

Vital Spiritual Energy from within Can Make Your Sādhanā Miraculous



- Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya

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Ho Jāye”

based on a discourse

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Sisters and Brothers,

*let us begin with the collective chanting of the
Gayatri Mantra:*

Om Bhūr Buvah Swah, Tatsaviturvareṇyam
Bhargo Devasya Dhīmahī, Dhiyo Yonah
Pracodayāt ॥

Prāṇa : The Life-Energy

A person's identity remains the same when he is dead. You would continue to refer to him by the same name; his face in the photographs would remain what it was when he was alive. Every one who knew him will recognize that face, as before. Unless it is damaged due to some accident or so, the face of a dead-body looks the same as what it was when the person was alive. Those of you who have seen some relative's or acquaintance's dead body must have noticed it! A person, who was alive moments before, is now dead; no change in the

appearance of his body, but it is now his dead-body. Why? What has changed? You may say that his heart is no longer beating; his body is not moving, etc. But you see, the biochemical activities inside continue in the dead-body as well! That is what accounts for its gradual biodegradation. So instead of heartbeat and other normal reactions, some new activities start in the body. If no preservatives are applied, these reactions progress very rapidly. What was that which used to prevent these degrading reactions earlier? What was that because of which there was auto-regulation of the body-functions including the heartbeats and the brain impulses?

It is the energy of consciousness-force (chetanā or chit-śakti) that is no longer available to the body. It is this vital spiritual energy (prāṇa) because of which the body (and the person who was identified by the name given to the body) was alive. The physical components, material form, appearance, and the name and identity of the body are the same but it is dead and cannot do anything, cannot even prevent its degradation, if there is no chit-śakti in it. You may keep it in the graveyard, build samādhi (tomb) on it, take its photograph, save its external physical existence (as mummy) by filling it with

chemical preservatives and applying medicines on the skin, but by no means you can make it do anything on its own. Because, it is dead!

Do you notice a somewhat similar difference in the idols/statues or the pictures of gods kept in a shop or in a sculpture museum and those enshrined in a temple? Both the kinds are made up of pulp-papers, metal or wood, but those in the shop or museum are not worshiped. Why?

The Importance Of Prāṇa-Pratiṣṭhā

You may go to a shop or exhibition of sculptures or idols in the shape and images of manifested forms of gods. You will find they are also lying there as other artifacts, statues or effigies. Be that of Lord Ganesha, Lakshmi, or any other manifestation of divine powers, they are nothing except some archetype of carved stones, metals etc. At times they might be kept haphazardly, even upside down, or crowded on a stand or even on the floor...! But no one – including the idolaters or idol-worshippers finds anything unusual in it. No one cares whether the place around is cleaned, whether there is dust on the statues or images. In fact, one hardly even notices it.

But what if the same idol was there in a temple, in the sanctum sanctorum of a holy shrine, or at a worship center? Same face, same form, same image of the manifestation of a god. But now it is worshipable! One won't tolerate or forgive anyone trying to touch or displace it? Now it is well decorated, worshipped, looked after by the believers as god personified. Earlier it was only a physical object. But now it is a deity! Why?

The deities worshipped in the holy shrines are often revered by the devotees as incarnated divine powers. Many of them have been blessed and have experienced miraculous powers of the deity. It is the devout faith (śraddhā) of the pure heart of a devotee that makes god appear before him/her. Many authentic incidences of saints affirm such possibilities. Most people including non-believers also find great peace in the vicinity of the idols enshrined in a temple. Fine! What concerns us in today's discussion is — not why it happens, rather, when does it happen? When does an idol or image of god-form become worshipable? The devotees, the believers, worship only these forms of deity and not the statues kept in the museum or shop. What is the difference between the two stone-carvings/ images of the same god-form?

An idol or sculpture of god-form is enshrined and worshiped in a temple only after the sacred process of prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā. To an onlooker, it would appear like yet another 'customized ritual' of invocation. If it were so, anybody would have been able to utter some prayers and perform the enshrinement steps of the ritual. But that is not correct. In fact this sacrament is a spiritual experiment. Only saintly priests who have devoted themselves to spiritual endeavors for ultimate light, only the dedicated devotees with enlightened hearts that pulsate with śraddhā can do prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā. With this, the transcendent divine power of god is invoked and established in the idol. Then the same idol, which was earlier like a toy, would work like god-personified for a true devotee. Depending upon the depth of his śraddhā, a devotee can communicate with the deity as though one is talking to a living god.

I hope, you have got a hint of what I am trying to convey. It is the awakening of chitśakti — the prāṇa, which makes all the difference. This principle applies everywhere in the world, in every aspect of life.

See Beyond Superficial Activities Of Sacraments

Friends! Whatever you have learnt so far in this sādhanā course amounts to following some disciplines, doing some ritualistic activities, chanting some mantras and attempting some meditative practices. But, without the prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā of your sādhanā, all these would be nothing more than superficial activities, mere sacraments and exercises of the mind and body. Without prāṇa, these will only constitute a skeleton of upāsana; there will only be mechanical activities but no spiritual flow.

Have you seen the toy-top? It rotates with great speed. But does that movement make it lively? Does it evolve or improve its condition? A pendulum keeps oscillating but reaches nowhere. Your attempts would also lead you nowhere without the force of your inner spirit.

Have you ever seen a game of cards? In varieties of these games people ‘cut’ (defeat and ‘kill’) the opponent’s King by the ‘weapon’ of an Ace or a Queen, or by an attack of another King, etc. But does the opponent file a case of murder against

them? Does the conquering king get any treasure or empire? No, nothing of that sort happens. It is only a game, a means of time-pass or entertainment for some people. Your attempts of sādhanā should not be hollow. These should not be a new mode of time-pass, fun or activity of interest. Many people find joy in devotional practices and feel as though they have had supernatural experiences. But most often these turn out to be hallucinations. Please note, devotion is not mere fantasy or emotional tumult excited by crying or by singing a prayer before the deity.

So far you have known only the name and form or skeleton of sādhanā. Haven't you? Yes! You have been taught how to do pavitrīkaraṇa and āchamana by sprinkling or drinking few drops of water with chanting of some Vedic hymns, how to do the breathing exercise of prāṇāyāma, how to hold the rosary and move its beads, how to do japa (rhythmic enunciation) of the Gayatri Mantra, how to count the japa with the help of a rosary, how to perform the fire-ritual of yagya (havan), how to sing the devotional Arati, etc. What are these? These are only external activities; only movements of the body using some sense organs.

One more thing you have been introduced to is 'names and forms'. Yeah! You have 'seen the image of the Divine Mother Supreme – "Gayatri" enshrined in the temple here. You know the syllables of the Gayatri Mantra, you know how to chant it, you know the word meaning of "anuṣṭhāna", you also know how many japas are to be completed with what kind of disciplines of fasting, etc. So you have passed three exams! The ritualistic procedures (karmakāṇḍa) and the name and form (nāma-rūpa) associated with Gayatri Anuṣṭhāna.

Now you may be eager to experience the astonishing results or to be blessed by divine boons and all that which you might have heard from some yogis or read in the scriptures. Yes my dear children, you can see the miracles, can attain the supernormal benefits, provided you induce life in the skeleton of your sādhanā (spiritual endeavors). How?

You may wonder, what I mean by making your karmakāṇḍas alive. Can the 'actions' be also dead or alive like a being? The ritualistic procedures of upāsanā-sādhanā you are practicing at present are only like physical exercises. Your mind and body may soon get accustomed to do these automatically.

But this means it is happening almost mechanically! This way a machine, a robot may also be trained to give oblation, offer flowers, recite (or play a pre-recorded cassette) a mantra, sing a prayer, etc. That is what I call as dead karmakāṇḍas of sādhanā. Similarly, your upāsana (devotion) is also confined only to the worship of nāma-rūpa of god.

Unfortunately most devotees get trapped into only the superficial acts of upāsana-sādhanā. Many of you also keep asking for learning more types of rituals or methods of worship, cramming more and more mantras and prayers, etc. Many of you like to read and talk about the allegoric depictions of god forms narrated in the scriptures. However, all this leads you nowhere. It is unnecessary. If you continue to go ahead only with the dead practices, either you will dump yourself in the mire of blind-faith and superficial religion, or get frustrated and dejected from upāsana-sādhanā because of your wrong approach. On the other extreme, some of you get attracted by the complicated terminology of philosophical text and want to master it and debate on the logics of different schools of philosophy merely for intellectual satisfaction. This way you

may inflate your mind with illusory interpretations of philosophy and get engulfed in the imaginary world of words without any sight of the true light.

What is important now is to complete the task in hand: First you should grasp the meaning and purpose of making your efforts lively. Then adopt it in action. Whatever has been taught to you so far is sufficient for initial conditioning of the mind-body system. The real upāsana-sādhana should begin now. I am going to discuss that in today's discourse.

