



Voice of Jagadguru

advaitam paramanandam



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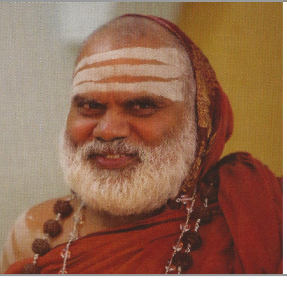
**Sri Sri Chandra Sekhara Bharathi Mahaswamiji and
Sri Abhinava Vidya Theertha Swamiji of Dakshinamnaya Sharada Peetham, Sringeri**

**Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sri Chandrashekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal
(1892-1954)**

**Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamiji
(1917-2017)**

SPECIAL SOUVENIR

We submit our efforts at the Lotus feet of Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī
Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāswāmiji and Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī
Vidhuśekhara Bhāratī Mahāswāmiji

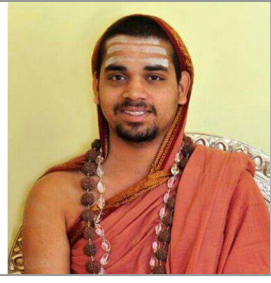


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॥ श्रीगुरुवन्दनम् ॥

श्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः

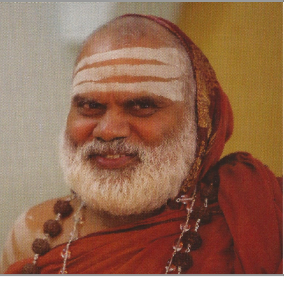
शङ्कारूपेण मच्चित्तं पङ्कीकृतमभूद्यया ।
 किङ्करी यस्य सा माया शङ्काराचार्यमाश्रये ॥
 प्रह्लादवरदो देवो यो नृसिंहः परो हरिः ।
 नृसिंहोपासकं नित्यं तं नृसिंहगुरुं भजे ॥
 श्रीसच्चिदानन्दशिवाभिनवनृसिंहभारत्यभिधान् यतीन्द्रान् ।
 विद्यानिधीन् मन्त्रनिधीन् सदात्मनिष्ठान् भजे मानवशम्भुरूपान् ॥
 सदात्मध्याननिरतं विषयेभ्यः पराङ्मुखम् ।
 नौमि शास्त्रेषु निष्णातं चन्द्रशेखरभारतीम् ॥
 विवेकिनं महाप्रज्ञं धैर्योदार्यक्षमानिधिम् ।
 सदाभिनवपूर्वं तं विद्यातीर्थगुरुं भजे ॥
 अज्ञानां जाह्नवीतीर्थं विद्यातीर्थं विवेकिनाम् ।
 सर्वेषां सुखदं तीर्थं भारतीतीर्थमाश्रये ॥
 विद्याविनयसम्पन्नं वीतरागं विवेकिनम् ।
 वन्दे वेदान्ततत्त्वज्ञं विधुशेखरभारतीम् ॥
 पञ्चाशल्लिपिभिर्विभक्तमुखदोः पन्मध्यवक्षस्थलां
 भास्वन्मौलिनिबद्धचन्द्रशकलामापीनतुङ्गस्तनीम् ।
 मुद्रामक्षगुणं सुधाढ्यकलशं
 विद्याञ्च हस्ताम्बुजैः
 बिभाणां विशदप्रभां त्रिनयनां वाग्देवतामाश्रये ॥

श्रीमत्परमहंस-परिव्राजकाचार्यवर्य-पदवाक्यप्रमाणपारावारपारीण-यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहार
 धारणाध्यानसमाध्यष्टाङ्गयोगानुष्ठाननिष्ठ-तपश्चक्रवर्ति-अनाद्यविच्छिन्नश्रीशङ्कराचार्यगुरुपरं
 पराप्राप्त-षड्दर्शनस्थापनाचार्य-व्याख्यानसिंहासनाधीश्वर-सकलनिगमागमसारहृदय-सांख्यत्रयप्र
 तिपादक-वैदिकमार्गप्रवर्तक-सर्वतन्त्रस्वतन्त्र-आदिराजधानी-विद्यानगरमहाराजधानी-कर्णाटकसिं
 हासनप्रतिष्ठापनाचार्य-श्रीमद्राजाधिराजगुरु-भूमण्डलाचार्य-ऋष्यशृङ्गपुरवराधीश्वर-तुङ्गभद्रातीरवा
 सि-श्रीमद्विद्याशङ्करपादपद्माराधक-

