at that time was not to question her, but to faithfully serve her since she, to me, was a God-realized and wise person who had just one passion in her life: how to put on God in daily life and enjoy it everyday. I never saw her sad or worried, through myriad circumstances and occasions, almost every day I have been in her grace for more than sixteen years. Her child like laughter always told me that the inner happiness is much more than the outer worldly happiness, and my effort at that time was to gather as much wisdom, patience, happiness, and Pure Love from her, as my container could carry. After she left her mortal frame, even though I missed her in the physical sense, yet I did not ever miss her laughter, brightness of her eyes, her wisdom, and her sole dependence on God. In the years thereafter, the conditions of my life have changed, though the inner calm she made me discover, inner joy she made me feel, remains ever growing. Spirituality, she taught, is not in putting ochre clothes, or to show people how religious we are, or to please people around us but to put on God in our character, and to please Him alone. More than anything

¹. Nupur is a Hindi word and it literally means an anklet. Usually a set of ornamental anklets is worn by dancers or women in general in India. The original title 'Nupur' for this booklet was coined by Mataji to remind each one of us that we are just like those little anklets worn by the Divine Mother, which emanate beautiful sound with the movement of Her foot, meaning our life dances in joy and peace when we move in Her will. She had also composed a song on it.

else, I have seen her depending on God. If I have to summarize her life in few words, I could say, she was the one who put on God all the time. I learnt from her that each one of us has to develop a personal relationship with God since He has a unique plan for each one of us. And God helps us to develop this relationship once we step forward sincerely.

At that time, however, my approach was intellectual. I still had to realize God live and living in my own heart and around. But I tried to serve her and her objectives with a sincere heart. Now when I see her, the meaning of what she says, what Thakur¹ says and what great men say has completely changed, and I now feel the Word of God and see it happen in my life every day. And mind you, I have paid no less a price to receive all this, and that happens only with God's unconditional grace. The events in my life that shocked me were indeed blessings and God gave me all the necessary courage, companions and conditions to take me from one world to another in no time. Again, I am still learning, still wanting to know more about Him in whom she merged, and who is closest to each one of us than anyone else. His blessings in my life have been countless and each one is no less than a miracle.

During a daily prayer about a month ago, contemplating on the life of Swami Nityatmananda, this revelation of the new meaning of Nupur came from God. And surprisingly all experiences got crystallized well in this "New Understanding of Pure Universal Revelations". The essence of Swamiji's life is: solely depend on God. And this is how Swami Nityatmananda lived on what M. told him, 'Just as a child lives in joy free from all cares when he is with his father and mother, even so may you

¹. People used to address Sri Ramakrishna as Thakur respectfully. Therefore it is being used for him interchangeably in the text.

live! Thakur and Ma are always with you. Believe it and live in joy and bliss.'

Thus NUPUR means: receiving the New Understanding, after you realize Him, of His Pure (directly from Him with no pollution from anyone in between), Universal (applicable to everyone in this world and beyond this world and which is eternally true) Revelations (His Word and its true meaning which is revealed when we open our heart to Him). Thus during that prayer, Shalini and I stood revealed the purpose and objective of this new organization: God's Child foundation. The sole aim of this Foundation is to remind us this: each one of us is God's small little dear child, and He loves us unconditionally, and we just have to live our life solely depending on Him, none else.

We pray to God that this issue of Nupur brings Him first in everybody's daily life and it brings Pure Love and Pure faith in the One God; and that He makes us release inner faith and love for everyday joy in our life, for by only releasing them, you grow and enjoy.

Sevak-santana,

Vinay and Shalini

निवेदन

नूतन बोध

नूपुर¹ का यह अंक एक ऐसा भाव वहन करता है जो कि, जब से पूज्य माताजी ने 1994 में मुझे प्रतिवर्ष स्वामी नित्यात्मानन्द जी के जन्मोत्सव पर नूपुर प्रकाशित करने के लिये प्रेरित किया था, मेरे हृदय में अब तक कभी भी प्रकाशित नहीं हुआ था।

उस समय मेरा मनोभाव उनको प्रश्न न पूछ कर उनकी मन से सेवा करने का था क्योंकि मेरे लिये वे प्रभु में स्थित एक ज्ञानवृद्ध जन थीं। उनके जीवन का एकमात्र ही प्रेम था - कैसे ईश्वर का वरण किया जाये तथा कैसे नित्यप्रति आनन्द मनाया जाये। विभिन्न परिस्थितियों एवं घटनाक्रम में से निकलते हुये मैने उन्हें कभी भी उदास अथवा चिन्तित नहीं देखा। मुझे उन्होंने प्रायः प्रतिदिन सोलह वर्षों से अधिक के साथ का सौभाग्य दिया है। उनकी बालकवत् हंसी ने सदा मुझे यही बताया कि अन्तर की प्रसन्नता बाहरी जागतिक खुशी से कहीं अधिक है। उस समय मेरा प्रयत्न था कि मैं उनसे अधिक से अधिक प्रबुद्धता, सहनशीलता, प्रसन्नता एवं शुद्ध प्यार ग्रहण करूँ जितना मैं क्षम्य था। उनका शरीर जाने के पश्चात चाहे मुझे उनका शारीरिक आभास खलता था, किन्तु मुझे कभी भी उनकी हंसी, उनकी आंखों की चमक, उनकी प्रबुद्धता तथा उनका केवलमात्र ईश्वर पर आश्रय भूला नहीं। इतने सालों बाद मेरी परिस्थितियां बदल गयी हैं किन्तु भीतर की शान्ति जो वे मुझे दिखा गयीं थी, भीतर का आनन्द जो

¹ पूज्य माताजी ने नूपुर नाम हमें यह याद करवाने के लिये रखा कि हम सब आद्या शक्ति मां के चरणों में एक-एक नूपुर हैं जो मां की चरणगति के साथ-साथ बजते हैं। अर्थात् मां की इच्छा में समर्पित होकर चलने से हमारा जीवन आनन्द एवं शान्ति में नाच उठता है। पूज्य माताजी ने नूपुर पर एक गीत की रचना भी की थी।

वे मुझे अनुभव करवा गयीं थी, आज भी उतरोत्तर बढ़ते जा रहे हैं। उनके लिये आध्यत्मिकता गेरुया वस्त्र पहनने में नहीं या लोगों को यह दिखाने में कि हम कितने धार्मिक हैं अथवा लोगों को प्रसन्न करने में नहीं, वरन् अपने चरित्र में ईश्वर का वरण करने तथा केवल ईश्वर को प्रसन्न करने में है। मैंने उन्हें किसी व्यक्ति अथवा वस्तु से अधिक ईश्वर पर आश्रित होते हुये ही देखा है। यदि उनके जीवन को मुझे दो तीन शब्दों में सारित करना हो तो मुझे यही कहना है कि उन्होंने सब समय ईश्वर का वरण किया। मैंने उनसे सीखा कि हम में से प्रत्येक को प्रभु के साथ अपना एक सम्बन्ध बनाना एवम् बढ़ाना है।

उस समय किन्तु मेरा भाव बौद्धिक था। मुझे अपने हृदय में प्रभु को जीवन्त जाग्रत अनुभव करना था। परन्तु तब मैंने सच्चे हृदय से उनकी तथा उनके उद्देश्यों की सेवा करने का प्रयत्न किया। अब जब मैं उनका कहा सुनता हूँ, जो ठाकुर ने कहा सुनता हूँ, जो महापुरुषों ने कहा सुनता हूँ, तो उसका अर्थ बिल्कुल भिन्न समझता हूँ। तथा अब मैं प्रभु के शब्द को अनुभव कर अपने प्रतिदिन जीवन में सामने जीवन्त पाता हूँ। और ध्यान रहे, इस सब के लिये मैंने कोई कम मूल्य नहीं चुकाया। वे घटनायें जिनसे मैं स्तब्ध रह गया था, मेरे लिये वरदान साबित हुईं। प्रभु ने सब प्रकार से साहस, अनुकूल साथी एवम् अनुकूल परिस्थितियाँ दीं, मुझे एक जगत से दूसरे जगत में लाने के लिये। फिर भी अभी भी मैं सीख रहा हूँ तथा उस प्रभु को और अधिक जानने का उत्सुक हूँ जिसमें पूज्य माताजी लीन हो गयीं हैं तथा जो हमारे सबके, किसी के भी मुकाबले, अत्यन्त निकट है। मेरे जीवन में प्रभु के वरदान अनगिनत हैं, तथा प्रत्येक किसी चमत्कार से कम नहीं।