Five Gods Exist In Your Being

The other day some of you were asking me about the “Pancha Kośīya Sādhana”. Well the pancha kośas (Annamaya Kośa, Prāṇamaya Kośa, Manomaya Kośa, Vijñānamaya Kośa and Ānandamaya Kośa) refer to the five sheaths, which constitute the existence of jīva (a being, soul manifestation in a life-form). The “Pancha Kośīya Sādhana” is a higher-level of spiritual ascent for ultimate realization. This sādhana will also be taught to you at the right time when you deserve it. I will teach you how to awaken the five divine

streams of the Consciousness-Force by sublime transmutation of these five levels of expression of the jīva. Even if I am not there by the time you reach this class of spirituality, don't worry, because before my departure, I will arrange for suitable person(s) to carry forward this guidance.

Some of you are stunned to see the word “five gods or five divine streams” residing in the five kośas. You think gods live outside, somewhere in the heavens, on the seventh plane, etc. My children, the five gods I am referring to, exist within our own being. How come? “Have you seen them?” – you might ask me. Yes, I have experienced them.

Okay! Let us take some simple examples to understand the main point first. You all have seen clouds showering rainfall in the monsoon. You may argue that — “see without the rainfall from up above the sky, there can't be any irrigation on the earth. No crops can grow. We can't survive without harvesting the grains from the blossoming fields. That means we survive on the blessings bestowed from above by the rain god....” Fine! So your argument is well taken. You may argue similarly to justify your belief that gods live ‘above’ and the

divine boons, supernatural powers (siddhis), grace of angels, help of great souls, all are bestowed from the 'heavens', from the higher planes, from 'above'....

Just look at the other facts in the same example! You have seen the clouds in the sky. They even shield the sunlight at times. But don't you know how they are formed? It is the water evaporated from the surface of the sea that forms clouds. So I may say that the water 'jumps' above from the earth and reaches the sky in the form of clouds. Thus the sea and rivers are also god's manifestations. But they live on this very earth! Yeah! You have not seen the water 'jumping' from the earth towards the sky, you have only seen the clouds gathered in the sky and you have seen their downpour. True, the process of cloud formation is subtle. You can't see the heating of seawater, its evaporation and upward flow that eventually gets condensed in small droplets gathered in the form of clouds. So, your argument may be reverted to conclude that gods fly up from the earth to the sky!

There is no limit to the manifestation and expansion of the Almighty. Gods, the divine beings live

everywhere. You can find them on the earth as well. In fact, they are very much within all of you. You have to recognize and awaken them. They would appear in your own personality, in your divine virtues and also manifest their astonishing powers. Have you heard of the Pandavas? They were endowed with divine personality that is why they are known as God's sons. But did they fall from somewhere in the sky or higher planes? No, as the history of Mahabharat tells, they were all born to Kunti or Madri. Karna was blessed by Lord Sun, Arjun by Lord Indra, etc, but they were all born as humans only. They had not descended from a sublime world.

So the divine powers may be born as children of just anybody! No. Don't jump to this conclusion. The angelic beings need parents of compatible quality. Only those who have refined their inner selves, their character, their personality, the ambience of their families to the level suitable for the birth of gods and angels in human form, deserve to have divine children. That means, those who have accomplished the sādhanā for this purpose alone would attain such rare potential.

Precious achievements require great efforts. This is the universal law of Nature. Don't dream of receiving divine gifts, blessings by merely uttering some prayers in the praise of God, chanting His names, offering flowers and sweets to the deity's idols or pictures. Many a times people pledge before the deities saying "If my such and such problems are solved, I will donate this much amount in the shrine, or distribute sweets, break these many coconuts, etc....!" or, "If I gain these many millions then I will build a temple", and what not...!! Such 'manautis' are like fake trades. Don't degrade divine devotion by such 'deals' in the name of upāsanā. Please note your prayers won't reach the Almighty unless you have a pure heart. The sincere call of a needy and helpless with purity of heart will anyway reach Him without any ritual of worship and without making such superficial promises.

There is no upāsanā or sādhanā by which you can 'bluff' or 'mislead' the gods to bless in your favor. I have read all religious scriptures of different faiths. I have not found any mention in the scriptures of any such mode of contacting or experiencing God. Please cast out all your illusions that Gayatri Anuṣṭhāna as a mere ritual, will shower great siddhis and boons upon you.

Know The Tenets Of Sādhanā

If it were so easy to find God or get blessed by divine grace, no saint or ascetic sage would have had to observe arduous penance, self-restraint, yoga, chastity, and time-testing sādhanā of self-purification, etc. People would have simply learnt the tricks in the form of some rituals or verbal and intellectual utterances to attract and hold divine powers. Then someone would have also sold the formula of ‘catching’ Lord Hanuman, ‘meeting’ goddess “Santoshi Mata”, ‘appeasing’ Lord Ganesha and so on... That way one would have also devised methods of attracting, captivating and even capturing the gods and angels. Then the mighty devils, cheats and clever ones would have been honored as His devotees in place of the poor saints and sages! Have you seen that happening anywhere? Why there would have been any need of ethics, moral values and disciplines then?

So please don't rove in any hallucination, illusory convictions or superstitions. Don't fool yourselves. Don't run behind the mirage of your mental imagination. If you have come here for sādhanā, you must know its true meaning. The word meaning

of sādhanā is “to perfect”, “to master”. As a spiritual endeavor, it is a devout attempt of self-purification, self-transformation (towards perfection) and self-ascent by self-determination. It requires mastery over the senses, over the mind and intellect.

Ever since the emergence of human culture on the earth, since the dawn of the Vedic Age, the history of the rishis, munis, saints and sages, has witnessed their dedicated sādhanā imbued with penance for self-purification, ascetic disciplines for self-restraint, and devotion for love and service of all beings. These aspects of sādhanā were as important to our revered rishis as the inventions and practices of yoga, mantra-japa, meditation, self-realization through trance, and supramental spiritual experiments.

Now you can see what I mean by inducing life in your sādhanā. Along with the sincere practice of mantra japa and meditation and the rituals and yoga-exercises of prior conditioning, what is of foremost importance is that you do every thing through the heart, with deep engrossment of your inner spirit, with śraddhā in divinity and in your

own divine origin. This will be possible and gradually become natural with purity and enlightenment of your thoughts and emotions and improvement of your conduct.

If you have grasped the meaning of sādhanā and you attempt to adopt it through your heart and soul, it will open the path of all-round illumination and success in your life. Let me assure that no sincere endeavor of sādhanā will ever go in the void. It will return you manifold beatifying results. If you are fully dedicated in sādhanā, you will experience the absolute truth of siddhi (supreme attainments) through sādhanā in this very life.

Worship The Deity Of Life

Friends, I have told you that no one will go empty handed from here. No one who completes the nine-day's anuṣṭhāna sādhanā here has ever left without being blessed enormously. Do I sound arrogant? No dear, it is not arrogance. I am telling you only the facts. I am affirming with full confidence that if you do the sādhanā of the real God, as I guide you here, there will be no want in your life. It will be full of peace, progress and

happiness. But who is this real god? How would you know?

You can't, because, sometimes you practice one mantra, sometimes the other, sometimes you worship one kind of stone (idol of god-form) or toy sometimes some other. Sometimes you go to one shrine another time to some other. Your ostentatious sādhanā and devotion keep flickering. At times you believe in one god or goddess, then lose patience and jump over to some other god, even to the tantra practices of attracting ghosts... and what not! You do that because of your eagerness, immaturity, lack of sincerity and faith.

In short, you do everything, except worshiping the god you should! You might wonder "who that real god is?" Well, there is no mystery, this is your nearest god; the soul-god (ātmadeva) living within you, the deity of your own life. Your sādhanā should aim to realize the Light of the Almighty, the Supreme, which is kindled in the soul of every being as the intrinsic glow of life – antarjyoti. If the efforts you had fuelled with your fluctuating faith in varieties of upāsanā-sādhanā were aimed at the sādhanā of antarjyoti, no wonder, you would

have succeeded in reaching great spiritual heights by now. I can vouch in the presence of divine powers as my witness, I can claim with full confidence, that if you had focused the direction of your life, your sādhanā in the righteous direction, you would have attained beatifying spiritual benefits.

While talking of spiritual benefits, let me first clarify your doubts and misconceptions, which are usually there in people's mind as to what is spirituality?

Definition Of Spirituality

Friends, do you know what spirituality means? In simplest terms it is the Science of Soul. This science pertains to the horizons of life within – in the transcendental cores of thoughts, emotions and inner self. It is the science of realization of the divine light of the soul. To experiment in this science, you need to begin with self-refinement and proceed with immense śraddhā and unperturbed self-determination worth the dignity of your divine origin. If you had done that, you could have mastered the science of sādhanā that was invented (by the rishis) in the times immemorial. This is

the most ancient of all sciences. I want to integrate this ancient (science) with the modern life.

