

# The Multifaceted Jīvanmukta

His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



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## Dedication



श्रुतायां यदुक्तौ न हि श्राव्यशेषः सुरूपे च दृष्टे न दृश्यावशेषः ।  
नतेऽङ्घ्रौ न कृत्यं दयाप्तौ न लभ्यं न माहात्म्यसीमा च येषां भजे तान् ॥

*(I worship Him whose greatness has no limit, on hearing whose words, nothing remains to be heard, on seeing whose graceful form, nothing remains to be seen, on prostrating before whose feet, nothing remains to be done and on obtaining whose grace, nothing remains to be attained.)*

This book is humbly dedicated at the lotus feet of His Holiness  
Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin.



**Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin**



श्री श्री जगद्गुरु शङ्कराचार्य महासंस्थानम्, दक्षिणाम्नाय श्री शारदापीठम्, शृङ्गेरी  
दक्षिणाम्नायशृङ्गेरीशारदापीठाधीश्वराणां

अनन्तश्रीविभूषितानां जगद्गुरुश्रीभारतीतीर्थमहास्वामिनामनुग्रहसन्देशः

दक्षिणाम्नायशृङ्गेरीशारदापीठं पञ्चत्रिंशद्वर्षाणि परिभूष्य सनातनधर्मप्रचारं विशेषतो विधाय परस्सहस्रलोकान् धर्मपथे प्रवर्त्य दिगन्तविश्रान्तयशसा व्यराजन्त अस्मद्गुरुचरणाः प्रातःस्मरणीया जगद्गुरुश्रीमदभिनवविद्यातीर्थमहास्वामिनः। चतुर्दशे वयसि तुर्याश्रमं परिगृह्य ओत्तमादुच्छ्वासात् आश्रमधर्मान् यथावदनुष्ठाय सर्वस्य यतिलोकस्य आदर्शभूता आसन् । न्यायवेदान्तादिशास्त्रेषु असाधारणपाण्डितीमण्डिता अपि अष्टाङ्गयोगानुष्ठाननिष्ठाः निर्विकल्पकसमाधिमप्यन्वभवन् । वेदपोषकसभा-सुरसरस्वतीसभादिप्रवर्तनेन, नैकपाठशालास्थापनेन, परस्सहस्रविद्वज्जनसम्माननेन च वेदशास्त्रप्रसारं बहुधा विदधिरे । सर्वत्र भारते असकृत् सच्चारं विधाय धर्मब्रह्मतत्त्वे लोकानवाबोधयन् । तेषां पवित्रं चरित्रं इतः प्राक् नानाभाषासु प्रकाशितमपि सामस्त्येन नास्तीति तां न्यूनतां परिहर्तुं गुरुचरणानवधिककृपाभाजनं श्रीमान् उमेशब्रह्मचारी सर्वलोकावबोधाय आङ्ग्लभाषया तच्चरितं रामग्रतया विलिख्य अस्मत्सविधे समर्पयत् । वयं च तं ग्रन्थमवलोक्य नितरां प्रसन्नाः स्मः। विश्वसिमश्च ग्रन्थोऽयं गुरुभक्तान् नितरां रञ्जयिष्यतीति ।

गुरुचरणानां शतवर्षपूर्त्यवसरेऽस्मिन् ग्रन्थोऽयं प्रकाश्यत इति महतः प्रमोदस्य स्थानम् । अस्य प्रकाशने कृतसाहाय्यसमेऽप्यास्तिकाः श्रीगुरुचरणकृपया श्रेयःपरम्पराभिस्समेधिपीरन्नित्याशास्महे ।

शृङ्गेरिः

हेमलम्बभाद्रपदकृष्णसप्तमी

भौमवासरः 12.9.2017

इति नारायणस्मरणम्

**भारतीतीर्थः**

शृङ्गेरिजगद्गुरुश्रीमदभिनवविद्यातीर्थ

महास्वामिनां करकमलसञ्जातः

**Benedictory Message of the Reigning Pontiff of the  
Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham,  
Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin**

Having adorned the Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham for thirty-five years, having exceptionally propagated the tenets of the *Sanātana-dharma* and having propelled several thousands of people along the path of *dharma*, Our pre-eminent *Guru*, *Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin*, who ought to be thought of at the commencement of every day, shone brightly with renown spread across the quarters. Having embraced *saṁnyāsa* at the age of fourteen and having duly performed the duties ordained for a *saṁnyāsīn* till the end, He was an ideal for all ascetics. Besides being embellished by unparalleled erudition in *Nyāya*, *Vedānta* and other *śāstras*, He was steadfast in the practice of the *yoga* of eight limbs and experienced even *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. By setting up the *Veda-poṣaka-sabhā*, the *Surasarasvatī-sabhā* and the like, by establishing numerous *pāṭhaśālās* and by honouring many thousands of scholars, He multitudinously propagated the lore of the *Vedas* and *śāstras*. Having toured throughout the country several times, He enlightened the people on the essence of *dharma* and the Truth of the Supreme Brahman. Though published hitherto in several languages, His life has not been exhaustively covered so far; in order to fix that lacuna, the recipient of the infinite grace of that most exalted *Guru*, the celibate Sri Umesh penned His biography comprehensively in

English for the comprehension of one and all, and submitted it to Us. We are immensely pleased on having looked into that volume. We also trust that this work will profoundly delight the devotees of the *Guru*.

It is a matter of great felicity that this book is being published on the occasion of the centenary of the most venerable *Guru*. We bless that by the grace of the pre-eminent *Guru*, may all those who are endowed with faith and have assisted in the publication of this tome, prosper well by a stream of auspiciousness.

Thus, with the recollection of Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme,

**(S/d Bhāratī Tīrtha)**

The disciple born of the lotus-hand of Sringeri *Jagadguru*  
Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Sringeri

*Hemalamba-bhādrapada-kṛṣṇa-saptamī*

Tuesday, 12.9.2017







**Jagadguru Śrī Vidhuśekhara Bhāratī Svāmin paying obeisance to  
Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin**

## Author's Preface

His Holiness *Jagadguru* Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin directed me to pen this book, specified that it should be comprehensive and, in response to my request, blessed it with His *śrī* *mukha*. My respectful *namaskāras* to Him.

Puṣpadanta states in the *Śiva-mahimna-stotra*, “*O Lord! If the ink in the inkpot that is the ocean were comparable to a dark mountain, the pen were to be a branch of a heavenly wish-fulfilling tree, the writing leaf were to be the earth and if, by taking recourse to these, the Goddess of Learning were to pen for eternity, even then the limit of Your glories will not be reached.*” These words, I believe, do apply to His Holiness *Jagadguru* Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin in toto. As for His intrinsic nature, even the *Veda* declares, “*Failing to attain which, speech, together with the mind, turns back...*” Such being the case, who indeed is competent to portray His corporeal and transcendental aspects? Much less am I, an insignificant disciple of His, capable of doing so. Yet I derive solace from Puṣpadanta’s words, “*O Lord, if praise by one who is ignorant of the extent of Your greatness be unbecoming then the eulogies of even Brahmā and others are inadequate for You. If all remain blameless by panegyrising You in accordance with their intellectual capacity then even this endeavour of mine to laud You is not flawed.*” To me, He is everything; He is God, even more than God; and is the absolute acme of perfection. It is only because of His natural and unbounded grace that I am aware of even an infinitesimal fraction of His splendour and this itself has been sufficient to submerge me in an ocean of bliss and to confer on me a sense of total fulfilment. Notwithstanding my aforesaid personal view about His Holiness, in this book, I have avoided hyperbole and stuck to just the presentation of facts. To the reader, I hasten to add, in the words of Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, “*Whatever is proper here is due solely to my Guru and not due to me. Whatever is improper here is solely on account of me and not on account of my Guru.*”

This book presents the life and teachings of His Holiness *Jagadguru* Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin, who adorned the Sringeri Sharada Peetham as its 35<sup>th</sup> *Jagadguru* Shankaracharya for 35 years, from 1954 to 1989. His birth and early days in Bengaluru, His pre-monastic life in Sringeri and His embracing *samnyāsa* are reported in the first three chapters. Next, His intense practice of spiritual disciplines up to their culmination in His enlightenment and *jīvanmukti* (liberation while living) on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1935, has been reported in detail. The bond between Him and His *Guru* was extraordinary; while

He was very deeply devoted to His *Guru* and served Him with dedication, His *Guru* loved Him dearly and even regarded Him as God incarnate. This has been brought out in the chapter, “*Unique Bond.*” The *Mahāsamādhi* of His *Guru* and His coronation as a pontiff are described in the next chapter.