लगभग एक महीना पहले, दैनन्दिन प्रार्थना के समय, स्वामी नित्यात्मानन्द जी के जीवन पर ध्यान करते हुये नूपुर का नया अर्थ प्रभु से प्रकट

हुआ। तथा सारे अनुभव प्रभु के शुद्ध सार्वजनीन प्रकटनों का नूतन बोध में अद्भुत भाव से घनीभूत हो गये। स्वामी जी के जीवन का सार यही है : केवलमात्र ईश्वर पर आश्रय। तथा इसी प्रकार स्वामीजी ने श्री म के शब्दों को अपने जीवन में जीया : जिस प्रकार एक बालक अपने मां बाप के साथ आनन्दित और निश्चिन्त रहता है उसी प्रकार जीवन यापन करो। ठाकुर मां सर्वदा आपके साथ हैं। विश्वास करो तथा आनन्दित और निश्चिन्त रहो।

इस प्रकार नूपुर का अर्थ है - प्रभु की प्राप्ति के पश्चात उनके शुद्ध, सार्वजनीन (इस विश्व में सबके लिये उपयोगी) प्रकट हुये ज्ञान का नूतन बोध (जब हम अपने हृदय के द्वार प्रभु के शब्द के लिये खोल लेते हैं, तब इसका सच्चा अर्थ समझ में आता है)। इस प्रकार उस प्रार्थना के समय शालिनी तथा मुझे इस नये संगठन God's Child Foundation (गौडज़ चार्डल्ड फ़ाऊंडेशन) का कारण एवम् उद्देश्य प्रकाशित हुआ। इस फ़ाऊंडेशन का एकमात्र उद्देश्य हमें यह याद कराना है कि हम में से प्रत्येक ईश्वर का प्यारा छोटा बालक है तथा वे हमें अहैतुक प्यार करते हैं। हमें अपना प्रतिदिन जीवन केवलमात्र उन पर आश्रित हो कर व्यतीत करना है, ना कि किसी वस्तु अथवा व्यक्ति पर आश्रित होकर।

नूपुर का यह अंक हमारे दैनिक जीवन में प्रभु को प्रथम रखे तथा उस एक प्रभु का शुद्ध प्यार तथा शुद्ध विश्वास प्रदान करे। तथा प्रभु हमारे अन्तर के विश्वास और प्यार को प्रतिदिन जीवन के आनन्द में प्रयोग करवायें, क्योंकि इनका प्रयोग ही हमारा जीवन उन्नत एवम् आनन्दमय बनायेगा।

सेवक-सन्तान,

विनय तथा शालिनी

1

Purpose of Life

Vāsāmsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya navāni grhṇāti narah aparāṇi, tathā śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇāni anyāni samyāti navāni dehī - As a man having cast away old garments wears new ones, so having cast away worn out bodies, the embodied enters into other new ones, says the Gita [2:22].

God gives a fresh man every day because in all His works there is freshness. When a life is born, God gives the soul a body which has sensory organs and a brain. This brain is a very powerful mechanism of a human body gifted by God. With this He gives the thinking power of the brain (mind) and various emotions with this 'package deal'. He above all gives us His breath and a part of Him.

Have we ever thought why does He give these assets to our soul and why don't souls just fly around? All these are the features or tools given to our soul to help it do the work God calls it to do, and ultimately attain Him through that. But what do we do: we keep running after worldly things like money, relations, and attitudes, get attached to these things and keep suffering. We keep pleasing our flesh, in the process we forget the 'Purpose of life'. It's like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa says: *The camel likes thorny bushes but the more it eats, the more it bleeds from its face. The worldly man who has not yet understood God also suffers so much agony, so much sorrow, yet he reverts back to his old self quite soon.* We in the process never realize why God has sent this soul in a human body. Each soul in a body has been given a prescribed work by God which it has to fulfill; we are here just not to gather space on this earth.

This can be seen from another perspective also. When a soul leaves its given body, what is left of it? Just a

mass of flesh which each one of us is in a great hurry to dispose off at the earliest, because if it is not done, it starts to stink and makes people around uncomfortable. So then, when this mass of flesh is just the carrier of the soul and has to perish someday then why do we keep making strategies for the flesh and not for the soul! Till the time we have not completed the work of the Soul we cannot get freedom from the cycle of birth and death and our souls will keep bearing the brunt of this life. But the day we realize this, we would be able to free our soul and let it get absorbed in God.

Let not you get carried away by the pleasures of this flesh, let not you forget your purpose of being here. Let not you be recognized by the way how you look, where you stay, or what you do because it is **'Who you are'** that ultimately matters and not what you do.

[There is a small but very significant incident behind this article which I would like to share with all. It was in the month of September last year in 2005 when God made me write this article. I started realizing God's work last year in summer. God and His teachings, those feelings were very new at that time in September. One day my maid's daughter, who had delivered a baby who at that time was seven days old, died. She, a young woman, left her body suddenly. From the worldly perspective if one might see, she was not taken care of properly after delivery. It pained my heart to see her body, but at the same time I prayed for her soul. This incident touched me very deeply because all I could think of was the seven day old baby, who was crying uncontrollably due to hunger. That afternoon I kept asking God the meaning of this whole incident and kept crying and fell asleep crying. Suddenly, after about half an hour I was woken up and taken straight to my computer and made to write this text. After my physical fingers had finished typing, I read this article and was amazed at the meaning of life it conveyed. After that day my whole understanding of our existence has changed. As Sri Ramana Maharishi once said, 'The dead are free from

bondage. Mourning is the chain forged by the mind to bind itself to the dead,' all pain and anguish of mine regarding the incident vanished after this. And God used me to bless the little child for his new life].

- Shalini Mehta

2

Put on God

It is said that M., a son and disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, lived Ramakrishna after Ramakrishna left his mortal frame. Many a sadhu-bhakta would go to him to forget the world and to see how Ramakrishna would walk, how he would speak and how he would sing. M., in his character and action, had completely dipped in Ramakrishna. His every action, every talk, every walk was in Ramakrishna, none else. In other words, he had put on Ramakrishna.

During a talk with devotees on 14 January 1925, he says, 'What do you mean by sannyasa? Only this that the mind has been surrendered to the Undivided One, God. The mind has been withdrawn from the trivial things, or the divided things or the world. To hear, the word *sannyasa* seems to be a heavy, very high sounding word. But its meaning is very simple - only this that one has put on the Bliss, one has put on God.'