I want to guide the real seekers among you that your sādhanā should also be of the level that was the basis of the endeavors of great rishis and saints towards chiseled refinement of their lives. There is no chance of hollowness or going astray in the inner world, you only need to look inside. Your unconscious mind, by its very existence, is an assimilation of enormous variety of reflections of consciousness. You have to wipe out the dirt (of vices, beastly tendencies and untoward instincts) from this core and carve the new, enlightened impressions. One may create a vacuum in a tube by deflating all its air. It needs to be inflated by fresh air if it is to be used again. The system of Nature is such that it continuously goes on filling an empty space as soon as something is blown out from there.

The practice of sādhanā is therefore two-fold--cleansing and illumination. I can give you enthusing inspirations, illuminating thoughts and spiritual sentiments. But, before that you will have to wane out the old confusions, prejudices, distortions, and

ill impressions and instincts. You will have to change your attitude, habits and character to adopt the new, improved ones. Rigid objects can't be fitted into new moulds.

I will give you bhakti (absolute devotion — immersion of ego in the ocean of divine love and faith). I have plenty of its stock reserved for you. If that is not sufficient, I will pray to the Almighty to bestow it upon you. If that is not effective, I will share mine with you. The very purpose of my bhakti is to expand it to relieve the agonized humanity from the thralldom of weakness, wickedness and wilderness and rejuvenate it with the unalloyed light and unbounded love of the soul.

Be Deserving, Then Desire

You want śakti (source of life, source of physical, mental and spiritual strength). But from where will it come? You must know that you don't have to beg for it. It is within you. In fact you, as human being, are a manifestation of śakti. But the śakti in you is lying dormant or is being drained out because of your ignorance and wrongs. Now you set things downside up and replace the wrongs by rights.

Dedicate your efforts for self-improvement. First deserve it! Then it will naturally awaken within you. You at least march the first step, I am there to help and support you. I will activate your śakti. My Guru has suffused immense śakti in me. It is for your welfare. I assure you that if you attempt to deserve it, you will not be deprived of it any more.

You want śānti (blissful peace). What you need to do for it? Pray before the 'Goddess of peace'? Offer gifts to Her? Will you just cry for it and śānti will reach you? Don't worry! As you will progress in your endeavors of making yourself more and more deserving, it will be generated within you. I will bless it upon you. An ocean of śānti is lying within me. As a caring father transfers his property to his deserving heir, I will also distribute it among the worthy ones among you all. The unlimited grace of God bestowed upon me, all the beatitudes of my puṇya (benevolent deeds) is for this purpose. I am willing to give it to you. Only condition is that you will have to purify, improve and uplift yourself by sincere endeavors. The ascetic disciplines of sādhanā, anuṣṭhāna are meant for this very purpose.

Worthiness Is Essential

Let us be practical. Suppose you go to the market to buy something. What if it is not packed and you have no bag to carry it, then? How will you bring it? You went to the dairy in your town and ordered fresh, pure ghee made up from the butter of cow's milk. The dairy has it. Superb! It is really fresh and smells so good! It is hot and flowing. 'Oops!' What happened? 'Oh!' You forgot to bring a container or pot to take it home! How will you carry it home? Want to try holding it in your palms only? Well, go ahead....

So you tried? Were you able to do that? No ! Why? Because it all had flown and fallen from the pores between the fingers and also bulged out from the tiny folds of your palms due to the jerk while walking. Not only that, it fell upon your dress and spoiled it. Your hand became so sticky. Even your feet have been dirtied because of its grease, as some drops had fallen on the feet too.

Now you are irritated and frustrated! The money spent on buying the ghee is all wasted. What about the discomfort you faced in striving to hold it in the hands and the time you wasted in making this blunder ! That apart, you have to now spend few

rupees on soap to wash your hands and legs. The stains on the cloths will require use of special, acidic detergent. This will further compound your loss as the strong detergent may tear off your clothes, in any case it will reduce the lifespan of the clothes.

Whom to blame now? Was it a fault of ghee or of the dairy-owner who sold it to you? Why are you shouting at him? It was not his mistake. He had given you the best quality ghee. You could not have it because you did not have any thing to hold and keep it properly. Don't curse your fate or foolishness. Don't repent so much that you would loose all hopes and confidence. Learn from the mistake. Now onwards whenever you want to buy something, carry a bag or container suitable and adequate to keep it without any trouble or loss.

Now look at that fellow. He is very happy, as he won't have to worry about 'all this' – going to a dairy to buy ghee, etc. His uncle has gifted him a healthy cow, which is supposed to give 5 to 6 litres milk in the morning and also in the evening. He is excited. His children will drink fresh, pure milk. He will also make curd, butter and buttermilk and

ghee out of it. He can even sell some of it to make some earning. He has not slept well because of all these dreams.... He got up early, took bath, wore new clothes in enthusiasm, and went near the cow. He started milking her. The cow did not trouble him, as her calf was already fed. The milk started flowing out of her udders... with the tharr, tharr..., sound of a tiny fountain stream... But look there! All of it is falling down and flowing on the ground, going into the drain. Some of it has also sprinkled on his clothes and dirtied them. Crazy man! In his haste, he forgot to take a container in which to fetch the milk.

Here again, it is not the fault of the cow, there is nothing wrong with the milk. It is fresh high quality milk. It was being poured out in abundance. But the process of milking was not well set. No pot was used.

These examples point out the loss and despair one faces because of not having the pātra (pot). Why I have narrated these funny anecdotes before you? This was only to illustrate the importance of “pātra” and “pātratā”. Pātra in Sanskrit means a pot, but it also means “deserving”, pātratā

means worthiness. You need to have “pātratā” (ability to hold intact) in order to get anything worth in this world. This is universally true in the fields of spirituality.

Where Are The Śiṣyas (Disciples) These Days?

Friends! I will give you enormous grace of the divine powers, but where will you keep it? Arrange for suitable place then you will not have to worry at all; then you see, divine blessings will shower upon you. What you aspire for is not difficult to be acquired; its very easy if you deserve what you desire for. You know, divine grace has no limits. Neither is there any dearth of those who can bestow it upon you. There are many seekers, many aspirants in the field of spirituality, but those who can guide this path are perhaps more. In this discipline, the number of able masters appears to be larger than the number of worthy disciples.

Today you may find that in several disciplines of university education. At times there are lesser numbers of students than the trained teachers. The other day someone was telling me about an Indian university which had begun with high aims of

dedicated education for social welfare. It seems for M.A. in Psychology only two students were admitted whereas the number of qualified faculty in this department was three. Any way, that may not be the case now and certainly not with all streams of higher education. But it has been the case, across the globe, in the fields of spirituality. It is more prominently so in the present times of crisis-of-faith.

It is true that in most cases today, we see hoards of followers of so-called 'gurus' who are being cheated in the name of spirituality. But these are the superficial disciples of fake gurus both of whom are aiming at worldly gains. I am not talking about them. I am referring to the noble gurus, enlightened spiritual masters. They don't show off and do not like to publicize their powers. Perhaps this is the reason why sometimes it appears that there are no able gurus of spirituality these days. But the fact remains that there are very few worthy disciples in the world today to whom such a guru could guide and elevate up to the high realms of spirituality.

Look at the life of the great saint, spiritually illumined guru, Revered Thakur Ramkrisha

Paramhans. So many people used to go and sit near his holy feet every day. Many used to claim to be his disciples. But the worthy disciples to whom he could transmit the angelic powers were countable on fingers. Swami Ramakrishna often used to go in trance or dance with divine delight after meeting them. These handful of disciples, Narendra, Rakhal, etc were the ones whom Thakur himself used to refer as great souls, children of the Goddess. Jesus Christ's message was finally disseminated by Saint Paul, the disciple of deserving caliber, who was born 300 years after Christ. He had propagated Christianity in new light. He had brought forth a refined division of the Old Testament and New Testament through Marcus-marking the Holy Bible. The present form of Christianity is largely due to Saint Paul. How exalted and beatified St. Paul must have felt after finding the divine grace of Christ! But I can tell you that the delight of Christ must not have been any less upon finding a disciple like St. Paul.

What you should have understood now is that a noble guru also searches for a worthy disciple. If you deserve his guidance, he will invite you or will himself reach you. No wonder it is the greatest

beatitude of human life to find a guru whose grace can take you to God.

Infinite Joy Of Finding A Divine Guru

I have found God in the form of my Guru. He is an omnipotent source ready to shower guidance and support in all my endeavours since past fifty-five years. Who helps anyone (in altruistic efforts) these days? I am indeed beatified! From where could I get the supramental intelligence to translate the entire Vedic Text in lucid Hindi with explanatory remarks? Up till now only four people on this earth could attempt translation of the four Vedas. One of them was Ravana. Other two names were Mahidhar and Ubbat. Most recent name cited in the history of Ancient Scriptural research is that of Acharya Sayana. Nobody else could do it.

