

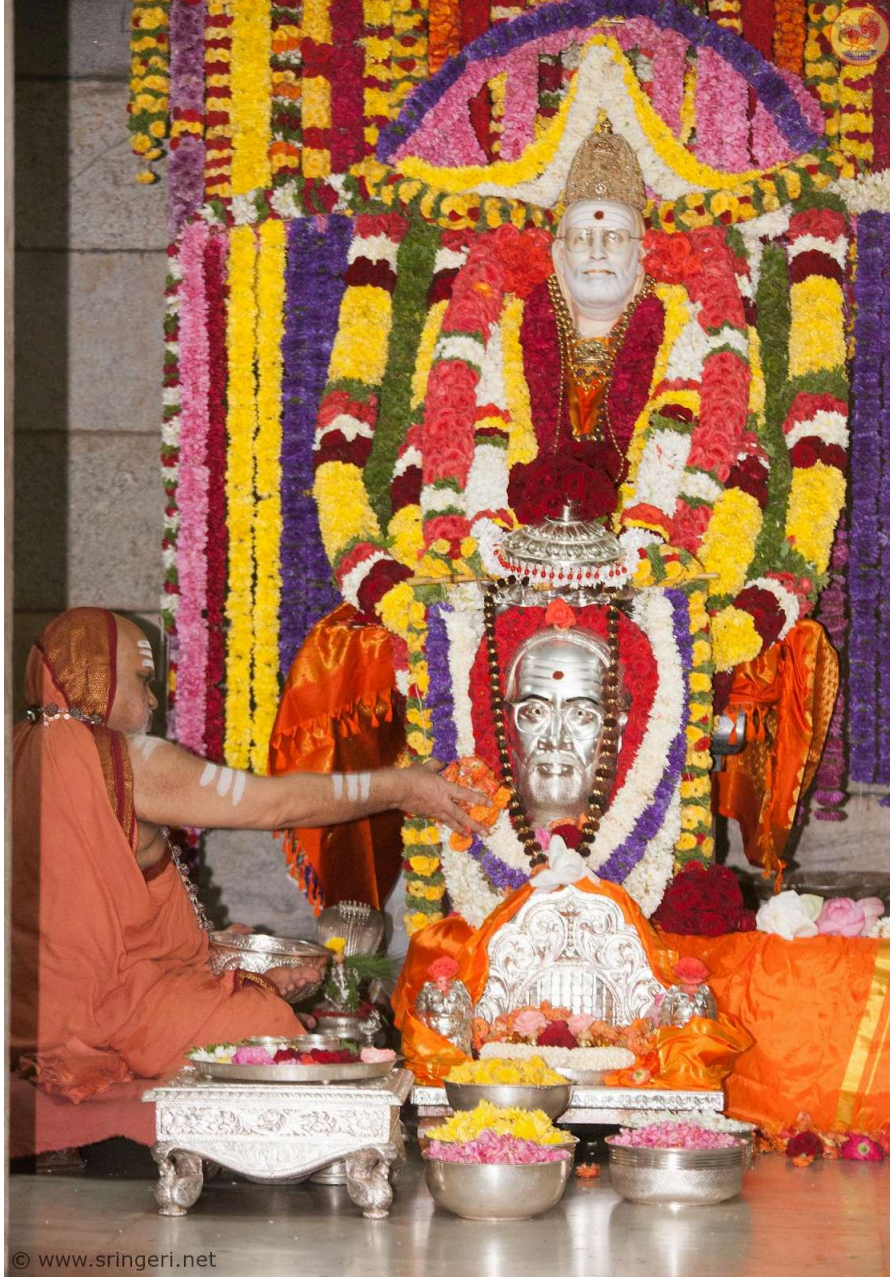


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**Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sri Chandrashekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal
(1892-1954)**

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

SPECIAL SOUVENIR - II

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 Vidhūśekhara Bhāratī Mahāswāmiji



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14th Nov 2020 Jayanthi Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness
Sri Abhinava Vidya Teertha Mahaswamigal (1917-1989)

ANUGRAHA BHASHANAM I
UPANAYANA

Devotee : Can upanayana be performed during Dakṣiṇāyana?