He was multifaceted. The chapters, “*Technical Acumen*” and “*All-round Administrator*” throw light on some of His facets. His role as a *Guru* is highlighted in the chapter titled, “*He Graced All.*” His interactions with the young and with animals are covered in the chapters, “*At Home with the Young*” and “*Love for Animals*” respectively. He was deeply patriotic and the chapter, “*Nation First*” deals with this. The next chapter, “*Admired Personage*” has for its content His interactions with different spiritual and religious leaders. His giving *saṁnyāsa* to and choosing as His successor a disciple, the present pontiff, Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī-tīrtha Mahāsvāmin, is described in the chapter, “*Chosen Successor.*”

His teachings are given thereafter under the heads, “*Enriching Stories*”, “*Cogent Elucidations*” and “*From His Pen.*” The content of the next chapter is patent from its title, “*His Scientific Insight.*” The chapter that follows, “*Beyond Embodiment*” describes His *Mahāsamādhi* and continued presence.

Following His becoming a pontiff, He toured extensively, spreading *dharma*, expounding the Truth and uplifting thousands upon thousands. During His pontificate of 35 years, He toured for over 17 years, the total number of tours, long and short, being 35. The details of His tours have been presented in tabular form; this big chapter is titled, “*Journal of Journeys.*”

For easy readability, only the translations or the imports of the Sanskrit quotations have been provided in all the chapters as has been done in this preface. The interested reader may refer to the Appendix for the Devanagari text of those quotations tabulated chapter-wise, along with their references.

It is only due to His grace that it has been possible to ready this book, which has over 1000 pages and around 1000 photographs, in around two months itself so as to meet the deadline of the book’s release on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2017, which marks the completion of His birth centenary.

But for Sri G. Ramasubramanian, this book could not have seen the light of day. All I did was to pen some material; the rest was essentially done by him. Working night and day, unmindful of his poor health, he collected and collated much of the information that

has been incorporated in several chapters, gathered and processed the photographs, cross-checked and tabulated the data pertaining to His Holiness's tours, typeset the book and coordinated with the press. He was ably assisted by a dedicated team, which included Sri P. Parimala Rangan, Sri Sridhar Sathi, Smt. Sujatha Sridhar, Ms. S. Sharada, Sri K. Parthasarathy and Sri V. Rajesh Kumar.

Dr. H. N. Shankar and Dr. B. R. Vidyashankar gave valuable suggestions and not only checked but also contributed significantly to the contents of this book. Sri V. Subrahmanian, Smt. Sumita Vidyashankar and Sri K. Suresh Chandar proofread the material.

The primary sponsors of this publication are Sri Venkataramanan Krishnan, Sri Suresh Krishnamoorthy and Sri A. Ramaswamy.

Sri N. Subramanian of Sudarsan Graphics, Chennai, printed this book with personal interest and in a short time.



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## Key to Transliteration

अ	a	ऊ	ū	ऐ	ai
आ	ā	ऋ	r	ओ	o
इ	i	ॠ	r̄	औ	au
ई	ī	ऌ	l		
उ	u	ए	e		

क्	k	ठ्	ṭh	ब्	b
ख्	kh	ड्	ḍ	भ्	bh
ग्	g	ढ्	ḍh	म्	m
घ्	gh	ण्	ṇ	य्	y
ङ्	ṅ	त्	t	र्	r
च्	c	थ्	th	ल्	l
छ्	ch	द्	d	व्	v
ज्	j	ध्	dh	श्	ś
झ्	jh	न्	n	ष्	ṣ
ञ्	ñ	प्	p	स्	s
ट्	ṭ	फ्	ph	ह्	h

. (anusvāra) ṁ

: (visarga) ḥ

### Note on use of Diacritical Marks in this Book

Sanskrit words have been spelt in English with diacritical marks to enable them to be correctly pronounced. Examples: *prāṇāyāma*, *pūjā*.

Names of divinities and of monks have been written with diacritical marks. Examples: Śāradāmbā; Candramaulīśvara, Śrī Nṛsimha Bhāratī.

Names of buildings and institutions have generally been written without diacritical marks even when the names are clearly of Sanskrit origin. Examples: Shankara Krupa (not Śaṅkara-kṛpā), Sandhya-mandapa (not Sandhyā-maṇḍapa); Shankar Math (not Śaṅkara-maṭha); Sharada Peetham (not Śāradā-pīṭha).







At Kālabhairava Temple

## CHAPTER 1

# The Advent

The sun had set. An orange glow filled the evening sky and gave a golden tinge to the softly flowing river that wound its way through the valley. Atop a hill, in a secluded temple, a sage sat motionless. His eyes were half-closed. Time passed on but He seemed to be oblivious of it, lost as He was in some blissful state. His very silence seemed dynamic, for He undoubtedly radiated peace. Finally, His breathing became discernible and His eyes opened. He turned to the installed deity and called out its name. His voice reverberated in the small structure. He stepped out and gracefully walked down the hill to a building that was His abode in the picturesque valley. There, many awaited Him and to Him they paid obeisance. A kind word, a sagacious advice, a smile and a benevolent blessing to cheer the assembled ones and then He disappeared from their midst for a session of *mantra-yoga*. He reappeared before them, this time to be lost in some mystic communion with the Divine as He sat to worship a treasured crystal *liṅga*. The Vedic chanting in perfect unison seemed to transport





those present to some divine realm. In the temple, amidst devotees and during the worship, the saint who shone with spiritual splendour was His Holiness Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin, the 35<sup>th</sup> Jagadguru Shankaracharya of the Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham.

His flawless character, noble virtues, intense dispassion, deep devotion to God and His *Guru*, thorough grasp of *Vedānta*, profound meditation, direct realization of the Supreme and *jīvanmukti* (liberation even while alive) made Him stand out as a living

testimony to the scriptural statements about enlightened sages with nothing further to accomplish. Exceptionally compassionate and egoless, He was an accessible *Guru* par excellence who touched the hearts of the hundreds of thousands who came into contact with Him, mitigated unhappiness, conferred happiness and uplifted people, even to the extent of liberating them once and for all from the bondage of *samsāra*. He was truly multifaceted; He was not only a spiritual giant, *yogin*, scholar and compassionate preceptor but was also an adept in agriculture, horticulture, forestry and the construction of buildings, an able administrator, a lover of animals, an admirer of nature and environmentalist, a staunch patriot, a polyglot, an extensive traveller, a patient and attentive listener, a well-read and fluent orator, an impactful communicator, a congenial and cheerful personage grounded in tradition yet catholic in outlook, a towering intellectual at home with religion and science and a visionary instrumental in the setting up of various religious and secular institutions to benefit the public.

In the Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham, His Holiness was the 35<sup>th</sup> in the unbroken line of *Gurus* headed by Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda. His *Guru*, to whom He was deeply devoted and whom He served with diligence and dedication, was Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī (1892-1954), the 34<sup>th</sup> pontiff of the Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham (from 1912 to 1954). His Holiness's *Guru* was thoroughly dispassionate and inward-turned and this was obvious to those who had contact with Him. Widely venerated as a *jīvanmukta* (one liberated while living), He was recognised by scholars as an unmatched authority on the *Tarka*, *Mīmāṃsā* and *Vedānta śāstras*. He authored a definitive commentary on the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* and to those who have carefully perused it, it is apparent that His knowledge of the scripture was very deep and that His exposition of some of the verses about enlightenment and *jīvanmukti* bore the stamp of His own realization of the Truth and blissful abidance in It. The *Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad* unequivocally specifies that to realise the Truth, one must resort to a *Guru* who is versed in the scripture and established in the Supreme Brahman and, in His Holiness's case, His *Guru* was decidedly of this kind.