It is a Herculean task for ordinary beings. But how could I complete it only in one year? It was by the kind grace of my Guru. At the same time, I could also translate, with illustrative commentaries in the prefaces, the eighteen Puranas, six Darshanas and hundred-and-eight Upanishads? It was my Guru's power that had got it done through me. I

have dedicated my being to him. I consider myself as a puppet that moves as per the instructions of the master. (This is what a true disciple, a devotee is supposed to do. Without surrendering your ego and self-centered attitude you cannot experience the Infinite Self, cannot grasp the Supreme Light).

Now see, how that Omnipotent can make one accomplish majestic intellectual tasks?

Path-breaking Research In Scientific Spirituality

Have you seen the Brahmvarchas Shodha Sansthan located about half a kilometer from here (Shantikunj)? It is the research wing of our mission. It is established as a torchbearer, a model of original research in the Science of Spirituality. The research here is aimed to provide viable and comprehensive modes for complete wellbeing. These will include preventive and therapeutic modes for the fitness of the body, mind and the inner self. Not only for elimination of the diseases, complications and infirmities, the research here will also focus on further strengthening of the normal mind-body system and on psychological, intellectual and spiritual evolution of mankind. Who has given this

idea? Who has envisaged and formulated the direction of research? My Guru has inspired and guided on all fronts.

Who will carry out research in this centre? Well that way there are well-educated persons here who have voluntarily joined this distinct project, which will incorporate integration of Vedic and Modern Science in the light of spirituality. Some of them are post-graduates and have doctorates in Science, some in Psychology, Philosophy. There are also experts from modern medical sciences – including those holding brilliant profiles uptill and after M.D., M.S., M.B.B.S., and bachelors and masters of the ancient Indian medical science of Ayurveda. Will they initiate this research? No dear! The plan of this grand project is already chalked out. These people will only have to follow it, implement it, and present its model to give directions to the world. It is like this: a recipe is ready; these people will just try out its sample preparation and distribute practicable tips to many others.

These days many people eat bread-butter in break fast. Have you seen a milk-bread? How is it? It is baked and cut into slices. At home you simply roast

the slices on a heating pan or in a toaster to prepare crispy toasts; then apply butter on the toasts and eat. The bread is not prepared in your house. It is already prepared in a bakery or factory and you only roast the toasts. The heater or toaster does not produce bread, it only heats it.

The Brahmvarchas Shodh Sansthan is like a heater. Bread is already prepared (as per the Almighty's project), this heater will make toasts, butter will also be applied here to serve hot, tasty toasts to you all, and to the world for a demo. Do you think bread also would have been prepared here? No, this is not so easy. Ask the scientists, the researchers of world repute, even the most talented ones spent whole life in working on a single topic, mostly emanated from an established research. Then just think of the grandeur of the research, which is unprecedented; which has not been investigated or even thought of by any one in any form. That light of knowledge (scientific spirituality), which is still hidden since the creation of universe, is going to be brought on the horizons of pure intellect. This will prosper the welfare of mankind, carve a new history of the creation of the world, usher into an illumined future for all. Who is the originator, the principal

investigator of this research? It is my 'boss', my divine Guru; I am only an instrument, a medium to transmit the message of the Almighty.

I feel infinitely blessed by dedicating myself to my Guru. He also has expressed immense content and bliss having found a disciple who has devoted his very existence to the Guru. Whenever I have had the opportunity to meet him I have seen immeasurable love in his eyes. Infinite blessings are showered upon me in those moments.

Do Not Make a Mockery of Guru-Śiṣya Tradition

Most śiṣyas (disciples) of today are anything but śiṣyas. They are sort of thugs, bluff-masters, clever and greedy chaps, who want to grab everything, fulfill their all kinds of good or bad demands, worldly wishes, everything from their guru. They think the guru is a magician who will produce things from air, or he is some dullard who will do whatever they beg for if they touch his feet, offer him some sweets and cloths etc. For the śiṣyas these days the title guru (spiritual master) seems to be conferred upon someone who can serve as an agent between God

and them. They pray before the gurus to bless them with promotion in their jobs, profit in their business, resolution of pending disputes in their favor; those not having children pray for having at least one issue; those having them pray of good jobs for their son, good groom for their daughters; the diseased ones want good health, the greedy ones want riches and what not...., the list is unending.

Fine! You may think that if a true guru is capable of bestowing divine bliss and enlightenment, then why he can't give the tiny toys of worldly gifts! But do you know what it means to be a disciple of an able guru? Do you know what kind of examinations one has to pass to fit into the criteria set for a true disciple? If I put you to face even the minimal of such a test, most of you will collapse. Have you heard of King Harish Chandra and his guru Maharshi Vishwamitra? Do you know the hardships the king had faced – sacrificing his kingdom, wealth, power, family, his identity, that too in such pathetic conditions? Certainly, every guru can't be of the caliber of Vishwamitra and the disciples like Harishchandra are not born in every era. Nevertheless, the tradition of guru-śiṣya has been and should continue to be as dignified as in the times

of yore. This is the foundation of spiritual development.

People have made a mockery of this great system these days. The way it goes with them is like an entertaining game in which one plays like a guru and others like his chelas (disciples). Ironically, their mouths may talk of god, religion and spirituality, but their conducts are just the contrary. The gurus are fakes and the chelas are greedy. Both cheat each other and try to fetch as much materialistic favour from each other as possible with all sorts of ostentations. You better keep away from such fallacies. Don't utter the word spirituality if you are a part of such delusive practices of guru-śiṣya.

If you don't understand why sādhanā and sacrifice is essential on the part of guru as well as the śiṣya, let me explain it in more worldly terms. Human life and even Nature's system survives on the principle of "give and take". You cannot expect to get anything without paying for it appropriately – be that in terms of money, labour, favour or any other thing.

Give and Take

You know it well that you can purchase only small things by paying small amounts. High quality products, precious things cost very high. What do you use in worshipping a deity in a shrine? Some water, rice, kumkum (saffron or vermilion), flowers and may be some sugar balls or sweets. You may also light a tiny lamp and burn an agarbatti (incense stick). How much does all that cost? Only few coins or rupees! What can you expect in return? As a fair deal, you can only get a small thing worth the price of few rupees. Who would give you gold or diamond in its exchange? And you want to acquire invaluable attainments of spirituality? Does it make any sense? How is that possible? Your success will also be negligible as your efforts are. Okay, god or guru is magnanimous so he may give you a thing worth ten rupees for the two rupees you paid. What more can you expect? If you want a precious jewel of 'million dollars' then pay at least a noticeable fraction of that. This should be as clear as that. Just because someone longs for it, screams and cries, will you give an important thing costing several thousand rupees to someone who wants to buy it in five or ten

rupees? No, you won't, in normal state of mind. Then, how can you, having head on your shoulders, insist for it, or expect it from somebody?

If you want to have supernormal qualities, paramount attainments (siddhis), you will have to 'pay' for it – whether you call it a fee or a price – through sādhanā, sacrifice, surrender and service worth the level of the siddhis you aspire for.

Upāsanā Should Be Vivacious

You are interested in obtaining siddhis but you don't know that siddhis can be and definitely attained only by dedicated sādhanā. But, what kind of sādhanā you are doing? So far your attempts of sādhanā-upāsanā have been superficial. You either do it half-heartedly like a compulsion imposed upon you or do it causally like a child's play. Now you have to be serious and put forth a zealous and thorough effort. You have to induce prāṇa (vital spiritual energy, life-force) in your endeavours. You are alive and active because of your prāṇa. It is prāṇa that drags your body; it is that which pulsates your heart, activates your mental functions, inspires desire; it is that which is the source of courage,

strength, enthusiasm and fearlessness. Greater the level of prāṇa, more dynamic, creative and productive would be your life. I have explained you the importance of prāṇa-pratiṣṭha. Let it take place in your sādhanā too. Induce prāṇa in your upāsana (sādhanā). Let it be vibrant.

In some wedding ceremony they were playing a song of cinema. In a mood of dancing the singer utters – “mere pairon me ghungharū bandhā de to phira meri chāla dekha le... (tie the ghungharū – anklets with many ringing bells – on my feet, then see how I walk)”. What does he mean? He is saying that the real thrill of his dance will occur when he wears ghungharū. That is it! Your dance is dull because there is no music, no ringing bell of ghungharū to boost up the rhythm of your dance-steps. The enchantment of dancing comes through the musical support of the rhythmic tingling of the tiny bells of ghungharū in the background. It tunes up the steps of dance and also boosts up the dancer’s mood and energy. That is why the hero of cinema was singing that “... let me wear the

ghungharū then you see how my movements will vibrate with the flow of music

You should also wear the 'ghungharū' of prāṇa to let it set the background, and trigger the flow to drive your dancing movements (efforts), then see how lively and thrilling your dance (upāsana) would be!

A natural question arises – why do you need it? The answer is simple: because, without the inner force your efforts of upāsana are dull, life-less.

Why Boredom In Upāsana?

