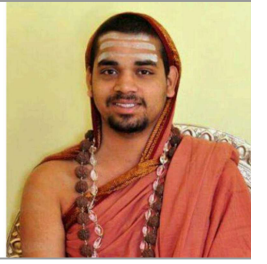


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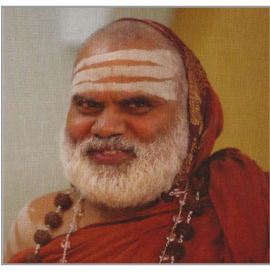


34TH VARDHANTI SPECIAL EDITION: VOL : I



OUR HUMBLE PRANAMAS AT THE HOLY LOTUS FEET OF JAGADGURU
ŚANKARĀCĀRYA HIS HOLINESS SANNIDHĀNAM ŚRĪ ŚRĪ ŚRĪ VIDHUŚEKHARA
BHĀRATĪ MAHĀSWĀMIJI ON THIS SPECIAL OCCASION OF 34TH VARDHANTI
MAHOTSAVAM OF HIS HOLINESS

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

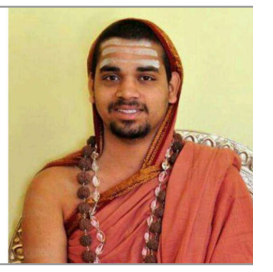


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ANUGRAHA BHASHANAM

ALTRUISM IS PERSONALLY REWARDING TOO (TATTV ALOKA JAN, 2016)

स्वस्त्यस्तु विश्वस्य खलः प्रसीदतां ध्यायन्तु भूतानि शिवं मिथो धिया ।
मनश्चा भद्रं भजतादधोक्षजे आवेश्यतां नो मतिरप्यहैतुकी ॥



svastyastu viśvasya khalah prasīdatāṃ
dhyāyantu bhūtāni śivaṃ mitho dhiyā |
manaścā bhadraṃ bhajatādhokṣaje
āveśyatāṃ no matirapyahaitukī ||

"May the world flourish. May the wicked give up wickedness. May all creatures wish for mutual welfare. May the mind attain peace. May our intellect turn towards God without any expectation."

Such a prayer comes from a pure mind. If man leads his life ideally with this noble attitude, he will attain sreyas. God will accept his prayer and suitably reward him, while bestowing his grace. If at all such a person faces any difficulty, everybody will come to his help.

We see examples of this in the Ramayana. Though just a bird, Jatayu tried to block Ravana's path to save Sita. The squirrel, a tiny creature, helped Rama as much as it could. And one cannot just forget the service of the vanara sena (army of monkeys).

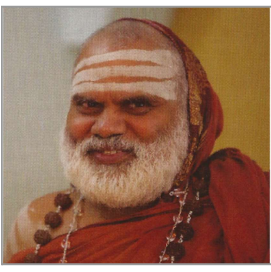
Kumbhabhisheka of the historic Sri Rajagopala Krishna Swami Temple was performed by Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha

Mahasannidhanam on May 22, 2015.

What we learn from this is that the prayers and activities of a pure hearted person praying for public welfare will be effortlessly crowned with personal rewards, too. Even persons with malice towards him will quickly reform themselves. This is indeed the special significance of a pure-hearted prayer.

We bless all to develop such a sattvic attitude

Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Bhārati Tīrtha Mahāswāmiji

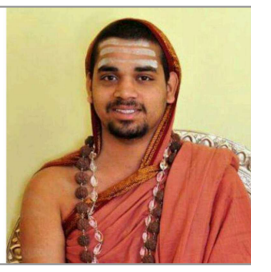


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Benedictory Addresses by Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Vidhuśekhara Bhārati Mahāswāmiji during Chadurmasya (2026 few and in various other events) : A rough translation

Anugraha Bhāṣaṇam : 1

"I bow to Bhagavatpada Shankara, the benefactor of the universe, the abode of Shrutis, Smritis, and Puranas, and the personification of compassion."



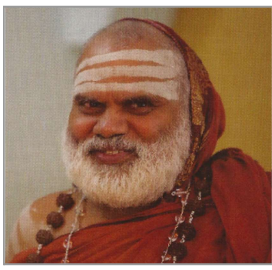
It is a matter of great joy that nearly 350 devotees from Madurai have arrived during this auspicious Chaturmasya period to offer collective Samashti Bhikshavandanam and submit a silver Prabhavali (decorative arch) for the temple celebrations and worship of the Lord. Every year, the Madurai devotees have been offering dedicated service, and coming here to seek the grace of Goddess Sharada, Lord Chandramouleshwara, and our Acharyas is truly commendable.

The connection between Madurai and Sringeri dates back centuries, existing since the very time of Adi Shankaracharya. Notably, the 25th Jagadguru of the Sringeri Sharada Peetham, Sri Sacchidananda Bharati Swamiji, was born in Kunnavarankottai near Madurai (close to Vathalagundu). In his youth, seeking a true Sadguru, he arrived in Sringeri, received Sannyasa Diksha from the then Acharya, Sri Abhinava Nrusimha Bharati Swamiji, and ascended the Peetham. During his tenure, numerous development works took place at the Peetham, as documented in historical inscriptions. His birthplace in Kunnavarankottai can still be visited today. Thus, a profound bond exists between Sringeri and the devotees of Madurai.

The Supreme Importance of a Guru:

In human life, a Guru's guidance is indispensable. We cannot accomplish anything meaningful without guidance. First, our mother and father give us this physical birth and provide everything necessary to sustain our lives. They endure countless hardships selflessly, wishing only for their children's well-being.

However, it is the Guru who teaches us how to utilize this life properly, how to live righteously, and how to attain Moksha (liberation). While parents give birth and provide physical sustenance,

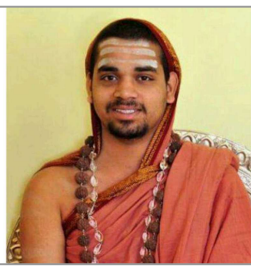


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the Guru imparts the wisdom of the Truth and shows the path to liberation. Hence, the Upanishad commands us to revere all three as divine:

Matru Devo Bhava | Pitru Devo Bhava | Acharya Devo Bhava |

(Revere your mother, father, and teacher as God).