श्रीमज्जगद्गुरु-श्रीमदभिनवविद्यातीर्थमहास्वामिगुरुकरकमलसञ्जात-

श्रीमज्जगद्गुरु-श्रीभारतीतीर्थमहास्वामिनां-

तत्करकमलसञ्जात-श्रीमज्जगद्गुरु-श्रीविधुशेखरभारतीमहास्वामिनां च

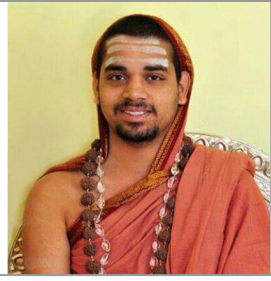


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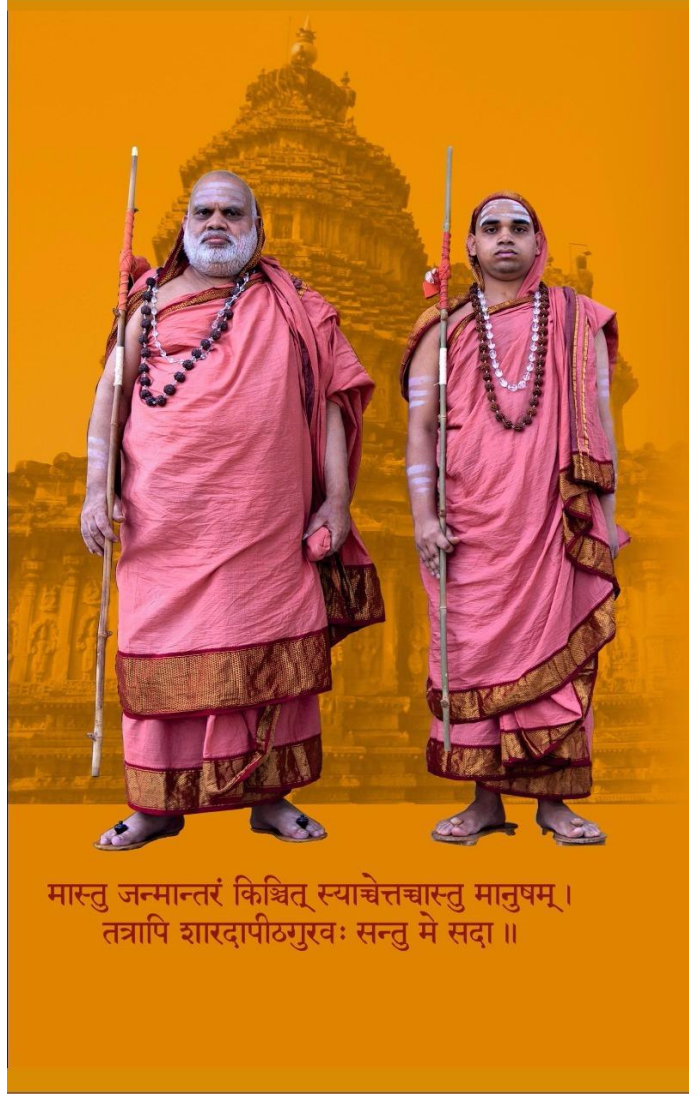
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चरणारविन्दयोः साष्टाङ्गप्रणामान् समर्पयामः ॥

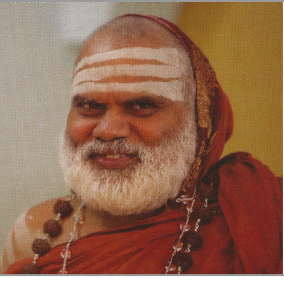


मास्तु जन्मान्तरं किञ्चित् स्याच्चेत्तच्चास्तु मानुषम् ।
तत्रापि शारदापीठगुरुवः सन्तु मे सदा ॥

A Souvenir most respectfully laid at the Holy Paduka of
Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhāratī Tirtha
Mahāswāmiji

And

Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Vidhusekara Bhāratī Tirtha
Mahāswāmiji

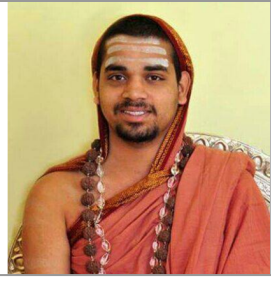


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ANUGRAHA BHASHANAM

SURRENDER TO GOD AND ATTAIN WELFARE

God knows everything. Not even a blade of grass can move without His grace. He bestows grace in accordance with one's Papa and Punya (stock of demerits and merits). He is Dayanidhi (a storehouse of compassion). There is no limit to His grace. He bestows special attention towards devotees.



Bhagavan says in the Gita:

अनन्याशिचिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

(Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Jeṣṭha Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Abhinava Vidyatirtha

Mahaswamiji and Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhārati Tirtha Mahāswāmiji)

However, people nowadays pose a strange objection: "When man experiences Sukha (joy) and Dukha (suffering) in accordance with his Karma (past actions), why should God be addressed as a Dayanidhi? When one is paying for his Papa Karma (acts of demerit/ sins), why does God not bestow His grace on Him?"

This is a mistaken impression. The Shastras talk about numerous temples, sevas and pujas (worship) for Bhagavan. Many Prayaschitta Karmas (expiations) have also been mentioned. What we learn from this is that a person who repents for his misdeeds and worships Bhagavan with devotion will be relieved of sorrow and beget happiness. That is why Bhagavan is called Dayanidhi. There is nothing that Bhagavan cannot do. He can alter any situation.