His Holiness's *Paramaguru (Guru's Guru)* was Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsiṃha Bhāratī (1858-1912), the *pīṭha's* 33rd pontiff (from 1879 to 1912). This saint's greatness found manifestation even on the day of His being initiated into *saṁnyāsa* at the age of eight. As He slept that night, He was heard saying softly, "*sarvo'ham (I am all)*." The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* points out, "*And when in his sleep, he thinks, 'This universe is myself. I am all' – that is his highest state.*" It is recorded that even when young, He often used to go into *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, the pinnacle of meditation, and had to be explicitly prohibited by His *Guru* from entering that exalted state for a time so that



Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsiṃha Bhārati      Śrī Candrasekhara Bhārati

His scriptural studies may not be affected. To Him goes the credit of determining the birthplace, Kalady (in Kerala), of Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda, consecration of a temple for Bhagavatpāda there and instituting the celebration of *Śaṅkara-jayantī* every year in a grand manner for five days at Kalady and elsewhere. Such was His Holiness's glorious spiritual lineage.



*Shrines at Kalady*

Kaipu Sitarama Sastry was, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a respected judge of the *Huzur Adalat* (a Court of Appeal with three Indian Judges) of the erstwhile princely state of Mysore. His forefathers had migrated from Kaipu in Andhra Pradesh and hence the prefix Kaipu was appended to his name and that of his progeny. He belonged to the *kaunḍinya-gotra*. He had three sons – Nanjunda Sastry, Srinivasa Sastry and Veeraraghava Sastry. Srinivasa

Sastry worked as a *Tahsildar* in the Chennapatna Taluk before becoming a judge like his esteemed father. Apart from being proficient in his profession, he commanded deep respect as an honourable and learned man. Srinivasa Sastry was a great exponent of the *purāṇas* and a gathering used to converge at his place to listen to him. When a young boy, he found an idol of Lord Gaṇapati in the Dharmambudhi Lake (where the large Kempegowda Bus Station in Bengaluru is now located). He carried the idol home and began to worship it. That idol has now been installed in a temple in Bengaluru. Several incidents reveal that Srinivasa Sastry was a recipient of Lord Gaṇapati's grace. One such is as follows.

One night, before lying down, his wife went around to see if all the children were asleep. She noticed that a child was sleeping with its legs in Lord Gaṇapati's shrine. Irritated, she struck the young one. The child, however, did not awaken. She herself put the child in the proper place and then retired for the night. The next morning, Srinivasa Sastry was seated in his bed and did not move out for some time. Seeing this, she asked him, "Why are you seated? Did you not sleep or are you not well?" "Sleep? I had just little of it" he responded. "Is anything upsetting you?" she queried. He asked, "Did any of our children do any mischief yesterday? Did the elders punish them?" "Who beat the child?" he continued, to the surprise of his wife. "Why do you ask?" she counter queried. "Someone has beaten a child. Are you not telling me or have you forgotten? Do you not know what has happened?" he pressed. She had not attached any importance to her striking her sleeping child and it had slipped from her mind. On her recalling what had transpired the previous night, she narrated the same to her husband. At this, Srinivasa Sastry revealed, "Lord Gaṇapati said, 'Are these children not mine? Why should I be angry?' He directed that the children should not be so beaten."

Srinivasa Sastry's elder brother Nanjunda Sastry had one son and one daughter. The son's name was Subbaraya Sastry. He, in turn, had three sons – Nanjundiah, Lakshminarayana and Rama Sastry – and two daughters, Seethamma and Janakamma. His third son, Rama Sastry, married Venkatalakshamma. Her father Ramaiah of Kanakapura was a student of Rama Sastry's father, Subbaraya Sastry, and he retired as a *Munsif* in the Revenue Department. He belonged to the *Haritasa-gotra* and had two sons and three daughters. Venkatalakshamma was his second daughter.

Rama Sastry was very fair, of medium height and handsome. He was not well-to-do. He worked as a teacher for a primary school at Bengaluru. His income was primarily confined to what he got at the school and what he collected from a village owned by him jointly with his relative, S. G. Narasimhaiyya. The amount payable to the Government was small and the rest went to the owners. There was no territorial or peasant-wise division and, basically, he who collected the money got it. Rama Sastry was rather haphazard in his procurements. This may have been due to his carefree attitude to life, with little care for the morrow.

He never demeaned himself by soliciting petty loans. By nature, he was always cheerful and ready to help others. He stood in the forefront whenever an occasion arose to perform some *dhārmika* activities. Given to sharing, he never consumed a delicacy without first distributing it to others. He was extremely fond of animals and had several pets. Later in life, he took care of several cows and was greatly attached to them. The

cows used to be at his side at his call. Narasimhaiyya had the occasion to witness Rama Sastry calling a cow by name. However, another cow moved forward. He pointed out to it that he had not called it and again called the cow he wanted. That cow immediately came to him. He even started rearing a tiger cub but as his neighbours grew apprehensive of the carnivore, he had to hand it over to a zoo.

According to Narasimhaiyya, Rama Sastry had some *mantra-śakti* obtained by him from his friend Vajapeyam Govindaiyya. Those suffering from acute single-sided headache as also those stung by scorpions used to approach him for succour. He chanted a *mantra*, waved a handkerchief and pressed the temples of the patient with the thumb and middle-finger in order to cure headaches. He resorted to protracted chanting of a *mantra* to deal with scorpion bites. To treat ailments relating to the liver and the spleen, he took up some thin sticks that were six to nine inches long, moved them as if he were playing a drum and chanted an incantation; he also gave some medicines to be taken for a few days. In Narasimhaiyya's view, many felt better after being treated by Rama Sastry.

Venkatalakshamma was a gem of a person. Her devotion and loyalty to her husband were exemplary. She was extremely patient, never complained about her family problems and bore them with remarkable fortitude. She was unable to tolerate the least criticism of her spouse. On an occasion, an important wedding was to take place. However, she abstained from attending it. The reason was that her clothing was not up to the mark. She felt that if she went there, it would lower her husband's prestige and people might feel that he was not giving her enough. If any of the children was injured or beaten during play and came complaining to her, she would say, "It is better that you avoid that place. At any rate, your suffering is due to your *karma*. Therefore, bear it with fortitude."

Venkatalakshamma was a gem of a person. Her devotion and loyalty to her husband were exemplary. She was extremely patient, never complained about her family problems and bore them with remarkable fortitude. She was unable to tolerate the least criticism of her spouse.

She used to narrate numerous stories from the *purāṇas* and other religious and moral texts to her children and was deeply committed to grounding them in righteousness. She carried out her domestic duties efficiently. A loving mother, she even starved herself on certain days so that her offspring – three boys and three girls – may eat adequately. Her first child was Sitalakshmi. During her second pregnancy, she stayed for some time

at her sister's house in Hosakote, near Bengaluru. While there, she bathed daily in the Pennar River and, with wet clothing, repeatedly went around an *aśvattha-vṛkṣa* (fig-tree), regarded as sanctified by Lord Viṣṇu's presence. Her prayer was that she should give birth to a good son. This supplication was heard by the Lord and He graced her with an exceptional male child, who went on to become the 35<sup>th</sup> Jagadguru Shankaracharya of the Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham.



*House where His Holiness was born*

She gave birth to her first son at Basavan-gudi in Bengaluru in a small room in Rama Sastry's sister's house (A multi-storeyed building is what is seen there now). As fate would have it, it was not given to Rama Sastry to be around when the child was born. He was then an inpatient at the Victoria Hospital in Bengaluru, having been admitted there for the surgical treatment of an abdominal condition. Venkatalakshamma's devotion to

her husband was so intense that even as the time of delivery approached, she expressed disappointment at not being able to be of any help to her husband in the hospital!