Let us reflect on what M. says. First of all, it is a common notion that a sannyasi is one who has left his family, does not get into worldly activities and is living in a secluded place and usually wears ochre or white clothes. These are the external symbols of a sannyasi. But as Ramakrishna says, the first and foremost identification of a sadhu or a sannyasi or a holy or godly person is that he or she has renounced the world from his or her mind. This means even a person staying in a household can be a sannyasi. And if you see M.'s life, which is like no other disciple of Ramakrishna, he was a sannyasi in the household. He was married, went through the post-marriage difficulties to an extent that he went to commit suicide; he had children, he lived and stayed in the family throughout his life on the command of his Master and yet

more than 85% of the sadhus in the Ramakrishna family were produced by M. through the Gospel he wrote or his personal contact. Amazing, isn't it? What was in that man, that made him so close to Ramakrishna and God? The answer is: **he put on God.**

The first point that M. says: Surrendering the mind to the Undivided One or God. What does it mean? That God is in the Undivided form in each one of us, in every thing, living or non-living in this universe. Why we can not find Him is because we never open our heart to His Undivided existence. We see all the things around us in a divided form, things which are different from each other, things which seem to contradict one another, things the outer form of which attracts us, and we fail to see inside them. Inside them is the One Undivided. Thakur has given us a wonderful practical wisdom: That Undivided One is the numeral one (1) and the rest all in this world or worldly activity is a zero. If you put 1 first, then put all the zeroes, you will have a number of great magnitude (1 million, 1 billion, etc.), but if you put the zeroes first, you are going to end up with the number of smallest magnitude. Thus the first characteristic of sannyasa is to put God first, surrender your mind to Him. This means we need to only please Him, not our own flesh as well as the flesh around us. If we are focusing on rituals, or counting on numbers, if we are focusing on how many people are attending our spiritual function, what will *they* think or talk about us, then we are in no way pleasing God. In-fact we are pleasing the people (flesh) around us. I remember Rev. Mataji¹ telling me what Swami Nityatmananda mandated her to do: 1) do not make me a marketplace (of

¹ Ishwar Devi Gupta was a disciple of Swami Nityatmananda. She and her husband Mr. Dharm Pal Gupta and their family served Swami Nityatmananda for a long period of time from 1958 to 1975. In the later part of his life, Swami Nityatmananda made their place his home. God used her for more than 40 years to spread His Word.

spirituality); 2) do not advertise (your spirituality) 3) Do not put a signboard (of spirituality). He further said: 'In your temple Thakur and you would be there. And you would keep a *patasa*¹. as an offering, and pray sincerely to Him from your heart.' And in no manner I saw my mentor crave for the number of people or calling or pleasing people to come to her. As Thakur said, when a flower blooms in the forest, it doesn't have to send invitation to honey-bees. Meaning if a person realizes God or sincerely seeks to realize Him *only*, god-seekers and godly people come automatically. No need to send them invitation. Once a lady told Mataji, 'Your temple is so peaceful but I do not see many people here.' She at once replied, 'If you wish to see the Lord and get peace, come here. If you wish to see and meet people, go to some other place.' She was in no way a people pleaser. The only one she would please was the Lord. Therefore surrendering the mind to the Lord and pleasing Him alone is the first step in putting on God.

Next M. says: such a mind is withdrawn from the trivial things of the world, the divided things. Once you start loving Him, Thakur says, all other things drop down like old leaves. What does it mean? In the world, a person does so many things to gain name, fame, money, position, status, etc. All kind of manipulations are done by him in order to gain such things. But are they important to God? No. Even while living amidst such things, the mind of a God-realized soul remains withdrawn from them. Let us first look at M.'s life. He studied in the best schools of Calcutta and stood in the top ranks in his exams. He was an erudite scholar of Calcutta University. He taught in the best schools and colleges and later owned a flourishing school in Calcutta. All this intense activity outside, and yet his mind remained fixed on his Lord, always thinking, walking and talking God, nothing else. Let us look at one

¹. Sugar in the form of a light convex sweet drop

of his great disciples: Swami Nityatmananda. This man left the comfort and security of a big institution like Ramakrishna Math and Mission in 1938 to fulfill the call of God in his life - to spread the word of Ramakrishna as he had seen through the person of M. He did not know anyone when he left Calcutta for the north-western India. He left all his friends, contacts, and acquaintances behind. Who did he depend on? Only God! And he did not ever think how he would get the life and works of M. published? But he kept doing his part: diligently writing the conversations with M. living in a small room and doing tapasya in Rishikesh where God gave him companions who respected him and took care of him. Who provided that? And then when he fell ill in Hoshiarpur, who picked him up from the road and took him home and served him until he got well? It was God. Since he totally depended on God, none else, God not only took care of him, but brought him the publisher of M.'s life and conversations in 1958, a person who would continue his legacy in a manner much greater and grander than what he could even imagine when he left Calcutta. Who did this? God.

Sannyasa is not a play or showbiz, it's something to be lived inside every moment. Have you surrendered your ego to God? Do you know that 'e' (self-eulogy) in e-go has to be dropped to take you to Go-d (who is the common denominator of everything in this world)? Have you surrendered your intelligence in favour of God's intelligence? Have you stopped thinking that it is God who sends His people, and you can not gather them by inviting them? Have you stopped thinking that you can learn from others, including little children? Have you surrendered your plans to God, and prayed to Him to give you what He thinks is the best plan for you? Have you ever called on God sincerely, not to give things you want, but to thank him for what he's given you unconditionally, for His love,

and for what He has been doing for you, even without your asking or knowing? Have you ever tried to be a blessing to someone inspite of feeling hurt? Have you ever thought of your own shortcomings before pointing fingers at others? Have you ever thought of blessing some one else, instead of thinking about yourself all the time? If not, start today. You will see God working in your life and pouring love on you, so much that you can't even imagine receiving. Putting God first in your doings and depending solely on Him in your daily life is the second step to put on God.

Let us go back to what M. says next: 'To hear, the word *sannyasa* seems to be a heavy, very high sounding word.' It is a fact that most of the people seem to think about *sannyasa* as a highly complex religious practice and a *sannyasi* as an individual who is different from others in most respects. The beauty of *sannyasa* can be seen in Swami Nityatmananda's words told to Mataji once when he was explaining "yoga" to her: 'Yoga is nothing but union with God.' He would join index fingers of both his hands to symbolically show the union of an individual with God. 'And to live this union consistently every day is called *sannyasa*.' How can I do it in my life? By imbibing it in my character, by putting on God. All the external symbols of godliness are waste and misleading, if I am not following this simple principle in my life. My life has to be my walk with God in every thought and action, not just the talk.

M. says next: 'But its meaning is very simple - only this that one has put on the Bliss, one has put on God.' Put on God is the only practice one needs to do if one wants to go closer to Him. There is no other way. All ways, processes, procedures and practices are waste if they do not help one put on God in one's daily life. This is the essence of the life of the great.

First time Mataji met Swami Nityatmananda at the home of a family friend, Prabhakars, at Tanda Urmur in 1958, he told her (when she got up to ask a question meant to be answered for her husband): 'There is no limited concern in this world.' It means: Ask your own individual question. It means each one has to find one's own way to unite with God.

So come, let us put on God, each one of us. Each one of us has to strive *individually* to walk in God. We are children of God and children of Bliss, how can we ever forget to put on God!

- Vinay Mehta

Full Dependence leads to Joy

Sarvadharmān parityajya mām ekam śaraṇam vraja, aham tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ - Renounce all dharmas and take refuge in Me alone. I shall liberate you from all sins; grieve not - Gita 18:66.

The dictionary meaning of dependence is to rely on someone, to have trust, to have confidence, to have faith, to have belief in someone or something. Dependence is a state of needing something or someone especially in order to continue existing or operating.