Sri Shankaracharya says:

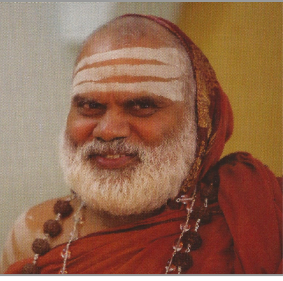
ईश्वरस्य तु सर्वज्ञत्वात्सर्वशक्तित्वान्महामायत्वाच्च प्रवृत्त्यप्रवृत्ती न विरुध्येते ।

Therefore, we should not forget God when we experience happiness and sorrow. Surrendering to Him is the wisest thing.

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मा मेवैष्यस्य संशयः ।

We bless all to keep this statement of Bhagavan always in mind and sanctify their lives.

--- Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhārati Tirtha Mahāswāmiji

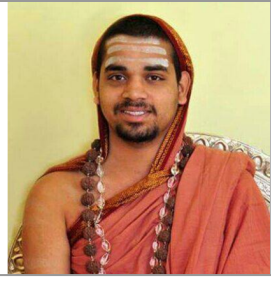


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9th Nov 2023 131th Jayanthi Mahotsava of Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sri Chandrashekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal (1892-1954)

TRUE SERVICE

It is a well-known fact that Sri Shastri by his devotion and capacity had earned the fullest confidence of the previous Acharyal Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sri Saccidananda Siva Abhinava Nrusimha Bhāratī Mahaswamigal also. As an instance of that confidence, an interesting incident may be mentioned. All the arrangements for the Kumbhabhisheka at Kalady in 1910 had been perfected. On the evening previous to the date of the Kumbhabhisheka, Sri Shastri was proceeding along a foot-path leading to the river in the back of the Math building. Evidently he did not notice a serpent lying on the way and trod upon it. It immediately wound itself round his leg and Sri Shastri with great force shook

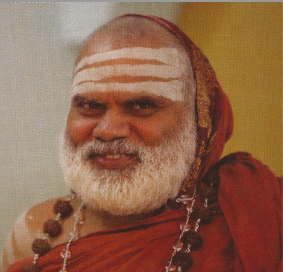


(Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sri Chandrashekhara Bhāratī Mahaswamigal)

his leg and the serpent fell at some distance from him. He dropped the idea of going to the river and returned to Math. This troublesome incident greatly disturbed him physically and mentally and he was in anxiety. In this state he went to His Holiness who had just then sat down for His evening ablutions, prostrated before Him and told Him about this incident.

Shastri : On my way to the river a serpent encircled my leg. I shook it off and by Your Holiness' grace I have come here alive. Tomorrow the Kumbhabhisheka has to be performed and it will certainly be duly performed, thanks to Your Holiness' blessings. Still, in as much as the major portion of the responsibility of attending to the secular side of the function is entrusted to myself, this incident of a serpent catching hold of my leg has depressed me a great deal. It seems to me to be very inauspicious and to indicate some evil. I pray that Your Holiness will be pleased to prescribe any purifying rites which may have to be done to ward it off. It does not seem proper to go on with the Kumbhabhisheka without performing such purifying rites. How can we ignore such a clearly serious indication ?

Acharyal : What is there inauspicious in it?

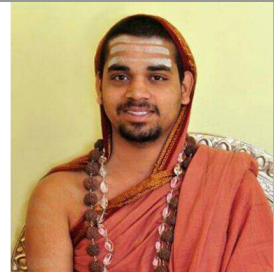


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Shastri : Is not the encircling of one's leg by a serpent inauspicious?

Acharyal : It is not so. On the other hand, it is an auspicious omen. It only shows that I have in Srikantha Shastri a bold devotee who will kick off anything even though it is capable of mortal injury. There is no need therefore for any expiation. Let the function proceed without the least anxiety.

On the day previous to the previous Acharyal attaining Videhamukti, Sri Shastri naturally felt very anxious about the state of His health. He went to the divine presence of Sri Sharadamba and prayed for His restoration to health and, to assure himself that his prayers had been heard, he wrote out on two slips of paper "There is no fear for life" in one and "There is fear for life" in the other, and placed them before the Goddess and asked a young girl standing nearby to take out one of them. The slip that she took out said "There is no fear for life" and this greatly relieved and gladdened the heart of Sri Shastri. He immediately went to His Holiness.

Shastri : Somehow, I was very anxious today and I sought the decision of our Goddess and I got an answer "There is no fear for life". Then alone I got relief.

Acharyal : Her words are ever true and never fail. Certainly there is no fear for life.

Shastri : I am gladder still to have this assurance from Your Holiness also.

Acharyal : Life or Breath is only a modification of Air and is consequently only inert matter. How can it fear anything? It is therefore quite correct to say that Life has no fear. Suppose the Soul has to go to some other region of experience, even then the life principle must necessarily accompany it even there; so the soul also has no reason to fear that it will be separated from life. Further as all beings have the greatest attachment to life, they are never afraid of life. If it so happens that there is no need to go to other regions of experience and, absolute disembodiment is had here itself, the life principle and other factors get dissolved even here and merge in their causal subtle elements and in that case there is absolutely no ground for fear either for life or about life. Thus, in whatever aspect the words of the Mother are considered, they are certainly true.