The blessed child was born at 6:45 a.m. on 13<sup>th</sup> November, 1917, corresponding to *kṛṣṇa-caturdaśī* of the month of *āśvayuja* of the cyclical year *Piṅgala*, with the child's *lagna* (sun-sign) being *vṛścika* (Scorpio), *rāśi* (moon-sign) being *tulā* (Libra) and the *nakṣatra* (birth-star) being *svātī*. Almost as if to mark a divine advent, there were widespread joyous



*Dīpāvalī*

celebrations with religious fervour; *dīpāvalī* was being celebrated at that time in several parts of India. Relatives attributed Rama Sastry's quick recovery and early discharge from the hospital to the benign influence of the child. The couple named their child 'Srinivasa'.

When Sri Srinivasa Sastry was a child, His elder sister Sitalakshmi, who used to help her mother in taking care of Him, took Him with her one day when she went to





*From left: Ramanatha Sastry (brother), Sri Rama Sastry (father), Subrahmanya Sastry (brother), Sri Srinivasa Sastry (extreme right)*

the Dharmambudhi Lake to wash clothes. She was aghast to see when she turned that He had slipped into the water and was almost drowning. It was with great difficulty that He was able to come out. He who knew no swimming at that age would, in a matter of time, become an ace swimmer and swim like a fish in various rivers and the ocean; not just that, He would swim across even the ocean of transmigratory existence and help many an aspiring soul to reach its farther shore, the Supreme.

He had His primary education in the Municipal Primary School and then studied up to the eighth standard at the Arya Vidyasala in Bengaluru. He was an obedient and conscientious student and every morning would see Him trekking on time to His school

in the prescribed uniform, which included a cap and a coat. He was sociable and friendly. In the evenings, He used to play various games with His friends. He was an adept at climbing trees and often played '*marakoti (tree-monkey)*'; the game was tree-based and involved chasing and catching. When a tree that appeared very difficult to climb was seen and the question, "Who can climb it?" arose, the answer, invariably, was "Srinivasa." To Him foul play was abhorrent and He never indulged in it.

He and His friends used to assemble after play and relate morally relevant stories. He proficiently narrated stories from the *Purāṇas*, *Mahābhārata* and the *Nīti-cintāmaṇi*. When narrating the story of Hariścandra, He stressed the importance of veracity and the advantages of being truthful. The dire consequences of attachment described in the story of Jaḍabharata and the soul-stirring devotion of Prahlāda were driven home by Him in some of His presentations.

His belief in God was deep. There was a body of water that His friends feared to approach after sunset as it was believed to be infested by ghosts. He had no such fear. In response to a challenge from His friends, He boldly went to it late in the evening

on an *amāvāsyā*, washed His hands and feet, rinsed His mouth and returned. Later, on later being asked about His lack of fear, He said, “I was chanting the name of God. How could any evil spirit accost me?” Interestingly, while He thus affirmed His confidence in the existence and protection of God, He expressed no opinion about whether or not ghosts actually inhabited that water body and harmed people who came to it.

One evening, on being asked what He would like to do when He grew up, He said that He would strive to realise God. When a friend asked Him why He opined thus, He said, “For that is what is good.” That friend then challenged His conviction that God exists on the ground that neither He nor those He knew had seen God.

Sri Srinivasa Sastry: Can you prove that there is no God? Would you say that something does not exist because you have not seen it? For instance, have you seen Bombay (now Mumbai)? No. Does it then follow that Bombay is non-existent?

Friend: I have not seen Bombay. But I have seen many who have. That is why I believe that Bombay exists.

Sri Srinivasa Sastry: Very well. Likewise, our ancient sages who had beheld the Lord have given clear-cut indications to that effect. What is wrong if we unreservedly accept their words? Their experience cannot be set aside and so we must concede the existence of God.

Here, He was not arguing to convert an atheist but to rebut a believer who challenged His conviction about the existence of the Supreme on the specific ground of non-perception of the Supreme by Him and by those He was familiar with. The crux of His response was that He was relying on verbal testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*). It is noteworthy that *Vedāntins* give great importance to verbal testimony as a means of valid knowledge. Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda does not accept inference, divorced from verbal testimony, as competent to conclusively establish the existence of the Supreme. Being rooted in the teaching of the scripture, the direct experience of the Supreme had by the truly great, such as the ancient sages, is deemed to be valid. Thus, His effective reliance, even when He was a young boy unexposed to *Vedānta*, on verbal testimony to substantiate the existence of the Supreme was quite in line with *Vedānta*, of which He would go on to become an undisputed authority.

He greatly valued *ahimsā*. The following dialogue is suggestive of this:

Sri Srinivasa Sastry: Hunting of animals is improper.

Friend: Carnivorous animals prey on weaker creatures. Such being the case, they deserve to be killed.

Sri Srinivasa Sastry: God has created some animals as food for the carnivores. This does not entitle man to poke his nose into the laws of nature and indulge in slaughter.

His statements about hunting were in harmony with the teaching in the *Mahābhārata* that desire-driven hunting is a grave vice and that the one who never yields to the delusion that hunting is right is praiseworthy.

He was patience personified. One day, His friends sought to test the limits of His forbearance. In the course of a game, they fetched a stick and began to beat Him with it. He bore their unprovoked onslaught without a murmur. When the boys stopped, aghast at how far they had gone in testing Him, He won their hearts with kind words. To impress upon them the power of fortitude, He also told them the following story. A Buddhist monk was unjustly tortured by a monarch. At the end, the king softened. Ashamed, he begged the monk's pardon. As an act of atonement, he catered to the subsequent needs of the monk. Thus, merely by non-retaliation, the monk was able to humble the emperor. His friends hung their heads in shame on hearing the tale and went home wiser.

While He was ready to put up with any nonsense involving Himself, His approach was different when others were troubled. There was a sturdy bully called Gundu. He often disrupted the games that Sri Srinivasa Sastry's friends played. Sri Srinivasa Sastry resolved to terminate the unwarranted bullying and disruption. Though of a small build, He pounced on the bully. A scuffle ensued. The other boys stood as silent spectators, expecting Gundu's might to overpower His valour. That, however, was not to be. It was the bully who was vanquished. The victor, Sri Srinivasa Sastry, sat on him and asked for a sheet of paper to be brought. On it, He made Gundu write that he would not trouble the boys again.

He was prepared to go out of the way to terminate the suffering being inflicted on even a small creature. He once beheld a boy cruelly catching thoroughly innocuous butterflies, tearing out their wings and throwing the hapless creatures to a dog. Walking up to the boy, He quickly grasped his hands and twisted them. The boy yelled. Relaxing His vice-like grip, Sri Srinivasa Sastry said, "The butterflies also must feel like this. Just as you have hands, they have wings. Abstain from torturing them hereafter." According to the scripture, even a butterfly does have a *jīva* (transmigrating,

individual soul) that can undergo suffering and it is possible for one to be reborn, as a consequence of one's sins, as a butterfly. In the *Mahābhārata*, there is the story of a learned ṛṣi named Māṇḍavya being impaled on a stake. On his later going to Yama, the god of death, and asking the reason for his suffering, he was told that as a boy he had tormented butterflies. As Sri Srinivasa Sastry's mother had narrated many stories from the scriptures to Him, it is presumable that He knew the story of Māṇḍavya. By getting the boy to desist from totally unjustifiably and sadistically torturing and killing harmless butterflies, He not only provided relief to the butterflies but also saved the boy from sinning by continuing to kill them and, thereby, saved him from having to suffer, at some time, the painful consequences of such sin.

He was willing to even put up with suffering to relieve others of their distress. Once, His friend did not fare well in the examinations. Determined to severely punish him, the boy's strict father ordered him to bend and placed a heavy stone on his back. Unable to bear the load, the boy soon began wailing. Sri Srinivasa Sastry heard the piteous cries and rushed to the spot. Addressing the father, He said, "You are older than me and wiser too. Your son is in great pain. Please let him rest, at least for a while. You may place the stone on my back instead and I shall support it for him." The father was moved by Sri Srinivasa Sastry's heartfelt concern and relieved his son of the burden imposed.