Who is a True Guru?

A person cannot become a Guru merely by assuming a grand title, wearing ascetics' robes, sitting on a high throne, or having a large crowd around them. The single most essential qualification is Jnana (Spiritual Wisdom) and the capacity to transmit that wisdom effectively through Jnana Upadesha (Spiritual Instruction).

In the Bhagavad Gita, when Arjuna was overwhelmed with moral confusion on the battlefield, unable to determine what was right and wrong, he surrendered to Lord Krishna and pleaded:

Shishyaste'ham shaadhi maam tvaam prapannam

("I am Your disciple. Please instruct me, who have surrendered to You.")

Though Arjuna had spent many years with Krishna as a friend and companion (Sakha), he had never looked upon Him as a Guru. Only when faced with the dire need for spiritual guidance did he surrender as a disciple. To guide someone, the teacher must first know the path thoroughly; a blind person cannot lead other blind people. Furthermore, a true Guru must understand the disciple's mind, intellectual capacity, and receptivity, and explain the highest philosophical truths in a clear, accessible manner.

Adi Shankaracharya defines a Guru in Prashnottara Ratnamalika:

Adhigata-tattvah shishyahitaaya udyatah satatam

(One who has realized the ultimate Truth and is constantly striving for the spiritual welfare of his disciples).

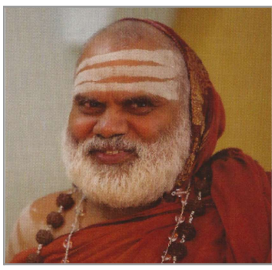
Secular Education vs. Spiritual Wisdom:

Consider the effort we put into worldly education. Parents send their children to distant countries and prestigious foreign universities, spending enormous sums of money, enduring separation, and facing unfamiliar cultures. Why? Because they inquire extensively and verify that a valuable degree will be obtained. Yet, all secular learning and material earnings last only as long as this physical body exists; a doctor or architect in this birth cannot carry that degree into their next birth!

If we investigate so thoroughly for worldly education that ends with this single lifetime, how much more carefully should we inquire when seeking a Sadguru whose spiritual teachings benefit us in this life, in the hereafter, and across future births?

The Value of Shraddha (Faith and Sincerity):

Whatever spiritual practice (Dharmanushtana) we perform, it must be done with deep Shraddha (faith and diligence). The duration is secondary to the quality of devotion. Even if one can spare

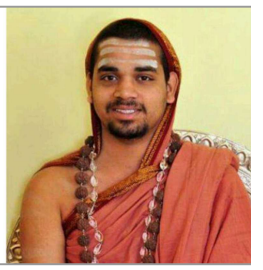


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only 15 to 30 minutes a day amidst busy worldly routines, performing one's daily prayers with total focus and faith yields immense spiritual benefit.

In the Puranas, it is stated that during the Vamana Avatar, Lord Vishnu blessed King Mahabali. The Lord ordained that whenever people in the world perform religious rituals devoid of Shraddha, the spiritual merit (phala) of those actions is transferred to King Mahabali in the netherworld (Patala). Therefore, unless we perform our duties with sincerity and faith, we will not receive their fruit.

The Guru Parampara and the Oneness of Shiva and Vishnu:

Our Sanatana Dharma is rooted in an unbroken lineage of teachers:

Sadashiva samaarambhaam Shankaraachaarya madhyamaam |

Asmadaachaarya paryantaam vande guru-paramparaam ||

The lineage originates from God Himself (Sadashiva / Narayana). One should never see a difference between Shiva and Narayana; scriptures emphasize that viewing Shiva and Keshava as distinct or unequal is a grave spiritual error. From the Lord, the wisdom flowed through sages like Vashistha, Shakti, Parashara, Vyasa, and Shukacharya, and then through Adi Shankaracharya and his four prime disciples (Sureshvaracharya, Padmapadacharya, Hastamalakacharya, and Totakacharya). In this Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Sharada Peetham, established by Adi Shankara in the sacred land where Sage Rishyashringa meditated, our Guru, Jagadguru Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji, currently reigns as the 36th pontiff.

We convey our heartfelt blessings with Narayana Smarana to all the devotees of Madurai, to Dharmadhikari Sri Natesharaja, and to everyone who organized and participated in this sacred pilgrimage. May Goddess Sharada Chandramouleshwara shower you all with good health, prosperity, and spiritual elevation.

Sacred Shloka Imparted by the Acharya:

Vedho-hareeshvara-stutyaam

Vihartreem vindhya-bhoodhare |

Hara-praaneshvareem vande

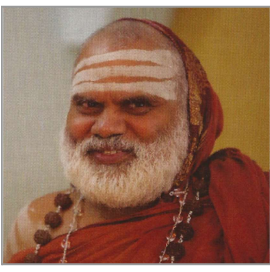
Hantreem vibudha-vidvishaam ||

Significance:

This is a powerful hymn praising the Divine Mother. The unique feature of this shloka is that every quarter (paada) contains all the individual syllables that constitute the sacred Hreemkara Beejam (the primal seed syllable HREEM of the Divine Mother). Just as the Hreemkara seed mantra possesses infinite spiritual power, chanting this sacred shloka daily with devotion will bestow the boundless grace of the Divine Mother upon all.

Source : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ycMd35nnj5k>

Courtesy : www.sringeri.net

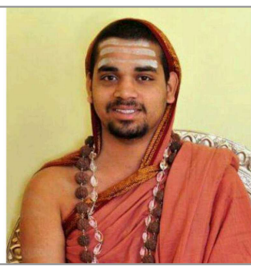


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Anugraha Bhāṣaṇam : 2

The path shown to us by Shankaracharya is not merely His personal path; it is the path of our Sanātana Dharma, the Vedic Dharma. Therefore, no one should think, “Shankara showed one

path; that is only Shankara’s path.” What He has shown us is indeed the Vedic path that reflects the inner essence of our Sanātana Dharma.