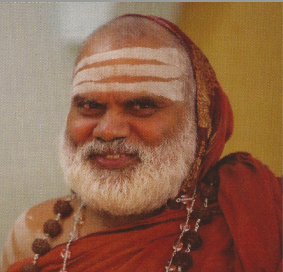
This kind of commentary greatly dispirited Sri Shastri. He realised however its truth when the Acharyal passed away the next day seated as He was in Yogasana. His Holiness was sure that He would the next day be free from embodiment and evidently He was unwilling to afford Sri Shastri any occasion for thinking that the words of the Goddess were untrue.

Some years after Sri Shastri retired from the active service of the Math, the Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore took upon itself the burden of managing the properties of the Math and conducting its secular affairs. Though the Government prepared the budget every year, it added, out of respect to His Holiness, a note that any of the items might be altered at the will of His Holiness. Sri Shastri when he went to Sringeri felt very glad at this consideration shown to His Holiness and had a talk with the officer then in charge.

Shastri : I note that it has been provided in the budget that any item may be altered by His Holiness as He likes, Has He at any time done so?

Officer : No.

Shastri : Have you informed His Holiness that there is such a provision?

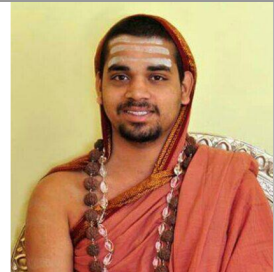


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Officer : Certainly, I have told Him several times.

Shastri : What did He say?

Officer : He would not say anything. Sometimes He would simply say "You may do whatever is proper."



Shastri : Why don't you ask Him what is proper.

Officer : I have asked Him. Even then the reply has been the same. If I pressed for more definite directions He would say "The budget itself is alright. You may act according to it." I realised therefore that it was no use troubling Him and for some time past I had given up asking Him.

In the evening, Sri Shastri went to His Holiness.

Shastri : I was very glad to see that in the Government budget it had been provided that Your Holiness might alter any item at Your will. Have You ever thought of altering it?

Acharyal : Why? Everything is going on properly. Where is the need for my intervention?

Shastri : I do not ask about the need. There may be some kind of expenditure which Your

Holiness may deem it proper to incur though it is not provided for in the budget.

Acharyal : Why should I mention any new kind of expenditure?

Shastri : I did not mean even that. During all these years, did not any thought ever come to You that some item of expenditure not provided for in the routine budget might be properly incurred?

Acharyal : As you are so particular, I shall answer you. Some months back a thought did occur to me that it would be well to have special Abhisheka to Sri Chandramouliswara with Ekadasha Rudra Parayana and to feed not less than a hundred Brahmanas on the occasion.

Shastri : Was this mentioned to the officer?

Acharyal : Why should I mention it?

Shastri : If you had mentioned it, he would have carried it out.

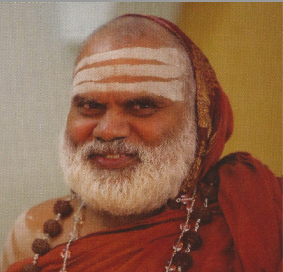
Acharyal : That is just the reason why I did not mention it.

Shastri : I do not understand this logic. What is wrong in asking the officer to carry out a good idea that comes to Your mind?

Acharyal : The wrong is not in the asking but in the idea coming into the mind.

Shastri : Is it wrong to entertain an idea to do a good thing?

Acharyal.: It is.

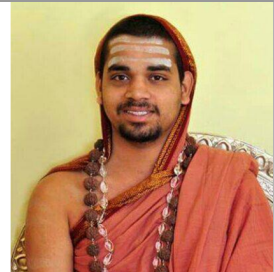


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Shastri : How can it be when the idea is a good one?

Acharyal : There is nothing wrong in the idea. The entertaining it is not right.

Shastri: How is that?

Acharyal : Any kind of mental activity which leads to external activity is necessarily wrong.

Shastri : Even if it is useful? Is it so?

Acharyal : Yes. The arising of a thought is by itself wrong. Further when it is our object to minimize our mind impulses, it is not proper to give room for fresh impulses. If I had asked the officer to carry out this idea, he would certainly have carried it out. Immediately another idea would crop up demanding its fulfillment. In this way the ideas will go on increasing and the desire to have them carried out will also go on increasing leading to ever increasing external activities. If however we effectively curb the very first impulse the further stages will be eliminated. That is why I did not think it proper to entertain the idea that came into My mind and curbed it.

Sri Shastri was very much surprised at the mental attitude of His Holiness. At the same time, he felt impelled to carry out His Holiness' idea. He had a talk with the officer and learnt that in a particular item there was some unspent balance.

Shastri : There is such a balance unspent. What do you propose to do with it ?

Officer : What can I do with it? It is there.

Shastri : You may mention to Acharyal that such a balance is available under this head and ask Him as to its disposal.

Officer : What is the use of asking Him? He will not say anything.

Shastri : Whether He says anything or not, is it not your duty to inform Him about it?

Officer : I shall certainly mention it to His Holiness and try.

He then went to His Holiness.

Officer : There is a provision of so much amount for this particular head of expenditure in the budget prepared by the Government. But only this much had to be actually spent and there is a substantial balance. I pray Acharyal to give directions as to what to do with it.