In the *Bhagavadgītā*, same-sightedness in pleasure and pain has often been eulogised. Such equanimity came naturally to Him. One day, He and His friends were served a dish and they began to partake of it. It was only then that they realized that it was very pungent. To assuage the strong burning sensation in their mouths, His friends screamed for water and jaggery. He, however, remained undisturbed. He suggested to them to be calm. Misunderstanding His well-intentioned suggestion, they reacted cuttingly to it. "You speak thus," they challenged. "Can you eat a handful of chillies without a murmur of protest?" "Yes," was His nonchalant reply. A handful of highly pungent chillies was placed before Him. One by one, the chillies disappeared into His mouth. The boys looked on, more surprised than disappointed. All the chillies were consumed by Him, without even a slight change of expression in His face. He then said, "One need not consume spices like this. As you demanded that I eat the chillies, I did so. My aim was only to convince you that it is possible to be contented with and thankful for whatever food one gets."

Even as a young boy, He made it a point to help His mother every day. He conscientiously performed various domestic chores, such as cleansing of vessels and sweeping. He also took care of His younger siblings. When once asked about His attending to His brother



*Lord Gaṇapati*

like a foster-mother, He said, “My mother is busy in the kitchen and my elder sister is assisting her. Who will attend to this young one? If I do not do so, it will add to my mother’s strain.”

He privately worshipped a small crystal idol of Lord Gaṇapati. One day, He asked His mother, “Can I have something to offer as *naivedya*?” The poor lady was at a loss to do anything, for there was nothing in the house to give Him. Sensing His mother’s discomfiture, He hastened to reassure her and said, “Do not be ill at ease. If it is difficult for you to give me anything, please do

not concern yourself.” The Lord could not be made to go hungry, could He? Nor was there anything to give Him. How did Sri Srinivasa Sastry extricate Himself from the horns of this dilemma? Bhagavān has said in the *Bhagavadgītā*, “*Whatever the pure-minded one offers Me with devotion, be it a leaf, flower, fruit or water, that do I accept.*” Accordingly, with a heart full of love and a spoonful of water, Sri Srinivasa Sastry satiated the Lord’s appetite.

He was a bright student. His father, a primary-school teacher, was a strict disciplinarian and students feared him. Consequently, several young boys of the primary school sought Sri Srinivasa Sastry’s help to clear their doubts. Never did He grudge them help though such tuition demanded that He regularly spare time for them. His elucidations were impressive and the young ones benefitted thereby.

One day, under the completely mistaken impression that Sri Srinivasa Sastry did not study properly, Rama Sastry upbraided Him and ordered Him to stretch out His hand. Even though He was not at all at fault, He obeyed, without uttering even a single word in His defence. His father’s hand held an upraised cane. The cane descended repeatedly on His upturned palm. He did not wince and no sound emerged from His mouth. When His father was done with caning one hand, He calmly stretched out His other hand to facilitate the continuance of the unwarranted corporal punishment. Venkatarama Iyer, an astrologer from Palakkad, who lived in a rented room in Rama Sastry’s house, intervened to terminate the chastisement. Wanting to gauge the extent of injury, he inspected Sri Srinivasa Sastry’s palms. He was conversant

with palmistry and the lines there captured his attention. Turning to Rama Sastry, he exclaimed, "You are fortunate. This boy is dissimilar to your other children. He is destined to be a dispassionate one adept at *yoga*. It will not be surprising if the *Jagadguru* of Sringeri nominates him as the successor to the *pīṭha*. Do not beat him, for it is likely that you may have to prostrate before him." Venkatarama Iyer then scrutinised Sri Srinivasa Sastry's horoscope and asserted that He would become a *samnyāsin*. Rama Sastry was sceptical about the prediction. However, perhaps because his curiosity was aroused, he requested an astrologer named Sathyanarayana, who lived nearby, to examine the horoscope. After careful perusal, the astrologer said, "If you permit him to become an ascetic, you will have the privilege of at least beholding him. Else, he will go away to a forest for meditation."

With the passage of time, Sri Srinivasa Sastry began to regularly express to His friends His desire to renounce the world. At first His companions found His longing ludicrous but soon realised that He was inexorably resolved. One boy asked Him, "What use is there in becoming a *samnyāsin*? By becoming a great king, one attains an exalted position." Sri Srinivasa Sastry responded, "Do not think thus. What long-lasting benefit is there in becoming a monarch? An emperor can enjoy only when he is in power. That state of affairs must come to an end, sooner or later. If, however, I become a *samnyāsin*, I can constantly meditate and be without any worries. There will be a wonderful opportunity to behold God and I shall remain ever protected by Him." He was only twelve years of age when He said this.





## CHAPTER 2

# Meeting His Master

One evening, Sri Srinivasa Sastry went to the residence of His elder sister, Sitalakshmi. There, ghee had just been melted. On His stretching out His hand, His sister poured a little clarified butter into His palm. He immediately sipped the same. Sitalakshmi's husband, Narasimha Sastry, observed this and remarked, "Such drinking of ghee is done in our tradition at the time of the *upanayana*. Hence, you will soon be invested with the sacred thread." These words gladdened Sri Srinivasa Sastry.

Meanwhile, at Sringeri, Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhārātī desired to throw off the burden of pontifical duties and remain absorbed in *Brahman*. Hence, He resolved to choose a successor to whom He could entrust the responsibilities of the *pīṭha*. He had made known His resolve to Srikanta Sastry, the Agent, who administered the *Maṭha* on behalf of the pontiff.

One day, Srikanta Sastry arrived at Bengaluru. He asked Venkatarama Iyer, the astrologer who resided in Rama Sastry's house, "Have you come across any boy whose



horoscope indicates that he will take up the *saṁnyāsa-āśrama*? The *Jagadguru* of Sringeri is looking for a successor." Venkatarama Iyer replied, "Yes, I have come across such a horoscope and shall bring it." He quickly fetched Sri Srinivasa Sastry's horoscope and handed it over to Srikanta Sastry. "Bring this boy and his father to the *Maṭha*," instructed Srikanta Sastry. Venkatarama Iyer proceeded to Rama Sastry's house and arrived at the Shankar Math with Sri Srinivasa Sastry and Rama Sastry.

Srikanta Sastry (to Rama Sastry): Has this boy's *upanayana* been performed?



		GURU	KETU
MANDI			SANI
			KUJA
RAHU SUKRA	LAGNAM BUDHA	RAVI CHANDRA	

*Horoscope of Sri Srinivasa Sastry*

Rama Sastry: Not yet. I am waiting for an opportune moment.

Srikanta Sastry: In that case, if you bring Him to Sringeri, the investiture can be done there at the *Maṭha's* expense. Will you come?

Viewing the offer as a godsend, Rama Sastry readily consented. Srikanta Sastry gave him in writing the day of the *upanayana*. Subsequently, Rama Sastry and his family left for Sringeri so as to be there a few days before the specified

date. They travelled by train from Bengaluru and reached Tarikere, via Birur. They then proceeded by tramway from Tarikere to Narasimharajapura (According to the Railway Timetable of 1930, the tramway, running on a two-foot track, left every day from Tarikere at 7:00 a.m. and reached Narasimharajapura at 10:30 a.m., the fare being eight annas, half a rupee. This tramway service was discontinued in 1941.) At Narasimharajapura, they had lunch at Lakshminarayana Sastry's house. (Lakshminarayana Sastry later became His Holiness's Private Secretary). After food, they left by bullock cart and reached Sringeri that night, around 10 p.m. Good arrangements had been made for their stay and they were accommodated in the *Dharmaśālā* (This choultry housed the *Maṭha's* school in the 1970s). When the *Jagadguru* came to that location in connection with the ongoing five-day *Śaṅkara-jayantī* celebrations, His glance fell on Rama Sastry and He said, "Everyone is busy now. You can have *darśana* at leisure tomorrow." The functions concluded on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, Saturday.