Most of you complain that your mind does not get focused during upāsana. It keeps wandering in agility and you can't concentrate it. In short, your mind finds it boring and dull. It hurts me when I hear this from almost all of you who come here for the sādhanā courses. Why should that happen? There must be something seriously wrong in your approach otherwise how is it possible that your mind which enjoys so many other things does not like doing upāsana? When some of your dear friends or relatives meet you, you are so happy. You don't mind taking off from the office, you even send false sick-leave application for this purpose. You go here and there with him, go to the cinema, hotel,

park, shopping, etc. Your mind is upbeat if you get an opportunity to shake hands with a celebrity or some dignified officer, meeting whom is likely to bring you favours. Your mind eagerly awaits such opportunity. Then how is it possible that it does not want to meet the Supreme of All, the Almighty Himself? (As you know upāsanā means sitting near God, it gives you an opportunity to meet Him). I just can't believe it! It puzzles me that one would not be keen to meet the Omniscient, Omnipotent! Are you telling the truth? What you said, "yes", without any hitch you said so! My dear, I am surprised to hear that.

God is imbued with infinite love, mercy, bliss, virtues and powers. Even a sight of whose smile, a tiniest bit of whose grace has beatified so many lives and has elevated so many to the divine realms! Your mind wanders away from 'sitting near' Him? It sounds ironical.

Possible Reasons Of Dullness

The only possibility I can think of this irony is that your mind does not understand the meaning and purpose of upāsanā, you have not been able to

convey or convince it properly, or there is something basically wrong in your approach to spiritual endeavours of upāsanā. This all amounts to one fact that your upāsanā is only 'mechanical', it has no life. I think this is the root of all your complaints about instability and disturbances in upāsanā. It is natural for human mind that it finds dullness in doing the same monotonous action without any 'entertainment' or interesting or inspiring instinct. (That way there is hardly any physical action in upāsanā – except carrying some ritual of worship and then sitting with closed eyes). Your upāsanā is devoid of prāṇa that can motivate your mind; it lacks the emotional depth that will engross your mind.

Your upāsanā is dull and boring for your mind, because it has no touch of emotional soothing and hence no source of joy; it has no inspiration of thoughts; it is lifeless without the zeal of your prāṇa. Therefore I say it is dead, it is only a skeleton or an illusion of upāsanā. You carry the 'burden' of this corpse of upāsanā and feel frustrated, as you 'gain' nothing from this tiresome effort. How will your mind get interested in it? How will you get any success?

You may spend long hours in this illusory attempt and continue this daily 'chore' every day, but achieve nothing, as your approach is wrong. You may sing bhajans and read and recite texts from the Holy Scriptures, follow ceremonial rituals but, by and large, things would remain the same unless your mind and heart are engrossed in the feeling of upāsanā. Your superficial attempt of upāsanā is nothing more than a routine exercise for the body; your cramming of devotional song and chants are only a fine twisting of the tongue. Dear Child, don't expect great benefits from such mechanical upāsanā, else you may feel despaired.

There Is No Short-Cut

It is amusing that most people expect quick success in the spiritual field. Every one thinks that the guru can do some magic and provide great things in return of their rituals of upāsanā. You come here, cry before me and request "guru ji, please make my mind interested in upāsanā?" How can I control your mind, that too as and when you want? How would this be possible?

When nothing else in the world can be gained without adequate efforts why do you expect some magic sort of things and short-cuts in the field of spirituality?

Suppose you fall ill, will you get well if I take the prescribed medication in your place? If you are thin and weak and want to become a wrestler, will you expect that guru ji would go to the gym, practice heavy physical workout and make you stout? Obviously not! Even a school going kid would know that if I go to the gym and do the exercises, I would get stronger. However, by no means I would be able to 'transmit' my physical strength, my body-weight to you? Tell me the method? On which principle such things would work? You want to pass B.A., M.A. and request someone to study for it. May be you request me to study on your behalf... Fine! Suppose I take admission in your college and study hard. Then suppose I write the exam and get excellent marks. So what? It won't get you the desired degree certificate. How is it possible that someone else could be a proxy for you in every phase of life as per your will?

Blessings Alone Will Not Do

You want me to eat lavish food, dry-fruits etc and bless you for vigorous health! May be, my body would get stronger but how would my blessings transfer that effect upon you? That way, I could also bless you even without consuming all that

stuff. If blessings alone can do all the wonders then why would anyone worry about doing anything at all in this world?

You may think your guru ji is so powerful and endowed with spiritual faculties that he can do anything. Okay! So you want him to do all the sādhanā, take all the pains of self-restraint and penance and bestow the siddhis, the divine blessings upon you? Why? Is this what blessings of the guru are meant for? Is this what you expect? For you blessings are natural means for transferring the fruits of someone else's hard work to you! Then why should there be your existence? Let someone else live and enjoy on your behalf? Why there were laws of Nature and what was the need for any orderliness in any system here? Blessings of an eminent spiritual master would have taken care of everything!

If this were true that just by moving the tongue and uttering some words (as blessings) then may be I will sit on a high stage in the forthcoming "Kumbha Mela" (grand religious congregation) in Haridwar. Nearly four million devotees are expected to attend this Mela. I will do an

anuṣṭhāna sādhanā (to energize my tongue and hence make my blessings more powerful). I will then use loudspeakers and bless all the participants that they all become millionaires, the millionaires should become billionaires. Money is the major concern of people these days. They always want a guru to bless them with enormous wealth. Another request with which they often go to the guru is that of being blessed by a son or several sons. So I will also bless all the four millions that they all have four sons at least. Not only that, as they have come to the Kumbha Mela, they might expect (as you all do!) some miracles. Well, so may be, I will bless that their sons be born only in four months. Forget the normal duration for birth of a child in nine months, let there be a 'magic' of blessings....

Such baseless things you expect to happen? No ! Then, why do you come to me with similar kinds of illogical, crazy wishes? Why you dream of the impossible and the unjust to take place? Why you want me to bless you with something you don't deserve for? Why do you expect things to happen against the law of Nature, against the system of the world? Why you do want your guru to utter lies and make bogus claims in the name of blessings?

Do you think a child could be born only in four months? Then how could anything else, which is illogical, unnatural, or impossible, happen because of a blessing?

So come out of all the mindless expectations, fanatic aspirations and emotional excitements. Try to understand what I am repeatedly trying to explain you. The principle of siddhi through sādhanā is universal, but you have to do the sādhanā yourself; you will have to first become deserving, only then the divine blessings will shower upon you.

The Correct Approach

There is only one purpose of upāsanā and that is – cleansing of the inner self. Removal of the vices, untoward tendencies and negative impressions assimilated in the mental domain, in the convictions and desires. It is not easy. But there could be no spiritual progress without it. You cannot augment your worthiness without sincere endeavours of upāsanā. If you could follow it, you will not have to worry about blessings. Divine tendencies would naturally enter and assimilate in

your mind, your inner self, as you progress in this endeavour.

The first thing you need to do is to induce 'life' in your upāsanā through introspection and sincere attempt to uproot the blemishes. Try to improve and inspire your mind that this will lead to immense joy in upāsanā. Once you determine and firmly endeavour to cleanse your inner self and chisel your personality, things won't be so hard. As the self-purification progresses, the virtuous tendencies, divine inspirations begin to surface. You may think these are blessings from above by the grace of Almighty. My child, the grace of Almighty is always there, you miss it, as you are not well prepared. There is nothing exceptional in the elevation, enlightenment and empowerment experienced with adept endeavours of upāsanā. Nothing is bestowed from above; it is awakened from within. Recall the example of rainfall! The clouds don't come from the higher planes to shower the rains. They are the result of evaporation of the sea- water, the fruits of the tapa (penance) and generosity of the sea!

Experience of divine grace, inculcation of virtuous qualities by invocation of divinity (through devout upāsana after self-purification) is a natural process. If you take a deep breath, your lungs will be filled by air to their full capacity. Air is pervaded all around in earth's atmosphere; it is its nature to fill the empty space. Similarly, it is the nature of divine powers to grace us as per our capacity. Their nature is — to give. We should have the empty space (worthiness) to retain their generous bequests. The divine forces as well as devil forces are active in Nature. They are attracted in their own ways towards compatible antennae at the receiving end. We have to check what kind of receiving sensors we have.

Generate Inner Strength

If your lungs are weak, they can't resist the attack of infections. In their weak condition, the mycobacterium may also invade and cause tuberculosis (T.B.). Similar is the case of many other infections and diseases. Though sublime in nature, the health of the subtle body also suffers such risks. If you lack strength of character, do not have firmness and stability of mind in moral values, then

evil tendencies, sinful desires and varieties of wrong doings in the world will attack and make you further infirm. Impurity convolves with adversities. On the contrary, if you have the inner strength, purity of thoughts and character, good qualities and favourable effects will be naturally attracted towards you.