Full dependence leads to joy, what and who are we talking about here? Full dependence on whom? Full dependence on God, our Lord, our Creator. The above verse from the Gita is self explanatory such that God Himself says to us: renounce all your worldly dependence and come to Me and I shall liberate you. What is a worldly person dependent on, in his life? He depends on his bank account which is dearest to him, without which he thinks that not one moment can he survive, on his relations (father, mother, spouse, daughter, son, brother, sister, friends etc.), on rituals, on his intelligence, on his job, on his ancestral property or his own property, on his astrologer or *guru-gaddi* (one word or one commandment from the mouth of the guru becomes a gospel for them), on stones (like topaz, ruby, neelam, moonga etc.) which they have been told to wear to correct their stars, and the list goes on. There are few who are dependent on all of the above items and there are some whose ratio of dependence on each varies. I was also a worldly person before I realized God and I was also dependent on relations, stones etc. When I realized one day that in spite of my

dependence on these things my problems in my life remained the same and no matter what I do, I keep running around the same circle over and over again without diversion. I was so very tired of resolving one issue and immediately getting into the other one and then some people predicting my future and giving me solutions, that I wanted to know something that could be completely fool proof, something that would help me to deal with the day to day happenings in my life and not just help me once in a while, and also something that could give me complete joy and make everyday of my life full of joy. Because I realized that it is not the bigger issues that bothered me more but the day to day happenings, the small nick-knacks which we call ups and downs of every day. So one day I sat down to sincerely pray, just pray (at that time it was not specifically meant for God as I didn't know much about Him). I prayed that there had to be some eternal power above everything and above everyone who is the Ultimate, and let that get revealed to me. How can a human being called an astrologer predict something for me when he himself cannot live a decent life devoid of problems? And then alone I was revealed God and His Word.

When we talk of full dependence here, what exactly does it mean? Sri Ramakrishna says '*Give your power of attorney to Him.*' A person gives the power of attorney of his property to only that person in whom he trusts the most, same way give your life's power of attorney to Him. We all have faith in some proportion or the other for God in us. We all believe in something and surely when we have major disasters in our lives the first thing we do is to run to God. But this is not full dependence. Full dependence means that you have put on God in your everyday life like we put on clothes, and come what may, in any circumstance no matter how bad it is, we have faith in Him and we totally depend on Him. Let me

explain this more. Sri Ramakrishna says: *God takes the burden of a devotee who is like an incapable child (akṣama bālaka)*. It means you need to everyday live before God like a small little child who has to depend for everything on her parents. We have to become like that in front of God. In Bible, Jesus says that *“Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it”* [Luke 18:17].

Why did Sri Ramakrishna take an example of a small child and not that of an adult, why did Jesus emphasize only about a small child and not an adult or even an older child? The reason is till the age of about two years, the child has no knowledge of right and wrong, good or bad, for the child what ever is told and projected, she takes it on face value. At this age the child does not know what is going on around her. All she knows is that these two persons (mother and father) who stay with me are my providers so she does not question them, but just asks. Whenever she is hungry, food is provided, whenever she is wet her diapers are changed and thus all her needs are met and there is full dependence of her on the parents. That's the reason a child is forever in joy and some people also call this time of childhood as life's golden years. What ever be the circumstances at home, a child's needs are met. Why? It is but natural for her parents to be her providers. For they love her unconditionally. Same is what God wants from us. He wants us to be like that small child and not reason like an adult. He wants that whatever be the circumstances He puts us in, we should have full faith in Him. And we need to know only this in our minds that whatever is happening is for our best interest and whatever will happen will also be for our best interest because **God is always good and is always in control**. But the moment we say, we have faith in Him, and then say 'but let me not take out the ring that my astrologer had

asked me to wear, or let me see what my friends or XYZ think or I rather depend on my bank balance or what I earn,' then we are not putting our full dependence on Him. God dislikes when we carry our back up plans with us, just in case it does not happen! All of the above are our backup plans, God does not want 10% or 85% of us, He wants 100% of us. It also pains Him when we don't fully depend on Him. It's a simple thing like if your child would not depend on you and rather trusts an outsider more than you, you'll definitely be hurt.

Bible in Proverbs 3:5-8 says, *Trust in Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.* Since you are not having full dependence on Him, you are also breeding fear in your mind. And where fear is (no matter for how menial a thing like food or situation etc.) there is no God. When we give our problems totally to Him with the belief that He is the one who will get us through and keep on having good faith, then He does, because He never lets His children down.

Bible says in Matthew 11:28-30 - *"Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."* Remember that how much ever a human being may try to solve the issues in his life he cannot have complete joy because he neither knows his past, present, nor the future. Only God knows our past, present and future as He is the author of it. So all that, we should have in our mind at all times is that -'We know Him who knows everything' and depend on Him.

- Shalini Mehta

पूर्ण आश्रय में ही आनन्द

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य माम् एकम् शरणम् व्रज, अहम् त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः - भगवद् गीता 18:66 [सब धर्मों को त्याग कर केवल मेरी शरण में आ जा। मैं तुम्हें तुम्हारी भूलों से मुक्ति दूंगा, शोक मत कर]।

शब्दकोष में आश्रय का अर्थ है - किसी वस्तु अथवा व्यक्ति पर आश्रित होना, विश्वस्त होना, भरोसा रखना, विश्वास करना। आश्रय ऐसी अवस्था है जिसमें अपने अस्तित्व के लिये अथवा कार्य के लिये किसी वस्तु या व्यक्ति विशेष की आवश्यकता होती है।

पूर्ण आश्रय पूर्ण आनन्द प्रदान करता है। यहां पर हम क्या और किसकी बात कर रहे हैं? पूर्ण आश्रित होना है प्रभु पर, ईश्वर पर, हमारे सृजनकर्ता पर। गीता के उपरोक्त श्लोक का अर्थ स्वतः-स्पष्ट है। भगवान कहते हैं - संसार पर अपना सारा आश्रय त्याग कर मेरे पास आ जा, मैं तुम्हें मुक्ति दूंगा। एक संसारी व्यक्ति अपने जीवन में किस पर आश्रित होता है? वह अपने धन पर, जो उसे अतिप्रिय है आश्रित है, जिसके बिना वह सोचता है कि वह एक क्षण भी नहीं जी पायेगा; अपने सम्बंधियों पर (पिता, माता, जीवनसाथी, पुत्री, पुत्र, भाई, बहन, मित्र इत्यादि पर); रीति रिवाजों पर; अपनी बुद्धि पर; अपनी नौकरी पर; अपनी पुश्तैनी सम्पत्ति पर; अपने ज्योतिषी पर या अपने गुरु-गद्दी पर (गद्दी पर आसीन गुरु जिसके मुख से निकला एक शब्द ही उसके लिये प्रभु का आदेश बन जाता है); कीमती पत्थरों पर (पुखराज, मूंगा, नीलम, इत्यादि) जो उसके ग्रहों को ठीक रखने में सहायी कहे जाते हैं; इत्यादि, यह सूची बढ़ती ही रहेगी। कुछ लोग ऐसे होते हैं जो उपरोक्त सभी वस्तुओं पर आश्रित होते हैं और कुछ का कुछ वस्तुओं

पर कम-ज्यादा आश्रय होता है। मैं भी एक सांसारिक जन थी। प्रभु प्राप्ति से पहले मैं भी अपने सम्बन्धियों, कीमती पत्थरों पर आश्रित थी। एक दिन जब मुझे यह बोध हुआ कि मेरे इन वस्तुओं पर आश्रित रहने पर भी, मेरे सब कुछ करने पर भी, मेरे जीवन की कठिनाईयां जैसे ही बनी रहीं हैं तथा मैं एक वृत्ताकार पर बिना मुड़े घूमती जा रही हूँ। मैं इससे पूरी तरह थक चुकी थी कि मैं एक मुश्किल हल कर दूसरी मुश्किल में पड़ जाती हूँ तथा कुछ सज्जन मेरे भविष्यत में क्या होने वाला है, उसके समाधान खोजते रहें। मैं जानना चाहती थी एक ऐसी वस्तु जो निश्चित रूप से काम करे, जो मेरे प्रतिदिन जीवन में मेरी सहायता करे ना कि कभी कभी। ऐसा कुछ जो मुझे पूर्ण आनन्द दे तथा मेरे जीवन को पूर्ण आनन्द से भर दे। मुझे यह बोध हुआ कि मुझे बड़ी बड़ी मुश्किलें नहीं बल्कि छोटी छोटी घटनाएं, जिन्हें प्रतिदिन का उतार-चढ़ाव कहा जाता है, ज्यादा परेशान करती थीं। इसलिये एक दिन मैं प्रार्थना करने बैठी, केवल प्रार्थना (मुझे उन दिनों प्रभु का इला पता न था, इसलिये यह प्रभु को प्रार्थना नहीं थी)। मैंने प्रार्थना की कि सब वस्तुओं, व्यक्तियों के ऊपर एक शाश्वत सत्ता होनी चाहिये जो सबसे परम हो तथा वह मुझे प्रकाशित हो। कैसे एक मनुष्य ज्योतिषी मेरे लिये भविष्य कथा कर सकता है, जब वह अपना जीवन मुश्किलों के बिना नहीं व्यतीत कर सकता? तब ही मुझे प्रभु का प्रकाश प्राप्त हुआ।