Sri Srinivasa Sastry's *upanayana* was scheduled to take place the next day, that is, on 4<sup>th</sup> May, 1930, corresponding to *vaiśāka-śukla-śaṣṭī* of the cyclical year *Pramodūta*, in Goddess Śāradāmbā's temple itself. According to the *Manu-smṛti*, "For the boy's second birth (at the time of his *upanayana*), *Sāvitrī* is said to be his mother." *Sāvitrī*, *Gāyatrī* and *Śāradā* are names of Goddess Sarasvatī. That morning, Srikanta Sastry told Rama Sastry, "The time when the *brahmopadeśa* (initiation into the *Gāyathrī-mantra*) is to be performed has been decided. The bell in Śāradāmbā's temple will ring at that time." The ringing of the bell began just past 12:00 noon, at the start of the *abhijit-muhūrta* (That day the *abhijit-muhūrta* was from 12:02 p.m. to 12:50 p.m.). Sri Srinivasa Sastry received His initiation and, thereby, had His 'second birth' at that time.



*Śāradāmbā Temple*

The *Maṭha's* main *purohita* (priest), Venkatasubba Avadhani, had been deputed to conduct the ceremony and it was he who taught Sri Srinivasa Sastry His first *mādhyāhnikā* (religious rite to be performed every afternoon). That evening, he sent his son, Ganapati Subrahmanya Avadhani (who later succeeded his father as the *purohita*) to substitute for him and teach the evening *sandhyā-vandana* (religious rite to be performed every day at dawn and dusk). Sri Srinivasa Sastry meticulously repeated what He was told to say till the portion on *abhivādana* (salutation with self-introduction) was reached. "*Kāśyapa-vatsara-naidhruva-trayārṣeya-pravarānrita (Belonging to the line of ancestors headed by the three sages Kaśyapa, Vatsara and Naidhruva),*" intoned Avadhani. "Stop," retorted Sri Srinivasa Sastry. "I think something is wrong." "You do not know. Repeat what I tell you," countered Avadhani. "What you are telling me now is different from what I was taught in the afternoon regarding this," persisted Sri Srinivasa Sastry. His sister Sitalakshmi's spouse Narasimha Sastry, who had heard all this, told Avadhani, "Your *gotra* is *Kāśyapa*, whereas Srinivasa's is *Kouṇḍinya*. Hence, he should say: *Vāsiṣṭha-maitrāvaruṇa-kouṇḍinya*." Avadhani corrected himself but was surprised that Sri Srinivasa Sastry had remembered what He had heard once earlier and that too amidst numerous *Vedic* and *non-Vedic* metrical and prosaic utterances.

The religious observances connected with the *upanayana* were completed in five days and in this period Sri Srinivasa Sastry was required to observe ceremonial purity and was not supposed to cross any river. Thereafter, Rama Sastry and members of his family crossed the gently flowing Tuṅgā and went to Narasimhavana to behold the *Jagadguru*. Looking compassionately at Sri Srinivasa Sastry, the *Jagadguru* said, “Now you are a *brahmacārin*. It may be necessary for you to go home and perform the ordained duties.” “I would like to remain here,” Sri Srinivasa Sastry responded, with reverence. The *Jagadguru* asked, “Do you not have to study English and take up a job to earn your livelihood? If yes, it is imperative that you go.” Undaunted in His resolve and frank in His expression, Sri Srinivasa Sastry said,

“I desire neither that education nor a job. I wish to study Sanskrit here.”

*Jagadguru*: Tell me what you are now reading in school.

Sri Srinivasa Sastry: I am studying the *Nalacaritra* and I know it by rote.

*Jagadguru*: Recite some verses from it.

At this point, He unexpectedly placed His right palm on Sri Srinivasa Sastry’s head. Sri Srinivasa Sastry recited and expounded some passages in such an exemplary manner that Rama Sastry was astonished.

*Jagadguru*: What else have you studied?

Sri Srinivasa Sastry: History and geography.

*Jagadguru*: What are you taught in history?

Sri Srinivasa Sastry: About kingdoms, wars and the like.

He proceeded to give a brief account of some of the historical facts learnt by Him.



Looking compassionately at Sri Srinivasa Sastry, the *Jagadguru* said, “Now you are a *brahmacārin*. It may be necessary for you to go home and perform the ordained duties.” “I would like to remain here,” Sri Srinivasa Sastry responded, with reverence.

*Jagadguru*: What about geography?

Sri Srinivasa Sastry: We read of oceans, continents, etc.

*Jagadguru*: You must have been taught various morals. Tell me one moral which you regard as being rather important.

The elders who were present became tense, for they did not know what answer would be given. They need not have had any fears.

Sri Srinivasa Sastry: Keep good company and eschew evil associations.

On hearing these words, which were spoken unhesitatingly and with conviction, the others heaved a sigh of relief. For His part, the *Jagadguru* was visibly pleased. He spoke to Srikanta Sastry for a while. Next, addressing Sri Srinivasa Sastry, He asked, “Will you study here?” Without a moment’s hesitation, Sri Srinivasa Sastry answered in the affirmative. Turning to His parents, He said, “You can go home, for I wish to be a student here.” In accordance with the *Jagadguru*’s instructions, arrangements were made for His stay and study at Sringeri. His parents and other relatives left for Bengaluru.

Desiring that Sri Srinivasa Sastry should not be disturbed in the course of His studies, the *Jagadguru* lodged Him in Siddhashrama (a building that is not extant now but was then situated near the present Office of the Private Secretary) in Narasimhavana. The atmosphere was that of a hermitage in ancient times. Ramaswamy Avadhani (who later served as the principal of the *Maṭha’s pāṭhaśālā* at Sringeri), a boy from Kerala named Krishnan, Vireswara Dongre and Anantarama Somayaji were among those who became Sri Srinivasa Sastry’s classmates and stayed with Him. Sitarama Holla was instructed to sleep in Siddhashrama at night. He was also tasked with supplying warm water to the boys in the mornings for their bath. {When Holla gave me this information, He added that he had been instructed to ensure that Sri Srinivasa Sastry did have warm water for His morning bath. This showed the *Jagadguru*’s concern for His disciple’s health, which He felt was in need of attention.}

Sri Srinivasa Sastry developed the habit of waking up at around 4:30 a.m. After taking a bath, He used to perform His *nityakarma* (scripturally-ordained religious observances

*Jagadguru*: You must have been taught various morals. Tell me one moral which you regard as being rather important.

Sri Srinivasa Sastry: Keep good company and eschew evil associations.



*Narasimhavana*

to be practised regularly) with meticulous care. He then partook of light tiffin and some milk. Thereafter, He set Himself to studies. In the afternoons, after His *mādhyaṅhika*, He used to go for a meal, which had been arranged in Narasimhavana itself. He was not in the habit of taking recourse to any siesta in the afternoons and was mostly engaged in studies. It used to be around 10:30 p.m. before He retired for the night.

About the *Gāyatrī-mantra* into which one is initiated during *upanayana*, it is said in the *Sūta-saṁhitā*, “By the performance of the *japa* of the *Gayatrī-mantra* and *homa* with it, a person gets all that he desires. There is no room here for doubt” and in the *Manu-smṛti*, “He whose *upanayana* has been performed is freed from even a great sin, like a snake from its sloughed skin, by chanting the *Gāyatrī-mantra*, together with the *praṇava* (*Om*) and the *vyāḥṛtis* (*‘bhūḥ, bhuvah, suvah’*), a thousand times a day for a month at a place outside the village (such as on the bank of a river or in a forest).” Sri Srinivasa Sastry felt a great fondness for the *Gāyatrī-mantra* and started chanting it mentally whenever He could, right from the day of His *upanayana*. In about a month’s time, He was able to do so even while engaged in His regular activities. He was happy to soon find that He mentally repeated the *Gāyatrī* even during dreams. He did not disclose any of this to others. {It was only in 1982, fifty-two years later, that His Holiness compassionately blessed with these particulars in response to my asking Him about His initial weeks in Sringeri as a *brahmacārin*.}

One day, Ganapati Subrahmanya Avadhani asked Him to stand with him near the entrance of Śāradāmbā’s temple to await the *Jagadguru*. Some other students were also present. Avadhani felt that on seeing the students, the *Jagadguru* would order something to be fetched from the storeroom for them to eat. The *Jagadguru* did do that and then told the boys to state their names, one by one. On hearing the first boy give his name, He asked, “Why were you given this name?” The boy stood still. Next,



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He asked Avadhani. He too remained quiet. When it was Sri Srinivasa Sastry's turn, He immediately replied, "I have been named Srinivasa, which is a name of God. Our elders developed the practice of naming their wards after God so as to enable the thought of God to be constantly present." This reply not only gladdened the *Jagadguru* but also pleased the other students who were present there.