In composing His works, Shankaracharya has taken all our Pramāṇas as the basis. The Vedas, Shāstras, Purāṇas, Itihāsas—all of these expound certain principles for us. He examined those principles minutely and presented

them comprehensively in His works. In particular, He presented in a most beautiful manner the **Samanvaya**—the philosophical harmony—existing among all of them.

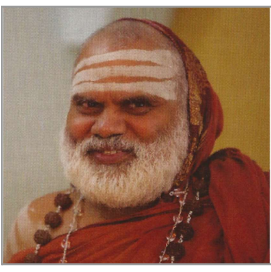
Karma Mārga, Bhakti Mārga and Jñāna Mārga are not mutually contradictory paths. Recognising the inner relationship among them, harmonising them, and integrating them, Shankara taught us the complete path of Dharma. Thus, the path shown to us by Him is the Vedic path; it is the path of our Sanātana Dharma.

Therefore, everyone must clearly understand this matter.

Shankaracharya never looked upon anyone with hatred. He did not refute anyone out of a feeling of hatred. Rather, He merely pointed out the philosophical or logical defect found in another person’s doctrine. He only indicated, “This point is not correct; you must rectify it.” His intention was not to hate the person; His intention was to correct the illogical element present in the doctrine.

Shankaracharya Himself has stated this very clearly in His **Sūtra Bhāṣya**.

In one Adhikaraṇa, the subject of the worship of Bhagavān comes up. There, people belonging to another school—which is itself connected with a tradition of our Vedic Dharma—give special importance to the worship of Bhagavān. At that time, Shankaracharya makes a very clear statement.

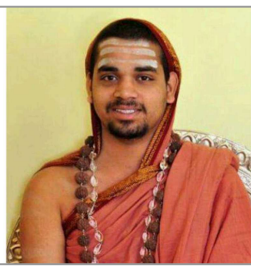


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“Here, we do not refute the worship of Bhagavān. Because worship of Bhagavān exists for us also; we too worship Bhagavān. It is our duty as well. But in the doctrine that they have propounded, certain ideas are not logically tenable. I am not calling them ‘wrong’ based on my personal opinion; they do not possess adequate **logical strength**. They are not compatible with reasoning. Therefore, we are saying that those aspects must be rectified.” Shankara clearly explains this. This point itself is made clear at the very beginning of that Adhikaraṇa.

A question arises there: “They too worship Bhagavān. They advocate that Bhagavān must be worshipped. That itself is the principal aspect of their spiritual practice. If so, why do you refute them?”

Shankaracharya’s answer to this is extremely subtle. To refute them does **not mean refuting their worship of Bhagavān or their devotion to Bhagavān**. We too have worship of Bhagavān. We too have devotion to Bhagavān. What is being refuted is not devotion; what is being refuted is only the doctrinal point that is contrary to reason.

They have followed certain methods to establish their doctrine. Some aspects of those methods are contrary to reason. Shankaracharya points out that only those illogical aspects should be corrected.

There itself He says:

तत्तु न खण्ड्यते । यत्तु तैरिदमुच्यते तत् युक्तिविरुद्धमिति कृत्वा तत् खण्ड्यते ।

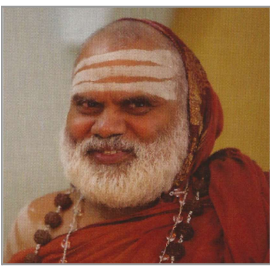
That is: “That matter concerning the worship of Bhagavān is not refuted. However, wherever there is an aspect in what they have propounded that is contrary to reason, only that aspect is refuted.”

In the Adhikaraṇa ‘**Utpatti-Asambhavāt**’ also, Shankaracharya explains this matter. Thus, it becomes clear that the purpose of Shankaracharya’s refutation was not hatred towards individuals; His purpose was the establishment of truth and the removal of ideas that are contrary to reason.

Who is a Bhāgavata?

Another important question is: Who are the true **Bhāgavatas**? Our Purāṇas themselves provide the answer to this.

In the opening portion of the Nārada Purāṇa, Maharshi Mārkaṇḍeya asks Bhagavān: “They say ‘Bhāgavatas, Bhāgavatas.’ Who exactly are the true Bhāgavatas? What are their characteristics?” Then Bhagavān replies:

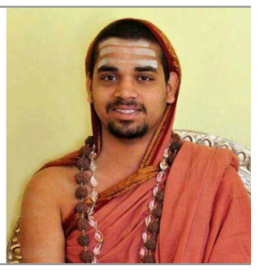


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“There are many characteristics of a Bhāgavata. Bhāgavatas are extremely exalted. They possess many virtues and many characteristics. It would be lengthy to explain all of them; nevertheless, I shall state some of the principal characteristics.”

Among them is one extremely important statement:

शिवे च परमेशे च विष्णौ च परमात्मनि । समबुद्ध्या प्रवर्तन्ते ते वै भागवता स्मृताः ॥

“Those who conduct themselves with an equal vision towards Shiva, Paramēśvara, Vishnu and the Paramātmā are indeed remembered as true Bhāgavatas,” says Bhagavān Himself.

The meaning of this is extremely profound. In the philosophy taught to us by Shankaracharya, **there is no place for a vision of difference between Shiva and Keshava**. From the standpoint of the Supreme Reality, not seeing the difference between Shiva and Keshava, and possessing a vision of oneness, is one of its principal characteristics.

Therefore, Bhagavān’s statement, “Shive cha Parameshe cha Vishnau cha Paramātmāni samabuddhyā”, presents this principle with great clarity. Those who do not maintain a sense of superiority or inferiority between Shiva and Keshava, and who look upon them with an equal vision, are true Bhāgavatas; they are specifically described here as the foremost among Bhāgavatas.

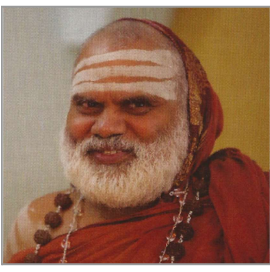
The Episode of Daksha’s Yajña

This same principle is once again clearly expressed in the **Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa**. In the episode of Daksha’s Yajña, when Bhagavān speaks with Daksha, the expression **“priyamāṇa iva”** occurs. Here, the word **“iva”** is highly significant. **“Priyamāṇa iva”** means “as though being pleased.”