पूर्ण आश्रय से हम क्या समझते हैं? श्री रामकृष्ण कहते हैं : प्रभु को आम-मुख्त्यारी दे दो। अपनी सम्पत्ति की मुख्त्यारी व्यक्ति उसी जन को देता है जिसमें उसका अगाध विश्वास हो। इसी प्रकार हमें प्रभु को अपने जीवन की आम-मुख्त्यारी देनी है। हममें से प्रायः सभी को, कम या ज्यादा, ईश्वर पर विश्वास है। हम सब किसी ना किसी पर विश्वास रखते हैं तथा निश्चय ही जब कोई विपद आती है तो हम प्रथम प्रभु की ओर ही भागते हैं। लेकिन यह पूर्ण आश्रित

होना नहीं। पूर्ण आश्रित होने का अर्थ है कि हमने अपने प्रतिदिन के जीवन में ईश्वर को इसप्रकार धारण कर लिया है जैसे हम अपने कपड़े पहनते हैं ; और चाहे हमारे जीवन में कितना भी अच्छा-बुरा क्यों ना हो, हम प्रभु में पूर्ण विश्वास रखते हुए केवल उसी पर आश्रित हैं। आइये, इसे कुछ विस्तार से जानें। श्री रामकृष्ण कहते हैं कि भगवान अक्षम बालकवत् भक्त का भार लेते हैं। इसका अर्थ है कि हमें अपने दैनन्दिन जीवन में प्रभु के समक्ष एक छोटे बालक की भान्ति रहना है जो पूर्णतया अपने मां बाप पर आश्रित है। हमें प्रभु से ऐसा सम्बन्ध बनाना है। बाईबल में यीशु ने कहा है - भरोसा रखो, मैं कहता हूँ जो कोई भी प्रभु का राज्य प्राप्त करेगा वह छोटे बालक की भान्ति ही प्राप्त करेगा, किसी और तरह नहीं प्राप्त कर सकेगा [ल्यूक - 18:17]। श्री रामकृष्ण ने क्यों अक्षम बालक की बात कही, यीशु ने क्यों छोटे बालक की बात कही, किसी बालिग की नहीं? इसका कारण है कि प्रायः दो वर्ष से छोटे बालक को अच्छे-बुरे, ठीक-गलत का ज्ञान नहीं होता तथा उसे जो जैसा बताया जाता है, वह उसे वैसा ही मान लेता है। इस आयु में बच्चे को उसके आसपास क्या चल रहा है, का पता नहीं होता। उसको पता होता है तो केवल अपने माता-पिता का, जो उसके संभरक हैं। इसलिये वह प्रश्न नहीं पूछता, बल्कि केवल मांगता है। जब भी उसे भूख लगती है, उसका खाना तैयार है; जब भी वह गीला है, तो उसके कपड़े बदल दिये जाते हैं। इसप्रकार उसकी सभी आवश्यकतायें पूरी होती हैं। वह अपने माता-पिता पर पूर्णतया आश्रित है। यही कारण है कि ऐसा बालक सर्वदा आनन्द में है, और लोग इसे जीवन का स्वर्ण युग भी कहते हैं। घर में चाहे कैसी भी परिस्थिति क्यों न हो, उसकी आवश्यकतायें पूरी होती हैं। उसके माता-पिता के लिये यह स्वभाविक है कि वे उसके संभरक हैं क्योंकि वे उसे प्यार करते हैं। प्रभु के साथ भी ऐसा ही है। वह हमें छोटे बालक की भान्ति चाहता है, न कि एक बहस करते हुए बालिग की

भान्ति। वह चाहता है कि जो कोई भी परिस्थितियों में वह हमें डाले, हम प्रभु में पूर्ण विश्वास रखें तथा हम अपने मन में केवल यह सोचें कि जो कुछ भी घट रहा है, हमारे अच्छे के लिये ही है तथा जो भी आगे घटेगा हमारे अच्छे के लिये ही होगा। क्योंकि प्रभु सर्वदा अच्छे हैं तथा सब कुछ उनके नियंत्रण में है। लेकिन जैसे ही हम कहते हैं कि भगवान में तो मुझे विश्वास है पर मैं ज्योतिषी की दी हुई अंगूठी नहीं उतारूंगा, या मैं अपने सम्बन्धी-दोस्तों से पूछता हूँ कि क्या कहते हैं, या मेरा धन अथवा आमदनी ही मेरी सहायक है, इत्यादि, तो हम अपने पूरे विश्वास से प्रभु पर आश्रित नहीं हो पा रहे। प्रभु को यह अच्छा नहीं लगता कि हम अपने backup plans (यह नहीं होगा तो यह सही) प्रभु के साथ लेकर चलें। उपरोक्त सभी हमारे backup plans हैं। प्रभु हमारा 10 प्रतिशत अथवा 85 प्रतिशत नहीं चाहते। वे हमारा 100 प्रतिशत, हमारा पूरा मन, हमारा पूरा हृदय, हमें पूर्ण चाहते हैं। हमारे पूरी तरह आश्रित ना होने से प्रभु को अच्छा नहीं लगता। यह वैसा ही है जैसे हमारा अपना बच्चा हम पर विश्वास न रख कर कोई तीसरे का भरोसा करे; हमारे मन को तो दुःख पहुंचेगा ही।

बाइबल में प्रौवर्बज़् [नीतिवचन] 3: 5-8 में कहा है -¹ प्रभु पर पूरे हृदय से विश्वास रखो; तथा अपनी बुद्धि का सहारा मत लो; अपने सभी कार्यों में प्रभु के आभारी रहो; प्रभु तुम्हारा पथ प्रदर्शन करेंगे। अपनी ही आंखों में तुम ज्ञानी मत बनो, प्रभु का सादर भय रखो तथा बुरे कर्मों से दूर रहो। यह तुम्हारे शरीर को स्वस्थ रखेगा तथा तुम्हारी हड्डियों को मजबूती देगा।¹ चूंकि तुम्हारा प्रभु पर पूर्ण आश्रय नहीं है, तो मन में भय उत्पन्न होगा। और जहां भय (किसी भी प्रकार का छोटे से छोटा भय : खाने का, परिस्थिति का, धन का, इत्यादि) है, वहां प्रभु नहीं। जब हम अपनी समस्याएं पूर्णतया प्रभु को दे देते हैं इस विश्वास के साथ कि वही

हमें पार उतारेगा तथा हम प्रभु पर दृढ़ विश्वास रखे रखते हैं, तभी प्रभु कार्य करते हैं, क्योंकि वे अपने बच्चों को कभी नहीं छोड़ते।