For example if you are walking with a neat and healthy baby, he will attract every one around. People will smile at him, call him near them and ask him to sit near them. Someone will try to play with him and give him something he likes. Someone will say – “the child is so cute, we want to play with him”. Someone would like to hug him and take him on the lap if he continues to smile, giggle, or talk in his sweet voice... Why? Is the child related to them? No! Then? Is he a ‘big boss’? No! Then? It’s his natural beauty that charms everyone. Why don’t you generate the beauty of purity, alacrity and benevolence? Why not you have the force of attraction in you that will also attract goodness around? Why don’t you cultivate those qualities in you that can invite the divine powers — which (directly or indirectly) run the world — to grace you in your peerless efforts or to strengthen and

illuminate your inner self? Please note, these qualities cannot be bought by any amount of wealth, these potentials cannot be 'transplanted' or 'transferred' by anybody. They are to be awakened and inculcated within you through your own sādhanā.

Look at the lives of great personalities. It was the charm of their character, their values that had paved the way of their success. As you might know Shri Lal Bhadur Shastri lived in such hardship. He used to get only two rupees a month to continue his studies. In this meager amount he had to manage his transport, books, everything. He was not strong physically either. But his character, his dedication to nation, his genuine qualities were such that among all the young volunteers of the Congress Sevalal, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had chosen only him for assistance and sharing of responsibilities in important projects.

Shining Example Of The Success Of Sādhanā

Attainment of siddhis through sādhanā is as true as any universally affirmed scientific fact or an absolute Law of Nature. It has its own method of

experimentation, which should also be scientific. Lal Bahadur Shastri had done the sādhanā of a duty-bond, principled life. In spite of all odds he continued his studies, also looked after his responsibilities towards his mother and later on his own family. Above all, his dedication towards service of the nation continued with brighter luster after each chiseling phase of hardship. This amounts to sādhanā, which gives weightage and charm to one's personality. This is what made his personality so valued and powerful that the great leader, the hero of the Nation, Pandit Nehru himself selected Shastri ji and made him a close associate, a confidante. Nehru ji advocated his active participation in governance of free India. Shastri ji became an M.L.A., then a minister of UP govt. Later on he was selected on the Union Cabinet. Because of Pt. Jawarharlal Nehru's high opinion about him, he was also chosen as Nehru ji's successor and was appointed as honorable Prime Minister of India. You all know that whichever duty, whichever position Shastri ji was given, he succeed in his efforts with immortal glory. So you see how God blessed him!

Every genuine sādhanā, gets the deserving support and grace of God. He does not have to demand or pray for it. God has arranged for enormous divine powers in the system of Nature. They are always ready to help and elevate whosoever is sincerely making best use of his available resources and faculties, is making adept attempt to improve. In fact they always look for people having saintly tendencies, people who have nurtured some qualities of great personalities in themselves. I have had the opportunity to meet and interact with many great saints, seers and siddhas, therefore I can tell you about them with full confidence. They are also eager to help people in their sincere endeavours of self-improvement and ascent in life with sustenance of ethical values. I can assure you on their behalf that you will not have to search for them, they will themselves come to you and offer helping hand once you proceed along the path of sādhanā with your full energy and devotion.

Gurus Search For The Disciples

History has many examples, which evince that a guru himself looks for the potential disciples who can be moulded to fulfill the need of the time and to

show righteous path to the world. Chandragupta Maurya did not even know what a guru is. But Chankya found this teenager in remote corners of countryside and took him along to glaze his hidden potentials; he trained Chandragupta over the years and made him a King whose reign added a golden Chapter in Indian History. You must have heard of another brave King in the later periods – Chhatrapati Shivaji. Who had casted this diamond personality? It was his guru, Samarth Ramdas Swami. Shivaji did not go to him. It was Samarth Guru Ramdass whose keen search and sharp foresight had spotted Shivaji.

More recent and globally reputed is the life of Vivekanand. It was his guru Swami Ramkrishna Paramhans who was after the bright young boy Narendra. He used to call and eagerly wait for the latter or himself used to go and ask Narendra to visit his Ashram, stay there. It was the noble guru again who recognized the would-be glorious disciple and transformed him into Swami Vivekanand. Narendra did not go to Parmahans to become a disciple, or to get blessings and support for his family in the adverse phase of life, or to learn and attain siddhis from this revered saint. I was

only fifteen years old when my divine guru appeared before me in his subtle body. I did not know him. But he knew me and came to me one day when I was engrossed in Gayatri Upāsana. It is the greatness of noble gurus that they themselves reach and bless the deserving souls by their angelic guidance.

Mode Of Working Of The Siddhas

Friends ! Eagle's eyesight is known to be very sharp. Hawk is also very quick in spotting the object of its interest. From a long distance these birds focus their target, in no time catch the prey in their pawns and fly away. Their hold is so strong and perfect that nothing can free the prey caught in their pawns. The siddha (spiritually evolved) gurus are also experts in identifying the suitable disciple. Like a wavy storm they reach and inspire a potential disciple crossing all barriers and change his/her future course of life in no time. Once they have found and taken a disciple into their asylum, they don't let his/her life astray into the smog of ignorance, illusions and dullness anymore. They love and guide the disciple but also put him/her into the fire of arduous tests that are essential for the latter's spiritual chiseling.

Don't get scared, they will not 'attack' and 'catch hold of you' in your present state of mind and inner self. As yet, you are not the kind of person any siddha guru would like and look for as his/her potential disciple.

No Place For Sycophancy Or Bribe

It is disappointing to see how you have made a mockery of upāsana! You don't even seem to remember what has been taught to you here. For you even the great science of spirituality has no value. You don't concentrate on meditation or introspection. Even your prayers lack the sensitivity of a devotee. You only know one thing, and that is to somehow do some rituals of worship to make a bargain with the Lord. You have been doing that throughout your life. Cheat people, deceit yourself, by all means content your vested interests; satisfy your selfish ego. Getting things done by telling lies, making false promises or shameless flattering — this is what you seem to have been doing in one way or the other on every front of life! That is what you are doing in your upāsana too!

You want to appease the gods! You want to bluff them! You have degraded your own faith. Whatever you may think of your beliefs, hyped sacraments, religiousness or theism, none is even remotely linked with the reality of spirituality and religion or with any god. You don't deserve to utter the word spirituality. If you have some reverence for divinity, please stop making a mockery of upāsana.

Have Maturity

It is time you understand the fact that the success of upāsana depends upon the depth of your inner faith, purity and integrity of your character, your benevolence, your sensitivity towards others and your added virtuous qualities. I, therefore reemphasize that gods do bequeath boons but only upon those who deserve.

Some elderly lady had kept her box of precious gold jewelry in her bank locker. Friends in her neighborhood were curious – for whom these were? “These are for my daughter-in-law”, she said with a mixed expression of affection and pride. What do you think, will she give the expensive ornaments to just anyone who begs for these, or to any

sycophant? No, these are kept in safe custody only for her daughter-in-law. No one else has the right to have these.

A teenager was crying before his father to have license of a gun? His father himself was the chief of the concerned department. Do you think he should issue it for his son, as he loves the latter a lot? Certainly not! This boy could have it at the right age only after proving his maturity and passing the necessary qualifying tests.

At present you are a kid in the field of sādhanā. How can one teach you an advanced level sādhanā. You have to first mature in this field, then talk of Kuṇḍalinī Jāgaraṇa, Pancha Kośīya Sādhanā, etc. These are not kid's games! If I teach and allow you to experiment on these, you won't be able to bear it; the energy explosion inside will 'burst' you. For filling more air, the tyre should also be big and strong, else it will burst out. What will happen if you use the air-filling pump of a car to inflate a balloon or a bicycle's tyre?

Not The Karmakāṇḍa, The Quality Of Life Counts

Now some of you would think why can't I transmit part of my power into you to uplift your 'potential' so that you can control the extrasensory energy flow generated by some higher-level sādhanās? Yes I can do that provided you have the capacity to receive and retain what has been transmitted.

There are some varieties of trees such that if even a tiny branch of a big tree is cut and planted in the soil, it independently grows and gradually turns into another tree like its parent. One does not have to sow the seeds and wait for the germination and sprouting of the saplings and protection of the latter, etc. You might have tried or seen the planting of the branch of a rose, or a sugar cane, etc. You seem to want me to cut (take out) a 'branch' (fraction) of my awakened Kuṇḍalinī power and plant it into yours? But you don't even have the suitable soil, where it could grow. So we are back at the square one! The basic point you should remember is that you have to enhance your worthiness. 99% of upāsana- sādhanā pertains to the quality of your life, the level of your character,

your attitude, your value-system, and your sentiments. Only 1% is for the action or what we call kriyā and karmakāṇḍa.

Please don't get stuck in the physical postures and actions associated with a particular method of upāsanā. Be a real sādḥaka, refine yourself; get rid of the distorted convictions and illusory arguments and lame excuses of your 'lazy and clever' mind. Inculcate some spiritual qualities in every bit of your personality. Illuminate your thoughts; make righteous use of your thought-power. If you could do so, I would like to thank you and may be your god will also do so, as you would 'relieve' us from your unmindful requests, childish demands and insisting prayers-cum-cries. You will do a great favour to your own self too.