In the commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmī, the subtle meaning of this is explained. In reality, Bhagavān was not pleased with Daksha. This was because Daksha had a feeling of hatred towards Shiva. Insulting Shiva, harbouring hatred towards Shiva, and having a vision of difference between Shiva and Keshava were not pleasing to Bhagavān. Therefore, the expression **“priyamāṇa iva”** is used.

That is, the commentators indicate the subtle meaning that He was not actually pleased, but spoke as though He were pleased. Bhagavān became displeased because Daksha had insulted Shiva. Thereafter, He instructs that such an offence should not be committed again.

There itself, the unity of the three forms of God is also established: **“Aham Brahmā cha Sharvaścha...”**—that is, the principle is propounded there that I, Brahmā and Sharva—the Trimūrtis—are different forms of the one Supreme Brahman Reality. Such examples are not merely one or two in the Purāṇas; there are many.

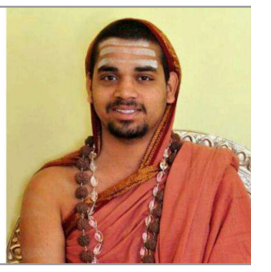


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The Clear Conclusion of the Nārada Purāṇa

In the Nārada Purāṇa itself, another extremely important verse occurs:

हरिं हरं विधातारं यः पश्यत्येकरूपिणम् । स याति परमानन्दं शास्त्राणामेष निश्चयः ॥

One who sees Hari, Hara and Vidhāta—that is, Vishnu, Shiva and Brahmā—as one form attains supreme bliss; **this is the conclusion of the Shāstras**, it is stated here.

It does not say, “This is my conclusion.” “**Shāstrāṇām eṣa niścayaḥ**”—this is the conclusion of the Shāstras. That means this is not the personal opinion of any one individual; the Shāstras themselves propound it in this manner.

The same matter is made clear by another verse:

हरिशंकरयोर्मध्ये ब्रह्मणश्चापि यो नरः । भेदं करोति सोऽभ्येति नरकं भृशदारुणम् ॥

It is stated here that one who creates a distinction between Hari, Shankara and Brahmā attains an extremely terrible and frightening hell.

Thus, the principle of the non-difference of Shiva and Keshava is not something that Shankaracharya Himself invented. It is a Vedic principle that has been propounded in various ways in the Vedas, Shāstras and Purāṇas.

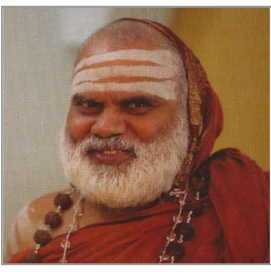
Shankara's Advaita Philosophy and the Viṣṇu Purāṇa

Similarly, we can consider the **Advaita principle** propounded by Shankaracharya. If we briefly state the essence of Shankaracharya's philosophy:

ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ।

Brahman alone is the Supreme Reality; the world is Mithyā; the Jīva is not different from Brahman—this is the famous teaching of Advaita Vedānta. Shankaracharya was not someone who independently created and stated this principle. Its basis can be found in the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Purāṇas and other authoritative scriptures.

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa also, the expression “dvaitino 'tathyadarśinaḥ” is found. This indicates the meaning that those who see through the vision of duality do not see the Supreme Reality as it truly is. This does not mean that the empirical world itself does not exist. **At the level of empirical dealings, duality is experienced.** However, it is not regarded as the Absolute Reality. From the empirical standpoint, difference is perceived between the world, the Jīva and Īśvara. But from the Pāramārthika standpoint, Parabrahman alone is the one non-dual Reality. This is the fundamental essence of Advaita.

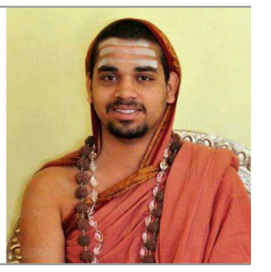


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The Example of the Holes of a Flute

A beautiful illustration for this is given in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa. The same air enters into a flute. But when it comes out through the different holes of the flute, different kinds of sounds are produced. The air is one; but because of the differences in the holes, variety is seen in the sounds.

In the same way, when the one Paramātmān is reflected in different Upādhis, He appears to us in the form of different Jīvas, with different natures and in different ways.

Through the illustration beginning with “*veṇurandhra-prabhedena...*” found in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, this very principle is explained.

Just as one and the same air produces different sounds when it emerges through different holes, the one Parabrahman Reality manifests differently through numerous Upādhis.

Sat-Asat Anirvachanīyatva

Similarly, the Advaita principle of ‘**Sad-Asad-Bhyām-Anirvachanīyatva**’ can also be found to have support in the Purāṇas.

As stated in the doctrine: “**If something is Sat, it should never be sublated; if it is Asat, it should never be experienced.**” Sat means that which, like Parabrahman, can never be sublated. Asat means something like the horn of a hare—something that can never be experienced.

But this world is experienced; therefore, it cannot be described as completely Asat. At the same time, when enlightenment arises, its independent Pāramārthika reality is sublated. Therefore, it cannot be called absolute Sat in the same manner as Parabrahman.

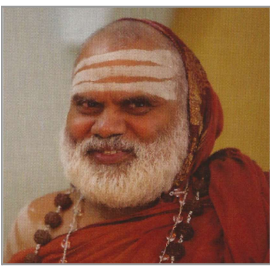
Thus, it is explained in Advaita philosophy that it does not completely belong to either the category of Sat or the category of Asat, and therefore it is ‘**Sad - Asad - Bhyām - Anirvachanīya**’—indescribable as either Sat or Asat. This principle too is propounded in various ways in our Purāṇas and other scriptures. Later Advaita works such as Advaita Siddhi explain this same principle in greater detail from a logical standpoint.

Shankara—Reviver of the Meaning of the Vedas

Thus, every major principle stated by Shankaracharya has a basis in the Vedas, Shāstras, Purāṇas and Itihāsas. He examined all these scriptures comprehensively, recognised their inner harmony, and presented their purport in a manner that we could easily understand.