Jagadguru Shankaracharya His Holiness Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamigal at Kalady
Sringeri Math - 1964.

Acharyal : For Brahmins, upanayana should nor be performed during that period.

Devotee : We come across upanayana of two brothers being performed simultaneously. The father gives the upadeśa to one son while an elderly relative gives it to the other . Some consider this wrong. What is Acharyal's view?



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Acharyal : Simultaneous performance of the upanayana of brothers, one being initiated by the father and the other by another relative, is not in accordance with the śāstras.

Devotee : When should upanayanam be performed?

Acharyal : The boy should be initiated even when he is young. It is said that a brāhmaṇa should be invested with the sacred thread at garbhāṣṭama (the eighth year from the period of pregnancy). However, specific occasions have been prescribed for better results .If a boy is initiated at the age of five, he attains brahma-varcas. Postponing the investiture is certainly not good. But there is no need to think as follows: "This boy has passed the age specified for the performance of upanayana. He need not therefore, be invested with the sacred thread henceforth."

Devotee: Which is the appropriate time to start the morning sandhyāvandana?

Acharyal : A short while before sunrise.

Devotee : Does Acharyal advice that one should wake up early in the morning?

Acharyal : Yes. In the morning, the period just before sunrise is most suitable for anuṣṭhāna. Going to bed between ten and eleven at night and waking up between four and five in the morning is a very good habit.

Devotee : If, due to some reason, the sandhyā period passes without sandhyāvandana being performed, can that particular sandhyāvandana be given up ?

Acharyal : Even if it is late, sandhyāvandana should not be neglected. If delayed, it should be performed by offering the prāyaścitta-arghya. This does not mean that one must not strive to do it at the proper time.

Devotee : What if one is ill ?

Acharyal : If consciousness and control over the mind are present during the illness, it can be performed mentally.

Devotee : Should one bathe before sandhyāvandana in the morning ?

Acharyal : Yes. Bathing before the morning sandhyāvandana is compulsory. During illness, mantra-snāna can be done. If illness is severe, at least sandhyāvandana should be performed mentally.

Devotee : How many times should gāyatrī-mantra be chanted ?

Acharyal : AS many times as possible. But there are lower limits, such as hundred and eight times during the morning sandhyāvandana. One should not, normally, chant fewer times than the limit. In case of an emergency, when there is no way out, the consideration is entirely different.

Devotee : Are samidādhāna and brahma-yajña included among the nitya-karmas of a brahmacārin ?

Acharyal : Yes

Devotee : The necessity of attending school, college, office etc., often precludes the performance of mādhyāhnika at the proper time. When, then, should it be done ?

Acharyal : Mādhyāhnika can be performed after morning sandhyāvandana itself. This is in case there is no other option.

ANUGRAHA BHASHANAM II

DHYAANA

Devotee : What is meant by dhyāna ?



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Acharyal : Dhyāna is the state wherein the mind concentrates on just one object.

Devotee : What is the main advantage of practising dhyāna?

Acharyal : If mental concentration is achieved by practice, the mind can then turn towards Ísvara, and being thus purified, it can be directed towards the ātmman, which is formless and devoid of attributes. By doing this, one attains the state of nirvikalpa-samādhī, the culmination of dhyāna wherein one realises the Truth.

Devotee : Though meditation can do so much good, why is it very difficult to practise?

Acharyal : The difficulty in controlling the mind is indeed the reason.

Devotee : How can the mind be controlled ?

Acharyal : The Lord has said that practice and dispassion are the means.

Devotee : What are the obstacles to get dhyāna?

Acharyal : Do you ask about obstacles during meditation or those arising at other times?

Devotee : I am asking about the obstacles that prevent one from attaining samādhī during meditation.