Sri Srinivasa Sastry was of a small build and this emboldened some of His classmates to tease Him. They used to sometimes verbally make fun of Him and, at times, used to hide His books. Being an epitome of patience, He never protested. On the contrary, He would wait silently for them to return what they had taken. So the teasers did not have any reason to fear a reprimand from the *Maṭha's* authorities. This teasing was an infrequent affair and was partly done in good humour. As such, it produced no disruption in Sri Srinivasa Sastry's studies.

The boys used to play various games, such as running and catching and blind man's bluff. On one occasion, Ramaswamy

Avadhani had a cloth tied over his eyes and was the one who was supposed to touch the others who were moving around to evade him. As he came near Sri Srinivasa Sastry, the latter dexterously stepped aside. Ramaswamy struck himself mildly against a pillar there. Infuriated, he loosened the cloth that veiled his vision, struck Sri Srinivasa Sastry a blow and shouted, "You are the cause of this injury." His hitting and accusing Sri Srinivasa Sastry were decidedly unjustified. Someone else in Sri Srinivasa Sastry's place might have chosen to retaliate with sharp words or, if possible, with a blow. He was made of finer stuff. He gave no room to anger. On the contrary, noting that Ramaswamy had



injured himself slightly, He patiently pacified him and attended to his injury. Thereby, He won the heart of Ramaswamy, who was able to recollect this incident clearly even after the lapse of over fifty years. {He was moved to tears when he narrated this to me in 1984. It was on that occasion that he also told me about the teasing.}

Off and on, the *Jagadguru* asked the boys, in general, questions such as, “Was the food satisfactory today? Was it tasty? Was it excessively salty or pungent?” The boys used to enthusiastically express their views on the food eaten by them. Sri Srinivasa Sastry, however, remained silent on these occasions. One day, the *Jagadguru* asked Him, “While all the others readily comment on their food when I ask these questions, why is it that you remain silent?” He replied, “All that we get is Your Holiness’s *prasāda*. As such, it is always tasty.” On hearing this reply, the *Jagadguru* was visibly happy.

Decades prior to that, when the *Jagadguru* was a *brahmacārin* studying in the *Maṭha’s pāṭhaśālā*, to similar questions posed to the students by a representative of His *Guru* (the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff), He had, unlike the others, answered, “What does all that matter? We are being taught our lessons properly.” When the representative had reported the matter to His *Guru*, who was then on tour, His *Guru* had been pleased and said, “He has simply defined his attitude that he is concerned only with his studies and other considerations do not enter his mind. Know him, therefore, to be a very good and pure soul.”

Vaidyanatha Sastry (later, Śrī Bhāṣya-svāmin) was deputed to instruct the students in the performance of their daily rituals and to teach them basic texts such as the *Amarakośa* (an authoritative metrical lexicon) and the declensions of Sanskrit nouns, pronouns and verbs. After their study of the Sanskrit *kāvyaś* (literary poems) had commenced, the *Jagadguru* used to regularly send for the boys and question them with a view to

examine their progress. Every time, He found that Sri Srinivasa Sastry was head and shoulders above the others. When the boys had gained some degree of competence in literature, the *Jagadguru* asked them to recite *antādi-ślokas*. (Herein, when a verse was chanted by a person, another had to intone one commencing with the syllable with which the previous verse had ended.) In the evenings, the *Jagadguru* generally went to the Kālabhairava Temple situated on a hill in Narasimhavana and often took Vaidyanatha Sastry and the young students with Him. On such occasions, several subjects were discussed and quite often *antādi-ślokas* were chanted.

One day, in the course of His walk to the Kālabhairava Temple, the *Jagadguru* was explaining to the students the importance of the Sanskrit language. A scholar happened to come there. The *Jagadguru* discerned that he was distressed and recited the following verse: “*dārā ime me, tanayā ime me, grhā ime me, paśavaśca me me. itthaṁ naro meṣa-samāna-dharmā me-me-karaḥ kāla-vrkeṇa nītaḥ* (This wife is mine (the Sanskrit word ‘me’, meaning ‘mine’, sounds, when pronounced, a little like the bleating of a sheep). These children are mine (‘me’). These houses are mine (‘me’) and these cattle are mine (‘me’). The man who, in this manner, keeps saying ‘me-me’ is on par with a sheep (which bleats ‘me-me’). He is killed by the wolf that is time).”

As soon as the scholar heard this, he wept copiously and said that the purpose for which he had come all the way to Sringeri had been fulfilled. He sought *prasāda*; the *Jagadguru* readily blessed him with it. The scholar then moved away. Vaidyanatha Sastry, who was standing nearby, was puzzled but said nothing. Though having asked for and received *prasāda*, the scholar did not leave Sringeri and returned



*Way to Kālabhairava Temple*

the next evening to the Kālabhairava Temple. The *Jagadguru* asked the students to recite the verse that He had cited the previous evening; He had directed them to learn that verse by rote. He then asked, “Do you know why I wanted you to recite this verse?” Different students gave different reasons but the answer that Sri Srinivasa Sastry gave was considered most appropriate. He said, “This verse illustrates the power of Sanskrit. Here, ‘me’ means ‘mine’ and, through it, the verse portrays the hold of the sense of possession in a human being. It also represents the sound made by sheep. Thus, in



Sanskrit, the same sound can bring to mind even what are quite different.” The *Jagadguru* was pleased with the reply.

The scholar, however, opined that the verse was particularly applicable to him. He said, “I am very rich but have no progeny. Not one of the children I have begotten has survived. My wife too is unwell. I came here to supplicate Your Holiness for a talisman for her and to obtain blessings for progeny. However, as soon as I heard Your Holiness reciting this verse, my mind cleared and I realised the uselessness of all possessions. I deem that this verse was chanted only for my benefit.” Interestingly, this scholar later took *samnyāsa* in North India.

One day, Sri Srinivasa Sastry’s mother came to have the *darśana* of and pay her respects to the *Jagadguru* and to see her beloved son. After meeting Them briefly in Narasimhavana, she returned to the northern bank of the Tuṅgā at about five in the evening. The *Jagadguru* then proceeded to the Kālabhairava Temple. On the way, He recited a verse that conveys, “A sow quickly brings forth many luckless piglets. A she-elephant, after long gestation, gives birth to a single calf that is loved by kings.” He then asked the students what, they thought, He had sought to point out through this verse. While the others were puzzled and remained silent, Sri Srinivasa Sastry stepped forward and remarked, “A big school may give instruction to more than a hundred students. But if they are unable to grasp the substance of the teaching, the instruction will be a useless effort. A small school may have a single student. But if that boy is endowed with brains and takes maximum advantage of the instruction, he will bring fame to the institution. This, I think is the implied meaning of the verse.” The *Jagadguru* then turned to Vaidyanatha Sastry and asked him his view. Sastry said, “It is given only to some rare lady to give birth to a child who becomes a *Jagadguru* worshipped by kings. Other mothers do not get this blessing.” The reason for his

The *Jagadguru* had asked the students to recite a verse. He then asked, “Do you know why I wanted you to recite this verse?” Different students gave different reasons but the following answer that Sri Srinivasa Sastry gave was considered most appropriate: “This verse illustrates the power of Sanskrit. Here, ‘*me*’ means ‘mine’ and, through it, the verse portrays the hold of the sense of possession in a human being. It also represents the sound made by sheep. Thus, in Sanskrit, the same sound can bring to mind even what are quite different.” The *Jagadguru* was pleased with the reply.

giving this interpretation was that the *Jagadguru* had cited the verse just a few minutes after Sri Srinivasa Sastry's mother had left. Subsequently, the boys started talking amongst themselves about this. One of them asked Sri Srinivasa Sastry whether it was not apparent that the verse referred to His mother. With His characteristic humility, He replied, "I cannot even imagine giving such an interpretation."