That is why the great men of earlier times praised Shankaracharya by saying:

“श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणानामालयं करुणालयम्”

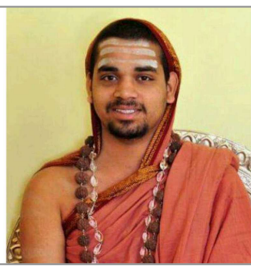


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That is, He is the abode of Śruti, Smṛti and Purāṇas; He is the abode of compassion.

In another hymn also, it is said:

वक्तारमासाद्य यमेव नित्या सरस्वती स्वार्थसमन्वितासीत् । निरस्तदुस्तर्ककलङ्कपङ्क॥।।

The meaning is that when Śaṅkarācārya was obtained as her commentator, Sarasvatī, who is eternal in nature, became endowed with her true meaning. At different times, various kinds of interpretations were given to the Vedas. Many people explained the meaning of the Vedas according to their own opinions. But Shankaracharya investigated the true purport of the Vedas, removed interpretations that were contrary to reason, and once again established the inner meaning inherent in the Vedas.

That is, Shankaracharya was not one who newly created a philosophy; He was one who comprehensively revealed the principle contained within the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Shāstras and Purāṇas.

The Importance of Worshipping Bhagavān

Therefore, **worship of Bhagavān and contemplation of Bhagavān are extremely essential in human life.** Human birth is extremely precious. The Bhāgavata and other scriptures teach us how to make meaningful use of the time available to us in this life.

Worship of Bhagavān, remembrance of Bhagavān, contemplation of Bhagavān and knowledge of the Truth are not mutually contradictory. Their harmony is the distinctive feature of the Sanātana Vedic Dharma.

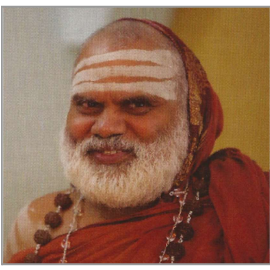
Shankaracharya too, in His various works, has given due place to the worship of Bhagavān, devotion and knowledge. Therefore, all of us should perform the worship of Bhagavān with faith and make our lives meaningful. Through devotion to Bhagavān, we should purify the mind; through the study of the Shāstras, we should understand the Truth; and through the path of Jñāna, we should strive to realise the Supreme Reality.

This path shown to us by Shankaracharya is not the personal path of any one individual. It is the **Sanātana Vedic path** that has come down through tradition from our Ṛṣis and Munis, the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Shāstras and Purāṇas. Let us understand the greatness of this Sanātana path and make our lives meaningful through the worship of Bhagavān and contemplation of Bhagavān.

On this occasion, we bless everyone, with the remembrance of **Śrīmannārāyaṇa**, saying: May all engage themselves in the worship of Bhagavān and attain fulfilment.

Source : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mipTHDTMWIA>

Courtesy : www.sringeri.net

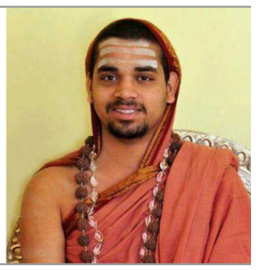


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Anugraha Bhāṣaṇam : 3



Questioner:

Regarding Shishtacharam (customs of the righteous/elders) and regional conduct (Acharas): Across India, customs differ significantly. The customs in North India are completely different from those in South India. Even within the South, Telugu, Kannada, and Tamil practices vary. According to the scriptures, these

customs are inferred from the Vedas (Shrutyanumeya). Yet, some customs seem contradictory—for example, cross-cousin marriages (maternal uncle's daughter) in certain regions. Or take a simpler example: wearing a shirt during worship is prohibited in the South, whereas wearing a shirt is customary in the North. When customs conflict like this, how do we reconcile the diversity? How do we determine which custom applies where?

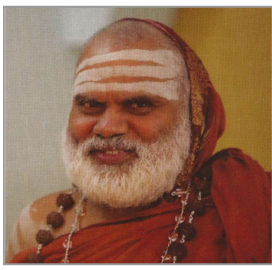
Acharyal: The ancient lawgivers resolved this long ago with the decree: “Yasmin deshe ya acharah sa eva pramanikah smritah” (The established custom of a particular region is authoritative for that region).

The underlying purpose of all customs is regulation and discipline. Customs were instituted to keep human life governed and orderly. Depending on local contexts and circumstances, our ancestors devised different regulatory frameworks to maintain this discipline.

Consider practical rules of the road: In India, traffic drives on the left; in other countries, on the right. One system evolved there, another here. The essential objective remains unchanged: reaching the destination safely.

If there were no designated lane and everyone drove arbitrarily, chaos would ensue. Customs serve the same function. Ancestors instituted them to guide humans toward righteous conduct (Dharmacharana) without disorder. That is why the very masters who laid down these practices also ordained: Follow the established ancestral customs of your respective regions.

By following the customs inherited through our tradition, we attain well-being. It is important to distinguish between the core essence (Pradhana) and the auxiliary customs (Anga):

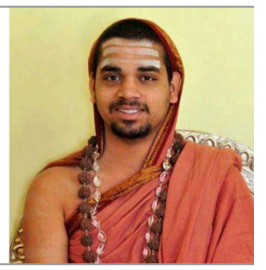


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The Auxiliary elements (Angas)—such as clothing, local rituals, and external forms—can vary from region to region.

The Core essence (Pradhana)—such as the worship of God (Bhagavad-aradhana)—must never change.

Whether you worship God adhering to traditional southern attire or northern customs, the worship itself remains constant. However, if one region worships God while another claims it is their tradition to revile God, the core essence itself is violated. That is unacceptable. As long as the core is preserved, regional variations in auxiliary practices are perfectly valid.

Questioner: That raises another doubt: Scriptures speak of Deshachara (regional custom), Jatychara, and Kulachara (family/lineage custom). When a family relocates—for example, a Telugu family moving from Andhra to Karnataka—which takes precedence: the local custom of the new region (Deshachara) or their ancestral family tradition (Kulachara)?