बाइबल में [मैथ्यू - 11:28-30] कहा है - ¹ हे सब परिश्रम करने वाले और बोझ से दबे हुए लोगो, मेरे पास आओ; मैं तुम्हें विश्राम दूंगा। मेरा जुआ¹ अपने ऊपर उठा लो; और मुझसे से सीखो; क्योंकि मैं विनम्र हूँ और मन में दीन हूँ; तुम अपने मन में विश्वास पाओगे। क्योंकि मेरा जुआ सहज और मेरा बोझ हल्का है।¹ याद रखें कि मनुष्य मुश्किलों को हल करने की जितनी भी कोशिश कर ले, उसे पूर्णतया आनन्द नहीं मिल सकता क्योंकि उसे अपना भूत, भविष्यत् तथा वर्तमान नहीं पता। केवल प्रभु को ही हमारा भूत, भविष्यत् तथा वर्तमान पता है क्योंकि वही इनके रचयिता हैं। इसीलिये हमारे हृदय-मन में सर्वदा यही भाव रहना चाहिये - हम उसे जानते हैं जो सब कुछ जानता है। तथा उस पर पूर्णतया आश्रित हो कर रहें।

- भावार्थ : विनय मेहता

¹ बैलगाड़ी या हल के आगे की लकड़ी जो पशुओं के कंधे पर रखी जाती है।

Importance of the Word

How should a *sadhaka*¹ view the worldly life? The clue is given in the Gita 4:24 as follows:

Brahma arpaṇam brahma haviḥ brahma agnau brahmaṇā hutam, brahma eva tena gantavyam brahma karma samādhinā

Brahma Brahman **arpaṇam** the oblation **brahma** Brahman **haviḥ** the clarified butter **brahma agnau** in the fire of Brahman **brahmaṇā** by Brahman **hutam** is offered **brahma** Brahman **eva** only **tena** by Him **gantavyam** shall be reached **brahma karma samādhinā** by the man who is absorbed in action which is Brahman

The oblation is Brahman, the clarified butter is Brahman, offered by Brahman in the fire of Brahman; unto Brahman verily he goes who cognizes Brahman alone in his action.

He who holds himself the agent to the performance of sacrifice cherishes the feeling of distinction between himself, the Deity to be propitiated, the things offered, the medium of the fire and so on. But he who takes to jnana-yajna, the process of enlightenment, views all these as Brahman, the Thing-in-Itself.

Consuming the daily food regularly is obligatory on all including the enlightened; but the latter convert eating itself into jnana-yajna. The food, the eater of it, the digestion - all these are mere modifications of Brahman even as the waves are of the sea. The one established in *brahmāvasthā*, in this wise state attains Brahman.

¹. One who sincerely seeks God

The above verse has been taken from the Bhagvad Gita as translated in English by Swami Chidbhavananda. The commentary thereafter is also by Swami Chidbhavananda. I would like to share the importance of this shloka in our everyday life that I realized after I read it. I used to see my husband recite this shloka every time we would eat at home or outside, before we partook anything. One day I asked him its meaning and which scripture it belonged to. He told me the essence of the shloka and said that this was from the Bhagvad Gita. We then searched the verse and after reading the full meaning realized its true importance in the sense that it is God who has become all things. And thereafter I also started reciting it on every occasion including even when I cook and serve food. I think it is very important for us to know the sure and definite meaning of the verse, whenever we recite or read from any scripture, be it Gita, Kathamrita, Guru Granth Sahib, or Bible. Many a times we recite mechanically without knowing a verse's meaning. The reason is our mind does not grasp or understand the true importance of the verse until we know its meaning. When we know the meaning and then speak out that verse, our mind registers it in the sub-conscious or in other words it is able to place it deep in our heart. And we began to see the verse happening in our daily life. This verse also inspired me to read the Bhagvad Gita thereafter.

- Shalini Mehta

6

Letters

1

This letter by Swami Nityamananda to Mataji¹, was often quoted by her, during mentoring of the bhaktas. At times our circumstances make us feel that God is punishing us. However, these trials, as Swamiji says in this letter, are necessary to raise our mind's level and to bring us closer to God. And God puts us through them only to the extent we can bear, since He is all good and all caring all the time.

Om

Swami Nityatmananda,
C/o Sri. K. J. Khosla,
516 R Model Town, Jullundur

14-January-1960

My dear Guptaji,

Many thanks for your kind postcard. I learned from Mr. S. S. Khosla all about Mannoji. Today my host Mr. K.J. Khosla will see you all. These trials are very hard indeed but we have no other alternative but to submit to Him, our Eternal Father-Mother. All for good, let us try to understand this by His grace. Love & blessings to your good self . . .

Affectionately,
Nityatmananda

Very dear Mannoji,

When Mother punishes us it is all for our good. Because She is all good. But we can't understand it at once. We humbly pray to Her, may She give us strength to forbear this trial. Surely, this will lift your mind to majestic heights, to God's Blessed Feet.

¹ Mrs. Ishwar Devi Gupta. People addressed her differently as Mataji, Didiji, Mummy, Mannoji, etc.

I pray to God every moment for your speedy recovery. I remember you always. May God make you alright very soon. My heartfelt love and blessings to you dear Mannoji.

Yours ever in the Lord,
Nityatmananda

2

In the letter below, Swami Nityatmananda presents the state of two of his devotees: he is disturbed with the first at his indisciplined attitude whereas he's happy with the second one on learning that he wants to dedicate his remaining life to God's work. Expounding this he says, God gets his work done only through toys. A toy here means one who has surrendered his whole self to God and is available for God's calling and whatever work God calls him or her to do. We need to see through ourselves: are we ready for God's calling or are we clinging to our ego and its little world?

Om Sri Sri Ramakrishna Sharnam

Swami Nityatmananda,
Tulsi Math, Rishikesh P.O.

30-March-1970, 1.45 p.m.

My dear Mummy¹,

Thakur bless you and all. Three hours earlier I have written a card to Guptaji - expressing my agony at Z for his unconscious foolish action.

¹. Swamiji used to address Mrs. Ishwar Devi Gupta as Mummy in later part of his life, after Thakur and Ma (whom he depended solely on) showed him in 1964 that Thakur had chosen her for publishing God's Word and the Holy Mother had chosen her for his physical well-being. In the first letter, Swamiji is addressing her as Mannoji, based on her nick name Manno. In the second letter, 10 years later, he's addressing her as Mummy. We can easily understand thus, the state of Swamiji's mind: a child talking to his mother, who represents Thakur-Ma to him in this world. Through this action he shows us that in God's world there is no relevance of age, gender, education, talent, riches, occupation (sannyasi or householder) etc. What matters is how much you *love* Him and how you *live* Him *each moment, each day*.

Now at 1 p.m. Ardhendu's letter tells me: Suresh Babu's only occupation in life henceforth will be Sri Ma Darshan.

I am sending the letter (in Bengali) itself. After reading it, you may send it to me or retain it with yourself if you like. I am translating the most important portion (3rd para):

"Sri Ma Darshan's work has begun by his (Suresh Babu's) wishes. Because, as he says, to pass his time at present and to keep him engaged, no other work does he have at present, greater than Sri Ma Darshan's work. The remaining days of his life, he will not attend to the worldly work. He will spend the remaining days of his life in doing Thakur's, Swamiji's work and his Gurudeva's works of printing and publishing."

The other portions (of the letter) you read and translate for Guptaji. Thakur engaged you in His work at your death bed. So also he has engaged Suresh Babu in His work at his death bed.

So let us believe that Sri Ma Darshan is Thakur's work He will get it done by me, you, Suresh Babu and Guptaji, even against all our protests and unwillingness.

So He has made you a "toy" in his hands. And only toys can work for God – not pundits or heroes.

Your depression will go away. After illness such depression is natural to all people. Poor Z thinks that the Trust has no home of its own. So I shall procure this land for the Trust's home.

I have written to him: at Hoshiarpur, Sardarji at least half a dozen times wanted to give land for ashram, but I refused. Even at Banur I can have plenty of land, but I will not.