Acharyal : You may do as you think proper.

Officer : I do not know what is proper. Hence my troubling Your Holiness.

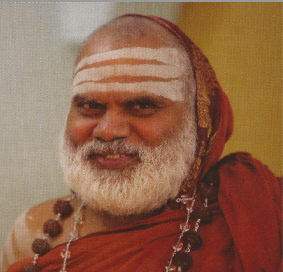
Acharyal : You may think it over again and do as you decide.

Officer : I have thought over it more than once but I got no solution and this is not a matter in which I can consult anybody else.

Acharyal : I suppose the balance may be kept unspent.

Officer: No doubt so. But it will certainly be better to spend it away in some good purpose on Your Holiness' directions.

Acharyal : What good purpose?

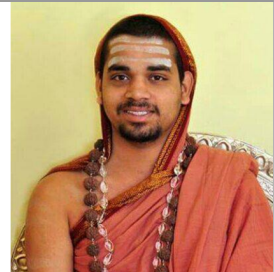


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Officer : I do not know. That is why I ask.

Acharyal : Sri Shastri has come. He has had a long experience in the Math. If you think it necessary, you may consult him and act according to his advice.

The officer accordingly approached Sri Shastri himself for advice and Sri Shastri thought it proper to advise him to arrange for a special Abhisheka to Sri Chandramouliswara and for the attendant Brahmana Santarpana. The function was duly performed and His Holiness was informed about it. When His Holiness met Sri Shastri later on, He said, "Out of great affection for Me, you



have chosen to carry out an idea which came into My mind long ago. On hearing of it, I felt in spite of Myself a wave of pleasant satisfaction in My mind. I realise from this that I have not yet learned to be completely detached in mind. I must thank you, for

giving Me this opportunity to know that My mind was still weak."

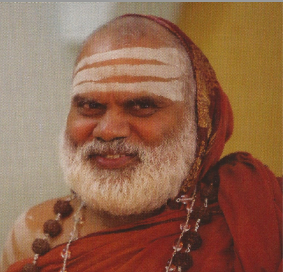
Sri Shastri was quite astonished at this remark of Acharyal.

It may be stated without any fear of contradiction that after Sri Shastri, there has been nobody in the Math who could read His Holiness' mind with such deep devotion and carry out His unexpressed wishes also.

When Sri Shastri was about 80 years old, he one day keenly felt that he might not survive for more than a few days and suddenly without any previous arrangements pronounced the sacred Mantras leading to the stage of Sannyasa. In view of the urgency that he felt, he dispensed with the preliminary ceremonies and rites. Though the Shastras allowed such a latitude in urgent cases, they insisted upon proper initiation by a competent Guru later on if he survived the emergency. On hearing about this sudden action of Sri Shastri, a friend of mine and myself went to Mysore and learnt from him the details.

K: Now that you are fairly alright, what arrangements are you making to get proper initiation into the Mahavakyas?

Shastri : I joined Math early in the time of the previous Acharyal Himself and spent my lifetime in His service. I asked Him once for permission to take Sannyasa. He said that I would get it later on.

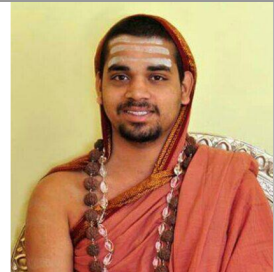


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Now that He is not before our mortal eyes, it is my earnest desire to go to Sringeri and have Upadesha in front of His sacred Samadhi from the present Acharya Himself if possible or, if that is not possible, from anybody chosen by the present Acharya for the purpose. I can then feel that I am having the Upadesha directly from the previous Acharya Himself. I have written accordingly to Sringeri and I am expecting a reply.

K : But will the condition of your body allow you to undertake a journey to far off Sringeri?

Shastri : As I am very keen upon having the Upadesha in the Samadhi, I think of going there directly in a motor car with adequate help.

K: As this is likely to be delayed, will it not be better to have the Upadesha immediately from a Sannyasi who may be nearby?

Shastri : The idea is no doubt good. But you know my temperament. I am now 80. If I have to accept with all my heart any person as my Guru and prostrate before him, I shall expect him to be older than myself, to be a very learned scholar, to be deeply devoted to our Math and to have closely moved with the previous Acharyal.

K: It will certainly be difficult to find out a person with such qualifications.

Shastri : Not necessarily so. I have thought it over and there is such a person in Sri Shankarananda now at Krishnarajapuram in the Tiruchirapalli District.

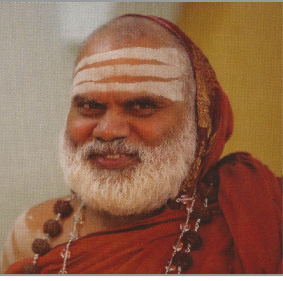
K : If you will permit me, I shall myself go and bring him here in a car.

Shastri : Don't be in a hurry. Let the answer from Sringeri come. If it is not favourable, we shall consider about this. Further, it will not be proper at all to bring him down here for giving me the Mahavakya Upadesha. It is I that must go to him for the initiation. If it becomes necessary, I shall myself go to him in a car as soon as my health permits it and get the initiation from him.