Acharyal: In private, personal, and domestic practices, individuals must continue following their family tradition (Kulachara).

Domestic/Personal Life: Whatever practices have been handed down through your lineage should be preserved at home, regardless of whether you move to Tamil Nadu, North India, or elsewhere.

Public/Community Gatherings: When you participate in a public temple festival in your new locality, you must respect and follow the local community customs governing that temple. You should not impose your home region's ways onto local public institutions or neighbors.

Festivals naturally vary across regions:

Vinayaka Chaturthi: While celebrated widely on Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturthi in southern regions, parts of Maharashtra and Goa observe the main religious fast on Magha Shukla Chaturthi (Til Kund Chaturthi/Ganesh Jayanti) and celebrate the Bhadrapada festival as a grand public carnival (Ganeshotsav).

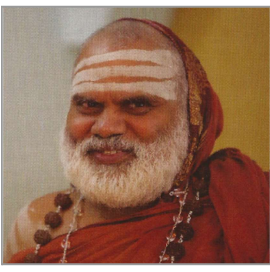
Vratams: Varalakshmi Vratam is celebrated extensively in Andhra and Tamil Nadu, whereas many locals in Karnataka are more familiar with Swarna Gowri Vratam (observed on Tadige, the day before Ganesha Chaturthi).

If a family moves to a new region:

They must continue their ancestral vows (such as Varalakshmi Vratam) at home. If they wish to also observe local festivals (such as Swarna Gowri Vratam), they are welcome to do so, as it is still the worship of the Divine Mother, though it is not strictly obligatory. In this manner, balance is maintained: honor family traditions privately while respecting the customs of the land publicly.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqVGii8s4OM>

Courtesy : www.sringeri.net

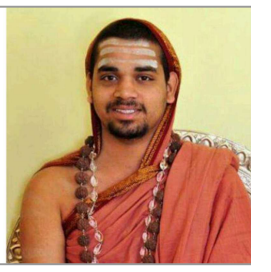


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Anugraha Bhāṣaṇam : 4

"I bow to Bhagavatpada Shankara, the benefactor of the universe, the abode of Shrutis, Smritis, and Puranas, and the embodiment of compassion."

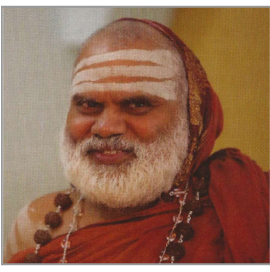


Jagadguru Sri Sri Adi Shankara Bhagavatpadacharya revitalized our Sanatana Hindu Dharma, taught the supreme importance of this path of Dharma to everyone, and instructed the righteous way through which all could practice Dharma and attain lasting well-being (Shreyas). He provided that sublime inspiration to all of humanity.

Consider this path of Dharma: In the world, when we wish to travel to a particular destination, we first decide upon the goal, learn the correct route from knowledgeable persons, embark on the journey, travel for whatever time is necessary, and finally reach our desired place.

When the Shastras expound righteous living, they refer to it as the Path of Dharma (Dharma Marga). Just as one travels on a road in the physical world, the practice of Dharma is compared to a pathway. Why is this comparison made? Because just as following a physical road takes us to our desired location, living by Dharma enables us to attain the ultimate spiritual well-being (Shreyas) that we seek.

What is the difference? On a physical path, we travel and reach a destination; on the spiritual path, we practice Dharma and attain spiritual elevation.

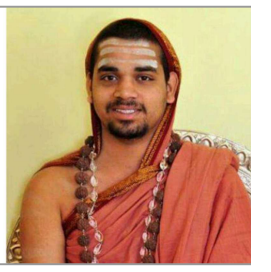


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If one wishes to travel from one town to another, one must know the exact route, the required time, and the proper mode of transport. If we wander off onto arbitrary paths or travel recklessly according to our whims, we will never reach our destination. Similarly, the Shastras delineate the precise path of Dharma. Only when we adhere strictly to the injunctions of the Shastras can we attain the goal. We cannot alter the road according to our personal whims and fancies. If a destination is 100 kilometers away, one cannot arbitrarily reduce it to 10 kilometers. If you only travel 10 kilometers, you will simply not arrive.

Likewise, Dharma must be practiced at the appropriate time and in the exact manner prescribed by the Shastras and taught by wise elders and Gurus. Through the steadfast practice of Dharma, a sublime spiritual refinement (Samskara) is generated within a human being, enabling them to realize the complete purpose of human birth.

What is the true purpose of human life? If one assumes that secular education, securing a job, earning money, and acquiring material comforts are the sole goals of life, that is a profound mistake. While material necessities are required to sustain our physical existence from birth until death, merely managing biological survival is not the ultimate purpose of human existence.

Animals also manage their survival between birth and death. Both humans and animals seek food and shelter. In fact, animals possess an innate instinct regarding what is suitable for their health. If an animal senses that a particular food is harmful, it will not touch it, no matter how much you compel it. Humans, however, driven by the sensory craving of the tongue, consume food even when knowing it causes harm.

Furthermore, animals do not commit deliberate wrongdoing out of greed, anger, or lust. In human settlements, you see police stations, courts, judges, and prisons because humans transgress ethical boundaries under the sway of Kama (desire) and Krodha (anger). In a forest, animals live naturally without courts or police.

Humans are considered superior to animals only because God has endowed them with intellect (Buddhi) and the unique opportunity to make their lives meaningful (Sarthaka). If a human merely eats, sleeps, and survives without spiritual discrimination, there is no difference between human life and animal life.

How then does human life become meaningful? By performing noble actions (Satkarmas).

What are noble actions? Primarily two: Bhagavad-aradhana (Worship and contemplation of God) and Paropakara (Selfless service and helping others). Whatever good deeds exist in this world, they fall under one of these two categories.