By accepting suitable and profitable gifts we will entangle the Trust with small land or property. Ramakrishna Mission does not accept land or property conditionally. They say, we must have the power to sell. And they have sold many properties and utilized money for the good of people.

Our entire energy must be engaged in getting

1. the Bengali books printed, and
2. then English and the Hindi Books.

Chandigarh will be the headquarters for the next ten years or more. Even if the Morni Hills project materializes, we can shift there soon.

That land is outside his Tehsil and town, in a village. Z wants that, but should we entangle the Trust for that? He can make a Prakashan Sabha and take the land in that name.

Both you and Guptaji may write to Z to desist from that effort i.e. he must not accept land in the name of the Trust. Why the sacred Trust should be dragged in favour of personal whims?

If we want anything we may consult (each other). Afterwards we can do with the approval of members, seniors and superiors. In any case if I am called a guru, bhaktas should obey me in matters spiritual. In their private activities, they may hear and obey or not!

Anyway good news Suresh Babu made to publish Sri Ma Darshan. Blessings to you, Guptaji, Guddi . . .

Affectionately,
Swamiji

* * *

God does not come Where shame, hatred and fear exist

*'Shame, hatred and fear do not let one attain Him', said Sri Ramakrishna. The same is echoed in Sri Guru Granth Sahib in the first verse itself: **One Universal Creator God. The Name is Truth. Creative Being Personified. No Fear. No Hatred, Image of the Undying, beyond birth, Self-existent** [Japu, 1:1].*

Shame - The dictionary meaning of shame is bad feeling, an uncomfortable feeling or of being ashamed of your own or someone else's behavior, or to cause (something) by comparison to seem not to be of high standard.

Sri Ramakrishna impressed upon three things as said above, that keep you away from loving God. Shame is one of them. There are many things that people feel shameful about in their lives. Some people feel shameful to take God's name in front of their friends who are *cool dudes*; some people, mostly men, feel shameful to do basic household chores because of their male ego ('what would people think of me if they see me doing it') and most of the time we don't even know who *they* are and surprisingly we'll find that these people actually hold no importance in our lives. I have also seen women who feel shameful of holding their own child, and feel proud to have a maid carry her; some people feel shameful of their parents because they are not too educated or moneyed or because of their particular habits; some parents feel shameful of their children because their children did something that was not acceptable to the people around; some people are shameful of themselves because of their past actions, and they keep on carrying that shame in their life; some are

shameful of how they look, or sometimes even of their simplicity or honesty. The list can go on.

Most of us speak all kinds of things in public, about politics, about fashion, about economy, about government, about whose neighbor said and did what. But how many of us intend to talk about God in public, speak about our experiences of going to a spiritual place or how soothing a spiritual experience is? This is missing in most of the people. Why? Because people feel shameful to speak about God, they feel they will not be thought of someone who is up to date (cool) or of high standard and people will find them boring. Sri Ramakrishna, while mentoring his disciples, says to the Doctor (Dr. Mahendra Lal Sarkar), *"That I am a big man and I dance uttering 'Hari Hari.' When big people hear of it, what will they think of me? It would be a shame if they were to say, 'I say brother, the Doctor was dancing uttering 'Hari, Hari', please give up such an idea."* Shame leads one to become a people pleaser, and who ever is a people pleaser can never become a God pleaser.

Another most prominent notion in people is that they feel spirituality or believing in God is older generation's hobby, people who have lived much of their lives and have nothing much to do, and therefore to vile away time they now need to spend time with God. This is absolutely erroneous, because at any time in our lives if we put God first and rest of the worldly work next, we begin to enjoy life with everlasting peace from that very moment. If we feel shameful to put Him in our lives and do our actions only to impress others we are only adding zeroes in our spiritual account, the only account we carry when we die. Here I would like to share something interesting with you. Once I was surfing the internet and happened to receive a mail from one of my old acquaintances. She asked me what I was doing. When I told her that I was trying to go deep in my walk with God and also had friends who were getting healed through me by the Word

of God, she was amazed and said 'but you are too young for all this, and right now you've so much to do in your life.' We need to shed this mentality of shame in talking about God and doing God's work.

Hatred - The dictionary meaning of hatred is a strong feeling of dislike or discontentment towards someone or something.

Why has Thakur pin-pointed hatred? The sole reason for this is that, God is love and love alone. God understands no language but love. He is all love and that is what He gives us and the same He wants from His children (that is what we are). Hatred is utterly disliked by God and it pains Him when He sees His children in hatred. Let me quote you an example here. Suppose someone starts hating your child for some reason known to that person, would you like to entertain that person in your life? No, in fact you'll not even feel like looking at his face. Likewise we all are children of God whom He loves equally, then how do you think does God feel when we show hatred or discontentment towards someone? Some people get so vengeful in hatred that they forget who they are and ultimately bring shame on themselves. Even if some one has wronged you, forgive that person and bless him or her, for you are no one to judge and He alone is your vindicator. Hatred does not harm the person you hate but produces negative feelings in your own self which are very harmful to you and leads to emotional and physical problems. So ultimately it is not the person whom you hate gets affected but you yourself. Therefore rightly has Thakur asked to hate none but love everyone.

Fear - The dictionary meaning of fear is an unpleasant emotion or thought that you have when you are frightened or worried by something dangerous, painful, unpleasant or bad that is happening or might happen.

Where fear is God is missing. This is my personal testimony, that fear of anything, literally anything, can never let God come in your life. The simple reason for this is that if you have slightest of fear, you are not trusting God to the fullest and you've not surrendered yourself completely to Him. People, who live under fear, small or big, are also surrounded by problems all the time, because then they take their daily happenings as their destiny. There are different kinds of fears people have: fear of losing money, fear of losing job, fear of not growing professionally, fear of washing clothes on a Thursday, fear of a haircut or a shave on Tuesday, fear of eating particular eatables and the list is endless. When you live in fear of any kind you are either living in the past or your future. What about your present, your now? God is always "now", right here, right now, this is the only truth. We never say God was there or will be there, we always address God in the present tense that He is here.

One day I was talking to some acquaintances of mine and I happened to speak to them about this topic, immediately the reaction was: 'Well it's not possible to be free from fear; you always have a little bit remaining.' I said, 'With God all things are possible.' Once you surrender to Him in totality He will then take care of all your issues. If you keep faith in Him and anytime you feel fearful of something, say 'God is in control'. See how the fear vanishes. Then people also bind themselves with unnecessary rituals which are actually all man-made but they somehow connect it to God's will and start living a fearful life. God is the simplest, most uncomplicated and most beautiful Being. Remember, any ritual that is not enhancing personal growth and is instead adding fear to the life of a person or a family has not been prescribed by God. Most of the time people get bound by so many of their self-made rituals, that they make their own life, as well the life of people around them miserable and full of

fear. I myself at one time did not wash my hair on Thursdays and soon realized that it was absolutely dumb. Many of the people I see around me are still tied down by the age old rituals. There is a family who believes in a particular ritual, because of which the position of the stars does not allow a father to see the face of his new born child for 30 or 40 days, in a particular constellation. You got to believe in the Creator who made these stars; you got to depend on Him rather than stones or stars. Don't you think, even the rituals like dowry, or heavy booty by the girl's family on the birth of a son, or making the eunuchs dance on the occasion of son's birth and marriage, are man-made rituals. What we actually do with these kinds of rituals is, we tie ourselves down in shackles of pleasing people and our flesh, and restrict our growth. We live in fear thinking if we don't do such and such thing it will get bad luck, so on and so forth. This does not impress God in any way. God wants us to live a blissful life which is free of tension and pressures. He wants all His children to be happy like we want our own children to be happy all the time. I am yet to see one family who follows these rituals and is free from problems in life, or is a happy peaceful family. But one thing is sure: once you depend on Him rather than rituals you will not fear problems in your life since you follow the life planned by Him. For God each day is the same that went by or the one that is about to come, every moment is auspicious, because it is His. He is the time, He is the day, He is the night, and He is every breath that you take.