It so happened however that his letter to Sringeri was not properly understood by the people there and so he did not get the necessary sanction to go there for the Upadesha. Even if he had got the sanction, it would have been impossible for him to go there as his physical condition began to deteriorate and he became extremely undernourished. He could not move out of Mysore at all and passed away in 1950. His body was interred in a corner of the open space in front of his bungalow at Kalhalli about 15 miles from Mysore and 3 miles from Nanjangud his native village. His Holiness felt this loss very keenly.

As he had served the Math for over 40 years with phenomenal devotion and capacity and had endeared himself and was indispensable to His Holiness and to His illustrious predecessor and as everything that was done by them or the Math was really done by Sri Shastri, it will be no exaggeration to say that his life history is verily the history of the Math itself. It is impossible to adequately assess the value of the services, secular and religious, which he has rendered to the Math. In private life also, he was known to be very kind, affable and generous. It will be well if any intimate relative of his takes up the work of writing his biography in all the aspects of his varied life. I am sure that it will be not only interesting but very instructive.

{Taken from the Book, The Saint of Sringeri}

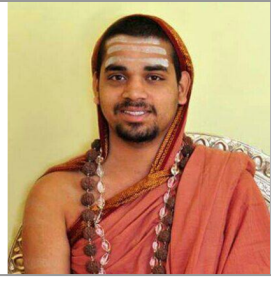


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12th Nov 2023 106th Jayanthi Mahotsava of Jagadguru
Śankarācārya His Holiness Sri Abhinava Vidya Teertha
Mahaswamigal (1917-1989)

ŚĀṆKARA BHAGAVATPĀDA

अहये बुध्न्याय नमो ब्रध्न्याय नमो नमोऽस्तु गणपतये ।

आर्यायै भारत्यै च नमो नमोऽस्तु विष्टरश्रवसे ॥

(Tattvabindu, maṅgala śloka)

(Salutations to Gaṇapati, Āditya, Viṣṇu, Ambikā and Śiva.)



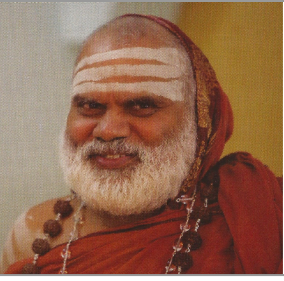
The four Vedas as also the smṛtis that are based on them have, since immemorial times, revealed to the people of India how they should conduct themselves to attain blessedness in this world and the next. The smṛtis and our tradition have enabled us to know that the Vedas are the foremost of the means of valid knowledge and that they were revealed by God to the ancient seers for the good of the world. The Vedas throw light on karma, physical observances, upasana, the concentration of the mind and contemplation on God, the Regulator of the universe, and jñāna, the true knowledge of God.

With the passage of time, karma became predominant while upāsanā and jñāna lost importance. It is, after all, to be expected that when one comes to the fore, the others are forced to recede at least a little. Karma, upasana and jñāna are all needed for a person to realize the Supreme and get identified with It. Amongst these, knowledge is absolutely essential; karma and upāsanā contribute to its manifestation.

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Vidya Teertha Mahaswamigal and Jagadguru

Śankarācārya His Holiness Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

It is insufficient if a person stops with karma and upāsanā. About two thousand years ago, karma was given extreme importance and upāsanā and jñāna became decadent. Śravaṇa, hearing of the Truth through the words of the śāstra and the Guru, manana, reflection on the Truth, and nididhyāsana, firm meditation on the Truth, which directly lead to knowledge, were ignored. People began to revel, as it were, in dullness.

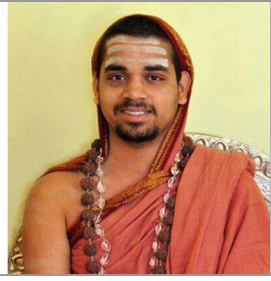


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At that time, several thinkers sought to effectuate the highest good exclusively through the exercise of their power of reasoning. Consequently, there arose religions conceived solely by the human mind that discounted the Vedas. The reasons for people turning to them then and now are similar.

कर्मलाघवमित्यलसा इतःपतितानामप्यस्त्यनुप्रवेश इति
अनन्यगतिका भक्ष्याद्यनियम इति रागिणः स्वेच्छया (दार) परिग्रह
इति कुतर्काभ्यासिनः...

(Udayana's Nyāyakusumāñjali, stabaka 2)

(Lazy persons embrace a non-Vedic religion motivated by the paucity of obligatory actions, desperate ones by the welcome extended even to the debased, intemperate ones by the scope for the unregulated gratification of the palate and perverts by the freedom to wed any female one fancies.)

These reasons that have been highlighted by Udayana are worth recalling.