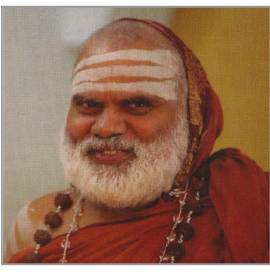
In his celebrated work Bhaja Govindam, Sri Adi Shankaracharya emphasizes both:

Geyam Gita Nama Sahasram

Dhyeyam Sripati Rupam Ajasram |

Neyam Sajjana Sange Chittam

Deyam Deenajanaya cha Vittam ||

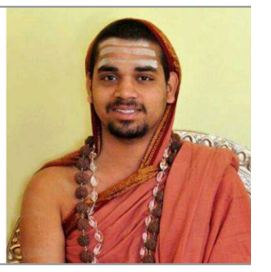


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Devotion to God: Chant the Bhagavad Gita and the Vishnu Sahasranama (Geyam Gita Nama Sahasram), and continuously meditate on the divine form of the Lord (Dhyeyam Sripati Rupam Ajasram). Instead of wasting precious time on idle political gossip and worldly vanity, utilize your mind in divine contemplation.

Service and Charity: Help the needy and destitute (Deyam Deenajanaya cha Vittam). However, the noble impulse to help others does not arise easily in every heart. To cultivate this compassionate mindset, one must seek the company of the virtuous (Neyam Sajjana Sange Chittam). Satsanga (holy company) naturally purifies human nature and inspires noble deeds.

When worshipping God, sincerity and one's honest capacity are what matter. God does not demand what is beyond your strength, nor does He accept half-hearted efforts when you possess the capacity to do better. Offer your worship and service with sincere devotion according to your means, and the Lord accepts it with joy.

This is the timeless message of Sanatana Dharma: Worship the Divine and serve living beings.

To ensure the perpetual propagation of this Dharma, Sri Adi Shankaracharya established the four Amnaya Peethams across India. In this Southern Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham, Goddess Sharadamba—the presiding deity of all wisdom—blesses seekers. Currently, our revered Guru, Jagadguru Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji, presides as the 36th Pontiff, showering his grace upon all.

Today, we are immensely pleased to witness the large gathering of devotees from our beloved disciple communities:

The Kannadiga Vaishya Community, who have been traditional, devoted disciples of the Sringeri Peetham across generations, arriving today from various regions. Special homas and religious rituals have been conducted today for the welfare of your community.

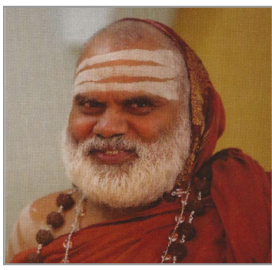
The Devadiga Community, who have observed the tradition for many years of visiting Sringeri on the second Sunday of Chaturmasya as per the compassionate direction of our Gurus, arriving in large numbers from Bhatkal and surrounding areas of Uttara Kannada.

We convey our heartfelt blessings with Narayana Smarana to the elders, leaders, organizers, and all devotee families of both the Kannada Vaishya and Devadiga communities. May Goddess Sharada Chandramouleshwara and our Gurus bestow upon you all good health, prosperity, peace, and spiritual elevation.

Hara Namah Parvatipataye Hara Hara Mahadeva!

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uB6CrflSgMw>

Courtesy: www.sringeri.net

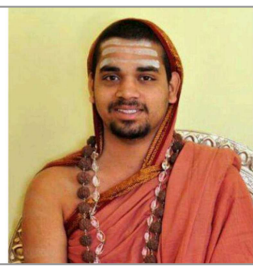


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Anugraha Bhāṣaṇam : 5

"Salutations to the abode of compassion, the repository of Shrutis, Smritis, and Puranas, Sri Adi Shankaracharya, who bestows auspiciousness upon the entire world."



Many devout astikas from India have relocated to foreign countries for education, employment, and various pursuits, yet they diligently preserve and practice our sacred traditions, culture, and religious rituals (Dharmic Acharas) wherever they reside.

In the European region, devotees who belong to this ancient Sanatana Dharma tradition have come together, established temples in various places, and are conducting temple festivals

and spiritual activities with great devotion.

Whatever adherence to Sanatana Dharma exists today is due to the grace of **Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada**. Incarnating in this holy land, he revitalized Sanatana Dharma, harmonized diverse philosophical views, expounded the non-dual truth of Advaita, and showed humanity the righteous path:

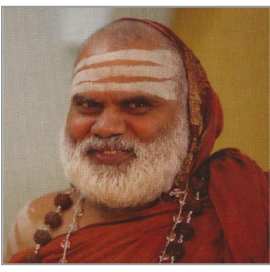
- He composed monumental commentaries (Prasthanatraya Bhashyas) to reveal the profound philosophical truth that leads to Moksha (liberation).
- He composed numerous devotional hymns (Stotras) to help ordinary seekers attain the grace of God.
- He authored practical treatises like Prashnottara Ratnamalika to guide humanity on righteous conduct, societal harmony, and ethical living.

For these universal contributions, we revere him as **Jagadguru** (World Teacher). Amidst our busy routines, we must dedicate some time daily to chant his hymns, study his teachings, and live by Dharma.

The Sacred Abodes of Goddess Sharada:

Traditionally, Goddess Sharada has two principal abodes:

1. **Kashmir:** Known from time immemorial as Kashmira Puravasini.
2. **Sringeri:** Consecrated by Adi Shankaracharya with perpetual divine presence (Divya Sannidhya).

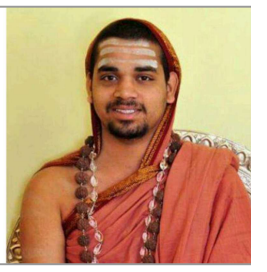


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During Adi Shankara's time, Lord Shiva and Lord Brahma incarnated to assist in establishing Dharma:

- **Kumarila Bhatta** refuted atheistic doctrines and re-established the path of action (Karma Marga).
- **Brahma incarnated as Mandana Mishra** (with Goddess Saraswati incarnating as his consort, Ubhaya Bharati) to demonstrate the sincere practice of householder Dharma and sacrificial rites.
- **Adi Shankaracharya**, upholding the path of renunciation (Nivritti/Jnana Marga), engaged Mandana Mishra in philosophical debate and established that while Karma purifies the mind, Jnana (knowledge) alone directly bestows liberation.