Rightly we need to put Him first in our life, shedding our shame, hatred and fear.

- Shalini Mehta

God teaches us everyday

Recently God made me go through three situations which were quite a learning experience for me. Therefore I would like to share them with all. These situations reflect common thinking and provoked me to think about where I was in my journey with God. There are lessons for me here, after I have started enjoying and understanding God, His ways and the people whom He has created.

In the first instance, we had gone to the market to buy some household items in Sector 19 Chandigarh, when we happened to see few representatives from the Brahma Kumaris Organization, who had displayed big charts on a number of stands and were distributing pamphlets to people. They were describing how to live in this world and some details about the theory of Hindu religion, way of life and God in a crisp manner. They were inviting people to join their seven day training camp to learn those principles. I found their effort very encouraging because for the first time I saw someone coming forward in public, in a market place, to explain about God openly. Being a student of God, I wanted to know what they were saying about God and what ways they subscribed to. The most important thing conveyed was that one should know the self (Who we are) first and then try to know God, because only then one can reach Him. Secondly their last poster portrayed a family who is under burden and bickering all the time but when they start putting God first in all their activities they turn into a happy family. I learnt the following from the whole experience:

1. One needs to know the self first and then can one reach God. At that moment God made me realize that I had also followed the same path as I had been practicing

mind control for six years and later came into the fold of God last year summer. Why is this necessary? The reason is when you know your own self, you come to observe yourself, your mind and then you are able to gradually learn who you are in God, by His grace. Once someone remarked that God punishes people who do wrong. I told her that I realize God is all good and always positive. He is all Love and forgiving, no matter how grave a mistake we might make. It is we who punish ourselves. It is our mind who punishes us for the deeds we perform, good or bad, since it returns us those very patterns and ways we think and act about. Truth is that, our thoughts make our words, our words make our attitude, our attitude makes our character and ultimately it's our character which makes our destiny. And the ultimate destiny of everyone's life is God alone and not the material things we attach ourselves to.

2. The poster which displayed remembering God first before every work in our daily life could have been put prior to the religious theory posters. As Thakur said, the time is less in this age. One really needs to know quickly in a simple and straightforward manner as to how God can be lived and be helpful in our daily life, rather than getting strained by the jargon of scriptures. Today people do not want to know God through theory since they do not have that much patience. The use of big heavy words used by present day "spiritual" leaders, go above everyone's head instead of helping and going deeper inside. What an ordinary person, burdened with the daily chores of life, wants to know is how God can help him and how can he live Him in everyday life.
3. We need to bring a simpler understanding of God in our shrines, be it a Gurudwara, a Temple, a Mosque, or

Church in a manner as simple as to quickly make a mind fall in love with Him. In fact, the motto of our Foundation is to **Put on God** in our lives rather than think that God is some super natural power available only to a selected few. We need to practice that God is our own, and is available to everyone who wants Him sincerely. Listen to what Thakur said: He is our own. We just have to love Him.

4. I found that the word meditation confuses people nowadays since so many practices of meditation have floated around and one feels at loss when putting it into practice. Meditation is not about sitting in a particular posture with eyes closed and trying to see something in yourself or breathing in and out trying your level best to relax. Meditation is nothing but thinking about something all day long. And instead of thinking on the problems of life, if we think all day long on His word and character, it is meditation. Thakur has given a wonderful example for this. He says when you have a boil on your back, all the time you keep thinking about its pain while doing your work or even while taking rest. Thinking about God in the same manner while you do every activity is nothing but meditation.

In the second instance, recently I visited one of my friend's home and during conversation about God with her mother-in-law, she happened to put across a very significant question to me that - What do you mean by 'God realized'? She is the first person to ask me such a question. I have always felt that God realization is more to be felt than to be explained in words. Its something like you have one kind of feeling when you construct your house and totally another when you start staying in that house. In the simplest way, being God realized is to put on God, when God becomes a part and parcel of your life:

when you only talk and think God, when you start to live Him in your daily life and no matter whatever grave circumstances you are faced in your life your faith in Him does not move even one bit. As Sri Krishna says in the Gita [6:22] - *yam labdhvā ca aparam lābham manyate na adhikam tataḥ, yasmin sthitaḥ na duḥkhena guruṇā api vicālyate* - ***And having gained which he thinks there is no greater gain than that, wherein established he is not shaken even by the heaviest affliction.*** This verse from the Gita shows what a God realized person is. Guru Granth Sahib also elucidates character of such a person: ***That person, who in the midst of pain, does not feel pain, who is not affected by pleasure, affection or fear, and who looks alike upon gold and dust; Who is not swayed by either slander or praise, nor affected by greed, attachment or pride; who remains unaffected by joy and sorrow, honor and dishonor; who renounces all hopes and desires and remains desire-less in the world; who is not touched by sexual desire or anger - within his heart, God dwells. That man, blessed by Guru's Grace, understands this way. O Nanak, he merges with the Lord of the Universe, like water with water*** (Raag Soratha, Ninth Mehla, 633: 1574-1580). It gave me immense satisfaction to share God's word with her.

In the third instance, I visited a book shop which keeps Christian literature. I happened to strike a conversation with the lady on the counter about God. She was later joined by her colleague. One of the ladies was born in a Hindu family and the other one in a Sikh family and both had accepted the belief in Christian way of life. The moment I spoke to the first one, she said according to Bible only Jesus is the way to reach God. Initially I was taken aback by what she said, because whatever I have loved and lived God till now, it has been not through Jesus. I think for each person God has a unique plan. The ladies out there asked my name and said they would pray for me to God to give me a deeper revelation on this. I

firmly believe in what Thakur said that religion is just a way to reach God and He has created various ways to reach Him. And both these ladies stuck to their argument (or rather belief) and they were referring to the verse in the Bible where Jesus says to his disciples in John 14:6 that "*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*" If you read the verse in the context of the Chapter it is written that, Jesus tells Philip to believe in him and the Father God who is in him. And at that time and place for those people there was nobody (present in the physical sense) except Jesus to show them the path to God. Therefore what's written in Bible is correct, but our understanding gets skewed because of our attitude.

The point I am trying to put here is that God has always sent (and will keep sending) his special Sons to spread His word for different kind of people living at different places in different times according to their needs, to raise them from the animalistic level to Godliness. All prophets like Sri Ramakrishna, Jesus, Chaitanya Deva, Guru Nanak Dev, and Buddha are God's Sons. It's good to keep a strong faith of yours in a particular path, that's good Thakur says so, but to say that it is '*the only*' way is staunchness and rigidity. You are not helping yourself by saying so. You are keeping yourself away from God, because God is beyond limits of human thinking. And people who really seek and love Him want to know from every place and person possible about Him alone, rather than proving that only their faith is right. When you realize God, a great deal of humility comes in you where you do not sit and argue about 'the paths' but just enjoy the bliss of His presence and His word, from whichever path may it come. And therefore one must be very sure to know and understand what you read from the scriptures, and if you don't understand, pray to God and He will reveal to you the exact meaning of His Word. The second

thing what one of ladies said was: 'only through Christianity have I been forgiven for my sins.' To me God is ever-forgiving no matter what path we chose to reach Him. It is our mind which needs to believe that 'I am forgiven'. As Sri Ramakrishna said, "Both bondage and freedom are in the minds of men. 'I am a liberated soul; I am the child of God; none can bind me' - if one assumes this attitude with firm conviction one becomes liberated. If a man bitten by a venomous snake strongly suggests to himself that there is no poison, he falls no prey to the bite."

- Shalini Mehta

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