If any famous kāvya be considered, one encounters numerous textual variants and several commentaries that differ from each other in their interpretations. When such is the divergence of views even with regard to kāvyas, it is surely impossible to ascertain the means to the highest good with finality if nothing authoritative is relied upon and every person comes to his own conclusion just on the strength of his own analysis. We should bear in mind that:

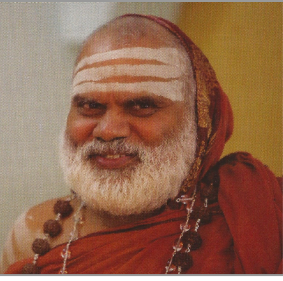
यत्नेनानुमितोप्यर्थः कुशलैरनुमातृभिः ।
अभियुक्ततरैरन्यैरन्यथैवोपपाद्यते ॥
(Bhāmatī on Brahmasūtra 2.1.11)

(Even what has been painstakingly demonstrated by adroit logicians is proved to be otherwise by defter dialecticians.)

How indeed can a person who believes in God, the Creator of the world, accept that even without having first instructed man as to what he should and should not do, God rewards or punishes him for his actions? The sensible way to rule a kingdom is to lay down the laws first and to enforce them thereafter. Likewise, it is but proper that God gives us the śāstra before assigning us the fruits of our actions.

At the time when thinkers were unwilling to accept that injunctions and prohibitions have been specified by God, who controls the universe, and when credos conforming to preference towards something increase quickly, the state of affairs was like riding an unbridled stallion and like digging a well in dry sand. On account of these numerous rudderless creeds, people began to feel troubled and wished for God's guidance. Whilst this agitation expanded, there occurred the advent of Śaṅkara

Bhagavatpada in a pious Brahmin family at Kalady, situated in Kerala on the banks of the sacred river Pūrṇā and sanctified by a temple of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He mastered all the śāstras during childhood itself. His knowledge of the Absolute obviated even the taste for sensuous pleasures and He began to strongly feel that it should be imparted to the world.

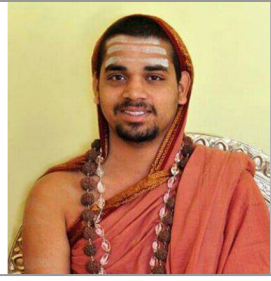


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His mother had no other child but Him and her spouse was not alive. The mother could not brook separation from her son but the son had a message of peace to pass to the world and, so, was not in a position to remain with Her. Such was His disposition that He could not confine Himself to holding just her as His own; His inborn outlook was that the whole world was His very own.



अयं निजः परो वेति गणना लघुचेतसाम्
।

उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥

(Śārngadharapaddhati
(manasvipraśaṁsā 6) 273)

(The petty ponder, "Is this person my own or not?" but the magnanimous view the world as their family.)

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Holiness Sri Abhinava Vidya
Teertha Mahaswamigal and

Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

These words of the ancients about the high-minded found fulfillment in Bhagavatpāda. He was disinclined to annoy her by leaving her coolly; to her, He was dear as life. As this state of affairs continued, one day, when Śaṅkara stepped into the river Pūrṇā for a bath, a crocodile gripped. His leg and began to drag Him into the flowing waters. He called out to His mother. Unable to bear the difficulty of her son, she began to shed huge tears. He said, "O mother! Alarmed by Me, this crocodile is hurting Me. It is only through saṁnyāsa that I can promise all, including this crocodile, immunity from fear on account of Me. Hence, please permit Me to become a saṁnyāsin." Not seeing any other way to save His life, she gave Him leave to do so.

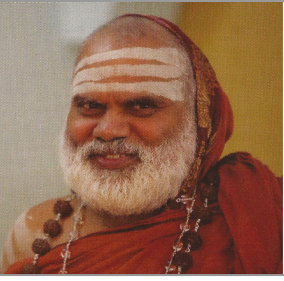
Dispassionately turning away from all comforts for the welfare of the world. He proceeded, in search of a Guru, to the banks of the Narmada. There, Govindapada initiated Him into saṁnyāsa in the prescribed manner. Bhagavatpāda absorbed the teachings of His Guru about the Ātman. He thus showed how the Vedic injunction about resorting to a Guru for acquiring knowledge should be stuck to. The Veda has said:

आचार्याध्दैव विद्या विदिता साधिष्ठं प्रापत्

(Chandogya Upanisad 4.9.3)

(Only the knowledge received from a preceptor becomes ultimate.)

On discriminating against the superhuman abilities of his disciple, the Guru became wonder-struck. He instructed Śaṅkara to author a commentary on the Brahmasūtras and

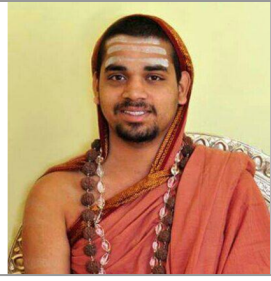


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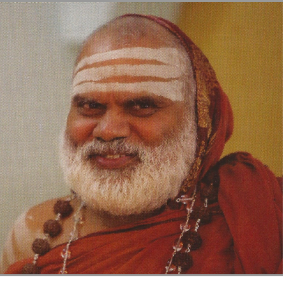
disseminate it for the spiritual uplift of mankind. Bhagavatpāda wrote commentaries on the Brahmasūtras, the Bhagavadgītā and the ten principal Upaniṣads and on a few ancient writings that expound the Truth such as the Sanatsujātīya, a part of the Mahābhārata. In them, He has demonstrated that non-dual, absolute consciousness alone is real. His various analyses are inseparable with sarcastic logic and can be understood only by deep thinkers. Containing replies that fully rebut the objections of the opponent, they are well-suited to be reflected upon by the knowledgeable.