Practical Guidelines For Beginners

I hope now you understand that siddhi from sādhanā is a gradual process. So far you have attempted a small anuṣṭhāna of mantra-japa. Note that along with this you will also have to endeavour self-discipline and self-refinement. The following five modes of upāsanā will help your

progress. Make these an integral part of your routine.

Of these five upāsanās, so far you have been given exposure to japa, dhyāna and swara upāsanā here. These are universal, in the sense that these are foundational in every religion, every path to spiritual ascent.

Japa – A Universal Upāsanā

Japa corresponds to repeated rhythmic chanting of mantras, or god's names and prayers that were initially realized or uttered by great saints. It is an essential part of religious practices and devotional support along every line of faith. You can find the Hindus, Muslims, Christians holding the rosary and doing japa as preached in their scriptures. The Sikhs, Jainies, Buddhists, Jews, Zoroastrians (Parsees), Arya Samajis, etc also practice japa in one form or the other. Therefore japa is a universal mode of upāsanā. You should therefore continue with the japa of the great Gayatri Mantra.

Only thing you must remember is that it should not be a mechanical action of movement of the tongue and lips. Your prāṇa should flow with its

rhythm; this will happen if you continue to do it with the spirit of intrinsic joy and unperturbed faith. The other four modes of sādhanā – upāsanā, which I am going to discuss now, will lend the necessary support in your spiritual ascent and thus augmenting your worthiness for higher-level sādhanās. Likewise japa, these methods do not emanate from any particular doctrine and therefore do not belong only to a particular cult or religion.

Dhyāna Is Also Universal

Your mind should be engrossed in the thoughts of divinity by way of dhyāna (meditation). Meditation is indeed a powerful and universally acclaimed method of soothing the mind and enhancing mental concentration. Most people need an object for imagination on which to focus the mind. As part of upāsanā the devotees meditate upon an image of their prime deity – such as manifestations of goddess Saraswati, gods Shiva or Krishna, etc. A universal symbol of divine glow and spiritual eminence is — light. This is referred as “Khudā Kā Nūra” in Islam, as “Latent God” in Christianity, as “Ātma Jyoti” in Hindu Philosophy – almost all religions, all schools of philosophy affirm its importance.

Meditation upon rising sun – its inspiring brilliance is recommended with the japa of Gayatri Mantra.

The rising sun is a universal symbol of Gayatri – the Eternal, Omnipotent Origin and Ultimate Evolution of all knowledge, divine virtues and powers. Those who think that Gayatri, because of being worshiped in the deity form of divine mother, belongs to Hindu Dharma are ignorant. The Gayatri Mantra is universal, it is not confined to any religion or cult or any specific manifestation of God, it is absolute and so is the meditation upon rising sun. You should focus upon its soothing glow in the āgyā chakra (i.e. in the region midway between the two eyebrows), as is also taught in the yoga practice of trātaka.

Swara Sādhanā – Soham Prāṇāyāma

Another practice that you should link with the daily upāsana is soham sādhanā. As you all know, prāṇāyāma is a wonderful yoga exercise. Soham sādhanā is a special kind of prāṇāyāma in which, along with deep and consistent breathing, you also do an emotional meditation. It is also a part of pratyāhāra —a deeper level sādhanā in yoga— that accelerates spiritual progress. (Concentrate upon the inhalation sound--"so" and exhalation sound – "ham" with a feeling that "He", the

Omniscient, universal self is entering and the “I”-ahamkāra, the ego, is being expelled).

This being a sādhanā of swaras (the breathing currents) is independent of any faith or religion. Can be practised by anybody at any time.

Worship or Devotional Practice In Sandhikāla

You should also continue with some form of worship or devotional ritual (sandhyā vandan) and prayer, as it gives you an opportunity to remember God, to have proximity with divinity by sitting near a symbol of His manifestation. Different religions preach this practice in different forms but the purpose remains the same. For example the Muslims offer “namaaz” five times a day. Our system mentions of trikāla sandhyā (doing sandhyā thrice a day). As the name “sandhyā” suggests it should be practiced in sandhikāla — the period of transition of the day into different phases – from night to morning, morning to afternoon, etc.

Most of you may not be able to practise it thrice a day. Do it twice for few minutes at least — once in

the morning (around sunrise time for maximum effects) and once in the evening (around sunset time would be the best).

This way you should incorporate five-phased upāsana in your daily routine. Once again let me emphasize that these should not be mere physical actions. Rather, these should be practised through the heart, with your full attention, interest, enthusiasm and emotional linkage.

**This is what amounts to making these acts
lively (prāṇavāna).**

I know you all are very busy and the materialistic trends of the world create problems and compulsions that often divert your mind. Don't worry. Where there is will, there is a way! Adopt the following simple practices. These will be of great help in orienting your mind, your thoughts and feelings in the desired way. I have practised and benefited a lot from these. You may regard these also as sacred sandhyās to be practised twice a day. In fact these two 'special' sandhyās are more important than those pertaining to worship.

Contemplate Before Sleep and After Getting Up

These are two sandhyās (of worshiping the deity of life), which are to be done lying on the bed — once when you get up and second time when you go to the bed to sleep. There are no restrictions of timings. If suppose you are working late in night, you may get up late next day, even then it won't matter. Whatever time you get up, consider that as the onset of your new day ahead. Similarly, whatever time you sleep, that would virtually be the beginning of night for you.

You may leave the above-mentioned sandhyā-vandan activities because of some time-constraints, but you must do these special sandhyās, which I am going to teach now.

What To Do ?

Soon after getting up in the morning (or at whatever time you may get up), take a deep breath to feel your existence. Think of the new day ahead as the beginning of new life. Ponder over the origin and nature of life and its purpose. Give a thought to your existence as a living being; ponder over the

fact that you are a manifestation of the soul. Make a small, practicable resolution for the day ahead which will make you a better person, will help waning out some of your shortcomings. Leave the bed with a feeling of being filled with new joy and energy.

After going to bed in the night (or whatever is your sleeping time!), think as though you are in the last phase of your life. Sleep will end the one-day's life span you had got since you got up. So it is time to ponder over the good and the bad you did during the day. Do thorough introspection. Try to find out where you could have avoided the mistakes or where you could have done better with respect to the circumstances at that time. Plan for receding the evil, the wrong and enhancing the good, the correct, for the next phase of life after sleep. Keep aside all your tensions and worries and sleep well, as though you were no more. (Thought of death allays your ego and the complexities and problems associated with it).

These simple exercises (of ātmabodha-tatvabodha) render great support in alleviating your stresses, your hidden infirmities and rejuvenate you with

new strength and hope. Regular practice of these will elevate your enthusiasm, interest and determination in self-improvement. Gradually all your sincere efforts, including your upāsanā-sādhana will become more lively and intense.

Recognize The Value Of Life

Life is indeed the most precious gift the Almighty has bestowed upon you. But most of you waste it in living for sensual pleasures alone, in eating and reproducing – which every creature, even the tiny insects and microbes do. Many of you ruin it in sinful activities. Had you recognized and paid attention to this invaluable treasure, today you would have been the ‘wealthiest’ and the ‘happiest’ person on this earth.

If you had torn off the leaf of ignorance from the chapter of your learning, you would have comprehended the meaning and purpose of life. This means, you would have acquired the ultimate knowledge — “ātmagyāna” (soul-knowledge). Lord Buddha had attained this knowledge while sitting in trance beneath a Peepal tree (poplar leaved fig tree) now known as “Bodhi” Tree and

he became a god. So you see how important ātmagyāna is? Do you know what it means? “Yeah!” some of you may respond. You might have heard the couplet from the holy “Ram Charit Manas” which says – “Iśwara Anśa Jīva Avināśī” meaning: the “jīva” being a fraction of God is immortal. “Oh!” So you mean Mr. so and so (or Ms. so and so) is part of God? No, my dear, it is the jīva – the soul which is manifested in human form – which is a fraction of God. This jīva has forgotten its identity and has begun to regard itself by the name and form of the physical body.

You, the bewildered jīva, is living in dormancy. Just think what for you have got the human body and mind, full of marvelous capabilities which no other creature has got. So many faculties and facilities Nature has already arranged for you! Was it all given only for sentient joys? Was it meant only for possessing material resources, for producing children and collecting more and more comforts for them? Was it to be wasted in laze or haphazard activities? Was it given for being misused in all kinds of bluffs, to be corrupted by misconduct and maligned practices? Certainly not! Friends, you have got this rare opportunity after thousands of

lives, suffering through the adverse phases and odd conditions of enormous life-forms (chorāsi lākha yonis).