Following the debate, Mandana Mishra embraced Sannyasa, becoming **Sureshvaracharya** (the Vartikakara). Upon Shankara's instruction, he composed extensive glosses (Vartikas) on the Taittiriya Upanishad Bhashya (Krishna Yajur Veda) and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad Bhashya (Shukla Yajur Veda/Kanva Shakha).

When Ubhaya Bharati prepared to return to Brahma Loka after her earthly mission, Adi Shankara prayed that she remain eternally present to bless seekers wherever he established Peethams for Dharma propagation. According to his prayer, the Divine Mother manifested when Adi Shankara consecrated the Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Sharada Peetham in the holy hermitage of Sage Rishyashringa.

Blessings and Mandate for European Astikas:

We are pleased to bless and present this sacred idol of **Goddess Sharadamba** to the devotees from Europe. Take this deity, conduct regular worship, and expand spiritual activities across Europe:

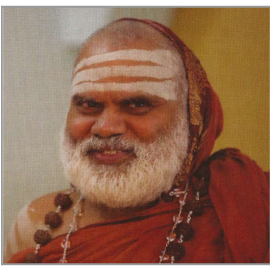
- Organize regular chanting of Shankara Stotras.
- Teach Ramayana, Mahabharata, and moral values to children through initiatives like *Bala Bharati*.
- Involve local communities to foster unity, Dharma, and cultural awareness.

We convey our hearty blessings with *Narayana Smarana* to Bhaskara Gurukkal for his dedicated service over the years, to Chandramouli, Karthik, Venkatraman, and to all devotees gathered here today. May Goddess Sharadamba and Sri Chandramouleshwara shower you all with lasting prosperity, peace, and spiritual well-being.

Hara Namah Parvatipataye Hara Hara Mahadeva!

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B392_wowll0

Courtesy : www.sringeri.net

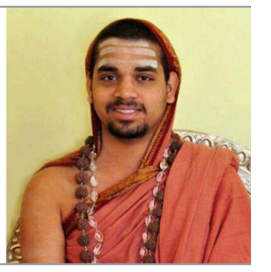


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Anugraha Bhāṣaṇam : 6

English Translation

"I bow to Bhagavatpada Shankara, the benefactor of the universe, the abode of Shrutis, Smritis, and Puranas, and the embodiment of compassion."

It brings great joy to welcome our devoted disciples, the Karada Brahmana community, who have arrived for Chaturmasya Darshana as they do every year, and to inaugurate the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Karada Brahmana Abhyudaya Sangha.

As you embark on celebrating this Golden Jubilee year with religious rituals, assemblies, and spiritual programs across multiple regions, we convey our hearty blessings for the all-round spiritual, educational, and secular advancement of the community.

In life, achieving secular progress while steadfastly preserving our religious foundation (Dharma) is essential. Our Shastras prescribe various compulsory rituals and Samskaras (sacraments)—foremost among them the Shodasha Samskaras (16 Sacraments)—which refine human life.

The Meaning of Samskara:

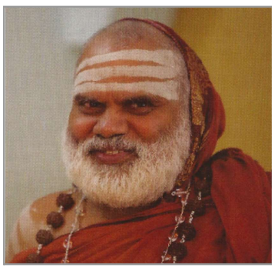
When raw mineral ore is extracted from a mine, it cannot be used directly. It must undergo systematic metallurgical refinement, purification, and craftsmanship according to precise technical science. Only after undergoing these transformative processes does it become a valuable, useful metallic object.

Similarly, an individual born from a mother's womb possesses innate potential, but requires sacred Samskaras—such as Upanayana, continuous Anushtana, and righteous living—to purify the mind and awaken spiritual capability. Without these sacraments, human life remains unrefined and cannot realize its ultimate goal of liberation and lasting well-being (Shreyas).

Perception of Dharma Through Shastra:

One might ask why Dharma cannot be perceived directly. In this world, each sensory organ has a specific domain:

- The **eyes** perceive form and color, but cannot taste sweetness or bitterness.
- The **tongue** tastes, but cannot smell fragrance.
- The **nose** detects fragrance, but cannot feel temperature.
- The **skin** feels touch, but cannot hear sound.

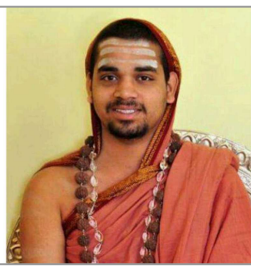


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Just as fragrance cannot be seen with the eyes, **Dharma and Adharma cannot be perceived by physical senses**. The authoritative instrument to discern right and wrong is **Shastra (the sacred scriptures)**.

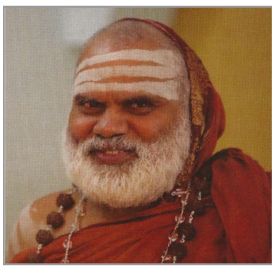


The Concept of 'Yoga' (Connection with Joy and Sorrow):

In common parlance, people frequently say, "My Yoga is good today" or "My Yoga is bad today." In Sanskrit, Yoga means 'connection' or 'relationship' (Sambandha).

- The connection between a person and desired happiness is brought about by **Punya (Merit/Dharma)**.
- The connection between a person and undesired suffering is brought about by **Papa (Sin/Adharma)**.

When we perform daily duties, spiritual practices, and sacraments with faith, our accumulated sins are destroyed (Durita-kshaya), turning unfavorable connections (Duryoga) into auspicious ones (Suyoga).

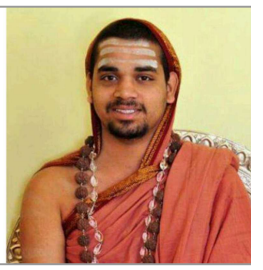


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On this milestone Golden Jubilee, we urge all community members to work unitedly for the religious, educational, cultural, and socio-economic elevation of the community. When the society prospers, every individual within it naturally prospers.

May the divine grace of Goddess Sharada, Lord Chandramouleshwara, and Jagadguru Sri Adi Shankaracharya forever bless the Karada Brahmana community with peace, prosperity, and spiritual fulfillment. We convey our blessings with *Narayana Smarana*.

Hara Namah Parvatipataye Hara Hara Mahadeva!

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