Pundits were not the only ones with whose uplift Bhagavatpāda was concerned. He had the arrogant idea that even those not versed in the śāstras should realize the Supreme and be free from the bond of impermanent existence. So, He wrote books such as Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, Upadeśasāhasrī and Prabodhasudhākara, these are classified as prakaraṇas and are not voluminous. Each of them can be analyzed in days and much study of the Vedānta-Śāstra is not essential to understand them; knowledge of Sanskrit is sufficient.

Though Bhagavatpāda was born in Kerala and Kerala's patois of His days was His mother tongue, He did not compose His works in it; large-hearted, He aimed at more than mere narrow minded knowledge. Sanskrit was then the language utilized by the Pundits of every nook and corner of India and it was understood by many without difficulty. With the magnanimous view that people everywhere should gain a proper knowledge of the scriptural path, He penned books in Sanskrit. The Vedas, which are the origin of the various dharmas, moral maxims and traditional practices of India, are in Sanskrit. The Lord did not incarnate as Bhagavatpāda to conceive of and propagate a new religion; doing so would not have benefited the world in any way. He incarnated to teach us the true meaning of the eternal Vedas and to point out to us that by not relying on them we give room to many delusions and, interpreting ourselves unfit to realize the Supreme, remain ignorant of It. As the Vedas, the detector of dharma, are in Sanskrit, how would it have been fitting for Bhagavatpāda to have written His scriptural commentaries in a language other than Sanskrit?

There are many who lack the competence to realize the Supreme; the required qualifications such as discrimination, dispassion, self-control of the senses and a longing for liberation from transmigratory existence are uncommon. Should not such people too attain what is most beneficial? They are not in a position to practise śravaṇa, manana and nididhyāsana, which directly lead to the realization of the Supreme. However, anything can be effortlessly achieved by the one on whom God showers His grace. Hence, to enable people to please God through mantra-yoga, Bhagavatpāda wrote a treatise on mantras called Prapañcasāra-tantra. Bhagavatpāda's great resolve was, "Let people think seriously about divinities, become the recipients of the Lord's grace and attain bliss in this world and the next. Finally, by the grace of God, let them acquire the required qualifications and realize the Supreme." This led Him to compose many devotional hymns, such as Śivānandalaharī and Saundaryalaharī, which all can read out loud with ease.

Bhagavatpāda traversed the whole of India thrice on foot. His genius and spiritual powers won Him the respect of all the Pundits of His time. The people were, by and large, the adherents of one or the other of many credos. Bhagavatpāda gently detach them away from practices interdicted by the Vedas and taught them, "Any divinity may be worshiped. However, bigoted notions of

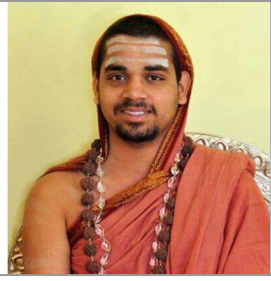


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differences between the divinities should be discarded. It is the same regardless of whether we worship Śiva or Viṣṇu or Śakti or Sūrya or Gaṇapati; our devotional homage be connected only to the Supreme who is of the nature of absolute existence, pure consciousness and perfect bliss. Differences lie only in the forms assumed by the Supreme to provide to the differing preference towards something of the believer." He thereby instilled in the masses the outlook and conduct that are suitable with the Vedic saying:

एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति
(Rgveda-samhita 1.164.46)

(The Truth is one. Sages speak of It variously.)

Through an act of His, Bhagavatpāda demonstrated that India in its entirety, and not merely a group of select regions in it, constitutes the dharmabhūmi, the land of the Vedic religion. Associated with the four Vedic mahāvākyas (great sentences that declare the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme), He established four Maths, one each in the east, west, north and south of our country and thereby give priority to the unity of India in a manner that is apparent to this day. But for the divine advent of this mahātman, our India would, by now, have lost the Vedas, Śiva and Viṣṇu temples and a dharmic basis for its unity. In the form of Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda, God established that the soul trapped in the prison of transmigratory existence is actually Brahman, which is of the nature of eternal bliss. He has graced us with many pieces of advice. One of His works is Mohamudgara. I shall conclude this essay by referring to a verse from it.

त्वयि मयि चान्यत्रैको विष्णुर्व्यर्थं कुर्यासि मय्यसहिष्णुः ।
सर्वस्मिन्नपि पश्यात्मानं सर्वत्रोत्सृज भेदज्ञानम् ॥
(Mohamudgara 24)

(The very same all-pervasive God dwells in you, in me and in others. Giving room to impatience, you get angry with me in vain. Behold the Ātman in all; discard everywhere the understanding of features.)

----- Jagadguru Śaṅkarācārya His Holiness Sri Abhinava Vidya Teertha Mahaswamigal

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