Acharyal : The first among the obstacles is vikṣepa; that is, the mind wanders in all directions. This is the foremost obstacle, The second is the mind attaining a dull state. Of course, vikṣepa is absent. Even this is bad. If one attains an inert condition similar to sleep, one will not reach the Supreme state. Sakaṣāya is the third obstacle. This is a state wherein there is neither vikṣepa nor mental inertness. It gives a sort of happiness, but in it the seed of desire is not destroyed. This is unlike samādhī. One should carefully go beyond even this. Gauḍapādācārya. One should carefully go beyond even this. Gauḍapādācārya has said:

लये सम्बोधयेच्चित्तं विक्षिप्तं शमयेत्पुनः ।

सकषायं विजानीयात् समप्राप्तं न चालयेत् ॥

(If the mind is in a state of torpor, it should be woken up. If it is dispersed amongst objects, it should be calmed down. If it is latent with the seed of desire, that condition should be recognised. One should not disturb the mind established in equipoise.)

Devotee : How can we calm down the distracted mind ?

Acharyal : We should turn the mind repeatedly to the object of meditation. With growth of dispassion, vikṣepa subsides. During meditation, the conviction that meditation alone is important should exist. The feeling that the form or sound being meditated upon is actually present is useful in focussing the mind.

Devotee : What is to be done if the mind becomes dull or sleepy ?

Acharyal : If a person is alert , he can discern that his mind is becoming passive and dull. By sensing the onset of torpor and awakening and focussing the mind, he can deal with dullness. The japa that is being done may be intensified . If this is done, the mind will become alert. But if, in spite of effort, the mind continues to drift into the state of torpor, it is advisable to take a small break, have a walk and then recommence dhyāna. On certain occasions, the mind should not be forced to meditate. If there is tiredness, it is advisable to commence dhyāna after a break. But, if indolence is the reason for the dullness, one should force the mind to continue with meditation.

Devotee : Is it necessary to do japa during dhyāna?

Acharyal : While doing saḡuṇa-upāsanā, japa is very useful in the beginning. It helps the mind to be calm. As the mind locks on to the object of dhyāna, japa ceases of its own accord. Thus, there is often no need to stop japa wilfully.



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Devotee : How should meditation on a form be practised ?

Acharyal : Techniques vary and different aspirants have to be instructed differently. A common code of instructions cannot be prescribed. I shall spell out one method. One can proceed with the notion that one's iṣṭa-devatā (favourite deity) is seated in the lotus of one's heart. If one finds it difficult to visualise and focus on the pertinent form of the Lord, one can take the aid of a picture of the deity. Japa should be done while looking at the picture. Then after, partially closing the eyes, one should try to meditate on the deity, with the idea that one is actually seeing the deity. The mind may focus for a while, without wandering. But once the mind starts wandering, one can open eye's and look at the picture again. This can be followed by meditation, with the eyes partially closed. If the attempt is repeated in this manner, the form of the iṣṭa-devatā will remain in one's mind, without the need fro looking at the picture. This is one of the methods of practising meditation. Meditating on sound is another method. Maṛṣi Patañjali prescribes the general rule: यथाऽभिमतध्यानाद्वा । (Or, by meditating on any desired, permitted object.) The Guru determines the method that is best suited to his disciple.

Devotee : Is it advisable to do meditation when one is not keeping good health?

Acharyal : That depends on the extent of ill health. Those who have considerably advanced in meditation will be able to meditate whenever they wish to. But those who are still in the beginning stages may be able to meditate only when they are keeping good health. INcreasing the practice of meditation yields correspondingly better fruits. This does not, however, imply that one should sit so long so to strain the mind. Experts in meditation can concentrate for hours together. But if one who is not versed in meditation tries to sit for hours in dhyāna, only unpleasant memories will be generated. Besides, headache or some other pain may make its appearance.

Devotee : How should nirguṇa-dhyāna (meditation on the Self devoid of attributes) be practised?

Acharyal : While doing nirguṇa-dhyāna, one need not take the aid of any divine form or japa. It is suited to those who have attained high levels in the practice of dhyāna. Meditation on that which is bereft of form and attributes is nirguṇa-dhyāna. It leads to nirvikalpa-samādhi, the highest state of meditation. No unique method exists for practising it. One of the methods for this is as follows. First, the rise and fall of thoughts should be just watched, with the conviction that there is no connection between oneself and the thoughts. Gradually, the thoughts automatically subside. Another method consists in directly putting a stop to all mental wandering and then firmly thinking, "I am pure consciousness and bliss." During nirguṇa-dhyāna, awareness of the body is absent.