Up till now, your getting up after sleep has been only a biological activity — it is confined to action of the physical body, of the extrovert conscious mind. The sandhyā of contemplation I told you just now is to awaken the jīva, to remind itself of its true identity. This is what the Upanishads teach – “Uttiṣṭhata, Jāgrata, Prāpya Varānnibodhata” (meaning: awaken, rise and reach illumined realms).

So with the awakening of the body, you also awaken your inner self. Peep inside and think of the dignity of your original self, its impersonal reality, realize the enormous power hidden within you. Ponder over the reality of life beyond its worldly expression and analyze the purpose of your being and see what you are doing to fulfill it. (Let me remind that if you do swadhyāya and satsang you will have the necessary background and light of thoughts, which will facilitate this contemplation).

The wakeup-contemplation will help you realize the importance, purpose and prudent use of life and thus lead to ātmabodha. If you make the righteous use of what God has endowed you with, I am sure you will accomplish welfare of the self as well as of all those in your contact. Don't worry about what you have lost so far because of your ignorance. Cast out the dormancy now and make a new beginning. If you determine and make the right beginning, you will surely reach the high realms to receive divine light and love.

Expand The Horizons Of Harmony and Love

Learn to live with harmony. Let the spring of love rooted in your inner self flow without any barrier. Please remember, there is one and only one condition to receive the love of the Almighty and this condition is – to love others. And this condition is mandatory. So if you desire divine bliss and grace, learn to love His creation. Work to beautify His creation, to make this world a happy abode for all His children. You may gain worldly success and joys but will not get even a drop of the elixir of His love, if you remain confined to your narrow boundaries of your selfish interests. If you are self-

centered and insensitive to others around you, you are no better than a cruel miser. Get rid of this sinner's tendency. Broaden your horizons of 'selfishness'; this is a prerequisite for sādhanā. Attempt to adopt an altruistic attitude. Look at the broad horizons of your interests with new perspectives. Remember these as your essential duties and resolve to progress a bit every day during the special sandhyā of getting up. There is no easier and better way of attaining completeness in life than expanding the feeling of unalloyed love.

Recall Death, It's Your Best Guide

You tend to ignore or forget the importance of life, because you don't remember that this golden opportunity may be snatched away any moment. Death can reach any moment and end the show. This is a blunder, which most people do. If they had remembered the other end of lifespan, their conscience would have remained alert. It would have saved the draining and ruining of this invaluable treasure. Therefore the bedtime contemplation is as important as the morning (wake up time) ātmabodha sādhanā. All your fear and misconceptions about death will disappear if you start this special sandhyā before sleeping.

You will know that death is a kind of long sleep of the jīva, the latter's waking up after which is the beginning of a new life. Taking stock of your day's activities – including those at mental and emotional levels – before sleep and regarding sleep as death of this (one day's) life, will gradually make you more conscious of your conduct. It will also diminish your excessive attachments and your tensions and worries before sleep. Eventually this practice will eliminate your stress, depression, apprehensions and other mental complications. It will help you see the eternity of the soul and life as only a transitive phase in its endless journey. In other words, this night-time (bedtime) contemplation sandhyā will lead to tatvabodha.

Thus, just recalling death every day will give you the knowledge, which most eminent of the spiritual masters alone would be able to. In this sense, (the thought of) death is a supreme master, a guide.

Many of you might have read and listened from the sages that death is a great opportunity for the jīva to get a new, fresh life and should therefore be welcomed as happily as a child would greet the offer of having new cloths or toys. But you still

have some varieties of illusions of what exactly will happen when the envoy of death will take 'you' (the jīva) to heavenly abode. You think the 'accountant' in God's kingdom will check as to how many times you visited a shrine, how many rosaries you rotated (with chanting of God's name) every day. Whatever be your imagination of the office of the death-god and His functioning, one thing is certain that nowhere in His system there is any 'meter' or record book that would register a count of your rosaries or chants and religious customs.

As I have told you several times, your rituals of worship and your endeavours of upāsana do not matter to Him. These acts, if done with due sincerity and mental and emotional engrossment, would help cleanse your inner self and initiate illumination of your intrinsic personality. Indeed the automatic system of Nature created by Him is such that the balance-sheet of your life will be definitely reviewed. But what will be seen in it? The accounts of your worthiness.

Show The Balance-Sheet Of Life

The Mahabharata script narrates that King Parikshit engaged himself in noble deeds when he

learnt that he is going to die in few days. History has also witnessed drastic change in the attitude of Alexander The Great as death reached near him. He had realized the futility of his victories in wars and the wealth and power snatched thereby. But you don't even want to hear about death! Nobody can deny that death is the only certainty in one's life. You should also accept this fact and recall every night that you are to die one day and have to present the balance sheet of your life before the Supreme Ruler of all creation.

God had conferred upon you the crown of becoming a human. He had endowed you with most splendid resources in the form of human life. How did you use it? Bought tea, chocolates and kites (spent in fulfilling childish desires)? What a pity, you spent in the void or lost all the traveler's cheques that God had loaned you for the journey of life! Now it's the termination of the offer, end of the period for which you were granted the loan. By no means you can escape giving the details of every single 'penny' bestowed by him; every deed of yours, every single moment of your life will be scrutinized and examined in His System.

Every Day As New Opportunity Of Ascent

Still there is time. My dears ! awaken now and set your account books as per His conditions and avoid the penalties. Make yourself worthy of rewards from Him. Use your precious resources of time, mental and physical faculties and other possessions in constructive, thoughtful, benevolent activities. The simple practices of analyzing your day's activities in the night and starting the next day with determined efforts of rectifying the mistakes and augmenting the good would give you the necessary training and guidance.

No matter who you are and which part of the world you live after going back from here. You all must follow what I have taught you today. Make your acts of upāsanā-sādhanā enliven by inducing your prāṇa, that is, by imbibing these with your devout feelings, enlightened thoughts and unperturbed zeal. Do the prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā of the deity of your life.

Now there should be no ignorance, no confusion, no looking back. Every night should remind you of death and every morning should be a new life that brings you more strength and brighter light for

further illumination and ascent along the beatifying path of sādhanā.

You might have read in spiritual texts that God is sat (eternal, ultimate truth), chit (absolute knowledge) and ānanda (supreme bliss). You will attain this ultimate realization if you sincerely follow these two simple, universally important practices (of ātmabodha-tatvabodha). The earlier mentioned three universal modes – namely japa, dhyāna and swara sādhanā will also gain support through these crucial exercises that motivate self-transcendence and self-expansion. If you could achieve this, nothing more will be required. This path itself will take you to the high realms of divine bliss and ultimate realization.



Additional Reading

1. Upasanā – Samarpaṇa Yoga. Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Samagra Vangmaya Vol. 3. Publ. Akhand Jyoti Sansthan, Mathura; UP, India.
2. Sādhanā Se Siddhi. Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Samagra Vangmaya Vols. 5 & 6 Publ. Akhand Jyoti Sansthan, Mathura; UP, India.

3. *Jeevan Sadhana (English translation of selected topics from 2 above), Publ. Shri Vedmata Gayatri Trust Shantikunj, Hardwar.*
4. *The Glory of Human Life. (English translation of the Hindi book "Mānava Jivana Kī Garimā"). Publ. Shri Vedmata Gayatri Trust Shantikunj, Hardwar.*
5. *Gayatri Sāadhanā – Why and How? (English translation of the Hindi book "Gāyatri Sāadhanā Kyon aur Kaise"). Publ. Shri Vedmata Gayatri Trust Shantikunj, Hardwar.*
6. *Meaning Purpose and Benefits of Worship. (English translation of the Hindi book "Upāsānā Kā Tatva Darsana aur Swarūpa"). Publ. Shri Vedmata Gayatri Trust Shantikunj, Hardwar.*
7. *What Is Spirituality? (English translation of the Hindi book "Adhyātma Kyā Thā, Kyā Ho Gayā, Kyā Honā Chāhiye?"). Publ. Shri Vedmata Gayatri Trust Shantikunj, Hardwar.*

Glossary of Sanskrit Terms Used In This Book

Anuṣṭhāna: *japa of a mantra (of a Gayatri Mantra, in the present context) of a pre-determined number (24000 in the present context) of times in a fixed duration of time (nine days in the present context) while also*

observing certain ascetic disciplines.

Bhakti: *Absolute devotion—immersion of ego in the ocean of divine love and faith.*

Pratyāhāra: *a deeper level sādhanā in yoga, which accelerates spiritual progress.*

Puṇya: *Benevolent deeds.*

Satsang and Swādhyāya: *Enlightening discourses, discussions and study of the sagacious thoughts and glorious works of great personalities on different aspects of life. Self-training through the teachings of elevated souls.*

Sādhanā: *Devout spiritual endeavour aimed at inner transcendence and elevation; it begins with dedicated efforts of self-transformation through control over mind and other senses.*

Sādhaka: *Who sincerely pursues a sādhanā.*

Siddhi: *Supernatural power and supramental talents.*

Śakti: *Source of life, source of physical, mental and spiritual strength.*

Śānti: *Blissful peace.*

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