Devotee : Why do some experience bodily jerks at times during meditation?

Acharyal : It normally means that the body is weak. It can also be due to the influence of the kuṇḍalinī-śakti. Meditation can be continued without worrying about minor jerks.

Devotee : Where should meditation be performed ?

Acharyal : In a calm and pure place.

Devotee : Is it advisable to sit on some special seat?

Acharyal : Lord Kṛṣṇa says: चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् The seat recommended comprises a mat of kuśa grass, on which deerskin is spread, with a cloth being spread on the deerskin.

Devotee : Many desire meditation sincerely but still are not able to so properly. Why is it so ?

Acharyal : It may seem that they greatly long for meditation, but is it actually so? No. Even a little analysis of the life of most people shows that they do not attach adequate importance to meditation. Sleep, food, office, examination, etc., get higher priority than meditation. If it is time for



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the office, that is the end of meditation. Further, even when they sit for meditation, they do not sit with the idea, "Let anything happen in this world. I need only meditation now." This apart, meditation is difficult in this birth for those who have not practised it much in their previous births. By the same rule, those who had practised much meditation will now find dhyāna easy. Swimming is initially difficult. It becomes easy with practice. That is the case here also.

Devotee : When one is seated for meditation, will the resolve, "I am not going to give room to any worry or worldly thought" be helpful?

Acharyal : Yes

Devotee : It stands to reason that he who has intense vairāgya should be easily able to forget the world when he sits for meditation. However, we see some persons with intense dispassion who are unable to meditate well. Will Acharyal clarify the reason for this?

Acharyal : Normally, dhyāna is easy for those who have intense dispassion . However, because of their not having duly practised mediation in their previous births, some deeply dispassionate ones may experience difficulty in achieving intense focus during meditation.

Devotee : If one is defeated again and again when trying to meditate, will not one become disheartened and irritated?

Acharyal : Giving place to disheartenment or irritation is equivalent to one standing as an obstacle in one's own way. Even to get a degree, one has to go to college and study for years, What then need be said about the effort required to achieve success in dhyāna, which is very subtle and far superior? Not only do people not put in the same effort as they do for obtaining a degree but they dare to say that they feel irritated and frustrated. You can see for yourself how fair this is. Maharṣi Patañjali had said in his Yogasūtra-s : स तु दीर्घकालनैरन्तर्यसत्कारासेवितो दृढभूमिः । (It becomes firmly rooted when practised for a long time, without any break and with sincerity.) If people could successfully accomplish dhyāna in days or a few months, the sage's aphorism would be meaningless.

Devotee : Even those who are able to get good meditation may experience fluctuations in their level of meditation. On certain days, their meditation is very good but on certain other occasions, it is unsatisfactory . What should be done to get good meditation always?

Acharyal : Ill health, unrestricted food, laziness, worries, desires, etc., remain as impediments to dhyāna. Therefore, if we strive and remove these obstacles, dhyāna will become steady. If the problem persists, then, without giving any room for worry, further efforts should be made. If meditation gets spoiled because of a particular powerful obstacle, one should, with the guidance of a Guru, remove it by a specifically directed effort. All this apart, advantage can be taken of the fact that the mind is naturally peaceful at certain times of the day, such as dawn and dusk.

Devotee : Is dhyāna alone sufficient to control desires?

Acharyal : Those who attain the highest state of meditation, namely, samādhi, can destroy desire through it. For others, meditation alone can be insufficient . Mental impressions are generated or strengthened when one thinks of or resorts to the object of desire while one is not in mediation. These tendencies tend to overpower those produced during meditation. Therefore, when one is not doing meditation, one should assiduously cultivate dispassion by the perception of faults in objects. Studying scriptural texts daily and contemplating on the ideas expressed therein help one to conquer desires. The company of sages is very helpful in curbing longings.

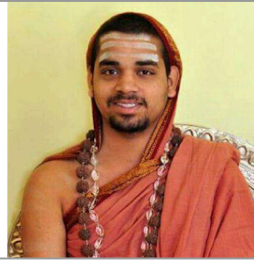


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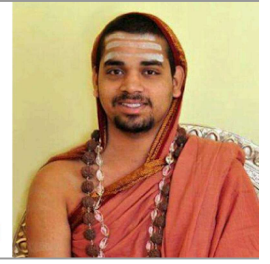
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Jagadguru Shankaracharya His Holiness Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamigal during his 6th tour -Short tour of South India - 1971



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SRI TUNGA PUSHKARA

In our country, from the very beginning, Dharma , moral code of conduct is in vogue. It is called Sanatana Dharma. It is this dharma that binds us together and prompts them to walk along the path of righteousness, thereby, giving them the happiness of fulfillment. This dharma has been formulated for the well being of mankind, ensuring peace and happiness in the world. It is for the benefit of the whole of mankind. There would be prosperity, happiness and peace in the world as long as this dharma is followed.

The great sage Sri Vedavyasa has conveyed the various ways of performing Dharma karyas in the Puranas for the benefit of mankind. Taking bath in Holy rivers, Visiting the holy places, performing japa of mantras and performing Dana such as Annadana in holy places are of great benefit.

Performing Snana(Holy bath) in Parva Kala yields more Punya and is considered highly auspicious. Parva kalas that are suitable for taking the ritualistic bath are the months of Kartika & Magha , Sankramana, Mahashivaratri, Grahana kala and Ratha saptami.

This year, Guru Graha enters Makara Rashi. The Pushkara will begin in the holy river "SRI TUNGA BHADRA". Taking the Holy bath in the first Twelve days of this Pushkara Parva will bestow Punya.

SRI TUNGABHADRA MAHATMYA

The protector of the World Sri Mahavishnu, after the Samhara of Hiranyaksha in his Varaha Avatara, resided on the Sahyadri mountains. During that time River Tunga Bhadra emerged from the canines of Sri Varahamurthy. The water of Tunga Bhadra has the presence of Sri Mahavishnu, as it originated from Sri Yajna Varaha murty.

In this river Lord Paramashiva resides in the form of stones. The Sand of this river has the Vishesha Sannidhya of Surya Narayana. On both sides of this river Great sages, Siddhas and Sadhyas do their penances by taking the form of plants.

The Puranas declare that a mere glance of this holy river is sufficient to wash our Papas and cure diseases. In the Treta Yuga , Sri Vibhandaka maharshi performed penance on the banks of this river and attained Shiva Sayujya.

The Linga which was worshipped by Maharshi Vibhandaka is known as Sri Malahanikareshwara Linga. Sri Rushyashruna, the son of Vibhandaka Maharshi also created His Ashrama on the banks of this holy river. Sri Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada Acharya who is Paramashiva Himself also selected this holy place for His first Amnaya Peetha that is Sri Dakshinamnaya Sri Sringeri Sharada Peetham.

Sri Tunga river originates from a place called TUNGA MOOLA (also popularly known as Gangamoola by locals) which is near Shrungagiri. This place is dedicated to Sri Varaha Swamy



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and from this place, river Tunga Bhadra emerges. It merges with river Krishna at a place called Sangameshwara near Srisailam which is a Shiva kshetra. So this river is also termed as "Harihara swarupini".

The Divine form of river SRI TUNGABHADRA, The Goddess Shree TUNGABHADRA stands on a lotus flower with Shankha(conch), Chakra(disc), Abhaya(gesture of fearlessness) with a Lotus in



her hand.

Jagadguru Shankaracharya His Holiness Sri Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji performing Ganga Puja on the banks of the Holy Tungabhadra River at Sringeri.

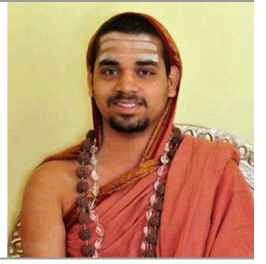


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Jagadguru Shankaracharya His Holiness Sri Sri Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati Mahaswamiji performing Ganga Puja on the banks of the Holy Tungabhadra River at Sringeri.

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