A few months later, as the *Jagadguru* was proceeding to the Kālabhairava Temple, He saw the watchman belabouring a cow with a stick. The *Jagadguru* called him and said, "It is improper to beat a cow thus." The watchman replied, "This cow does not belong to the *Maṭha*. It is a stray cow and is feeding on the flowers. That is why I am beating it." The

*Jagadguru* said, "It is improper to distinguish between one's cow and that of another and beat it. A cow should not be beaten." The watchman pleaded his inability to drive out the cow in any other way. The *Jagadguru* said, "I will explain a simple means to you. Pluck some grass and hold it in front of the cow. It will come towards you. Gradually, you can lead it out." The watchman followed the advice and, in a short while, the cow was led out of the *Maṭha's* premises.

The *Jagadguru* then turned to the boys and asked them to recite something pertinent to the occasion. None of them could do so, barring Sri Srinivasa Sastry. He said, "*upāyena hi yac-chakyaṃ na tac-chakyaṃ parākramaiḥ* (What can be achieved by tactful means cannot be accomplished by the use of force)." At that juncture, a wealthy landlord came to have the *darśana* of the *Jagadguru*. He asked if he could accompany the party to the temple. The *Jagadguru* readily agreed. He, however, continued the conversation about the beating of the cow. It turned out that the cow belonged to the landlord.



Sri Srinivasa Sastry's response that met with the *Jagadguru's* approval was, "A person may have hundreds of cows but what he needs for his own sustenance is very little. In the same way, the *Vedas* contain an enormous amount of wisdom. The person who takes the essence out of them is alone intelligent. The essence must be contemplated upon."

Perhaps purposefully, the *Jagadguru* turned to Vaidyanatha Sastry and asked him to say something that was relevant to the incident. After thinking over the matter for some time, he said that it exemplified what is said in Bhagavatpāda's *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*. He then quoted the portion that conveys, "On noticing a man approaching them with an upraised stick, cows begin to run away thinking, 'He wants to hurt me' and they approach a person holding green grass in his hand."

The *Jagadguru* smiled and said, "This is your opinion. But what I have in mind is different." He then cited a verse that means, "Though one may have a hundred cows, one needs but a little milk. From heaps of grain, one's requirement is

confined to a small measure. Likewise, though one may have a palatial mansion, one needs only a portion of a cot to sleep. The rest are mere luxuries of others." He proceeded to cite another verse whose import is, "Whosoever consumes the milk of a cow – be it a calf, one who tends to it, its owner or one who steals it – is associated with it (and should not harm it)." He then asked the students what, they thought, He was seeking to convey through the verses. Sri Srinivasa Sastry's response that met with approval was, "A person may have hundreds of cows but what he needs for his own sustenance is very little. In the same way, the *Vedas* contain an enormous amount of wisdom. The person who grasps their essence is intelligent. The essence must be contemplated upon."

The landlord, who was present during this conversation, felt that all the verses were particularly relevant to him. He said, "All that Your Holiness has spoken about cow-protection relates to me. I have numerous cows but do not take proper care of them and even beat them. This indeed is a shortcoming of mine. It is also my fault that I just keep selling all the milk of the cows to make much money. Henceforth, I shall utilise the milk for *pūjā* and for the benefit of holy ones. This is certain." He then acted accordingly.

One evening, as the *Jagadguru* was proceeding to the Kālabhairava Temple with the students, a person came there bringing several kinds of fruits. He placed them near the *Jagadguru's* feet and offered prostrations. The *Jagadguru* began to distribute the fruits to the boys. A monkey appeared on the scene. He tossed a bunch of black grapes to it.

The simian took the whole bunch to a distance, crushed each fruit with its hands and threw every one of them away. The boys were surprised that it discarded tasty fruit. Sastry remarked, "Like giving a garland of flowers to a monkey!" Sri Srinivasa Sastry said that what the monkey did was like what Hanumān had done to the pearl necklace presented to him. As the boys and Sastry looked puzzled, the *Jagadguru* turned to Sri Srinivasa Sastry and asked him to elaborate. Sri Srinivasa Sastry replied that He had in mind a story about Hanumān. He then narrated the following story:

"At the time of Rāma's coronation He gave away several presents to the assembled monkeys, such as Sugrīva. Sītā observed that nothing had been given to Hanumān. She therefore asked Rāma the reason for the omission. The Lord replied that He had nothing worthy enough to give Hanumān. He had already embraced Hanumān when the latter had returned from Laṅkā after seeing Sītā there. Perhaps, He felt that there was nothing that Hanumān would regard as worthy when compared to His affectionate hug. Sītā was not satisfied. She took a pearl necklace from Her neck and gave it to Hanumān. However, Ānjaneya did not wear it round His neck. He took it to a corner and looked at each pearl carefully. He then bit every one of them and threw them away. Sītā was annoyed. In anger, She asked Him why He had behaved in that manner. Ānjaneya replied, 'I examined each pearl to find out if any of them contained what is dear to my heart. I even broke them open to see if what captivates me was inside the pearls. What can I do with an ordinary pearl necklace?' 'What was it that you were seeking?' Sītā pressed. Ānjaneya pointed to Śrī Rāma. 'He is not inside your body. So will you destroy it?' She asked. At that instant, Ānjaneya tore open His chest with His hands. Therein, Sītā beheld Rāma seated on the throne along with Her. Rāma praised Ānjaneya and said that there was no devotee in the universe equal to Him."

On hearing the story and its moral, the man who had brought the fruits declared that he had been more than recompensed for his submission of fruits. Finally, the *Jagadguru* asked Sri Srinivasa Sastry, "Who told you this story?" He replied that it had



been narrated to Him by His mother a few years ago. When they returned from the temple, He mentioned to His friends that it had been strange that while the *Jagadguru* had given them oranges and bananas, which the monkey would have readily eaten, He had given only black grapes to the monkey. He felt that the *Jagadguru* had intentionally done so to make Him speak what He did.

On another evening, the *Jagadguru* was proceeding to the Kālabhairava Temple with the students and Vaidyanatha Sastry. They were engaged in chanting *antādi-ślokas*. Required to present a verse beginning with 'ta', Sastry recited the 75<sup>th</sup> verse of the *Soundaryalaharī*. This verse commences with the words "tava stanyam manye" and means, "O Daughter of the mountain (O, Goddess Pārvatī)! I think that the ocean of milk of poetry flows from Your heart as the milk of Your breasts. On savouring that milk, given by You who are compassionate, the 'draviḍa-śiṣu (Dravidian child)' became the poet-laureate among great poets." When the *Jagadguru* asked Sastry to give the gist of the verse, he said, "O Divine Mother! The milk that flows from Your breast is a veritable flow of learning because after drinking it, the *draviḍa* child, Sambandhar, became a great poet. Thus, in the guise of giving milk, the Divine Mother actually gives knowledge." The *Jagadguru* asked him, "What is the authoritative basis on which you have understood the word 'draviḍa-śiṣu (Dravidian child)' as referring to Tirujñāna-sambandhar (the celebrated Tamilian saint-poet who was a great devotee of Lord Śiva and lived in the 7<sup>th</sup> century)?" No satisfactory answer was forthcoming from Sastry. The *Jagadguru* then said that He had read another story in this regard and related it. The story that He narrated is as follows and is essentially what is recounted in the commentaries of Lakṣmīdhara and Kaivalyāśrama on the *Soundaryalaharī*:

"Pārvatī and Parameśvara were coursing in the heavens. When seeing whether anything interesting was happening in the world below, they heard a child in the southern part of India calling out, 'Mother, Mother!' Pārvatī came down to the place from which the sound had come. She beheld a male child resplendent in beauty. She took him on Her lap and gave him milk from Her breast. Immediately, the child praised Her in a hundred verses. The Goddess then returned to where Śiva was in the sky. He asked Her to recount the verses. She felt reluctant to do so as the verses glorified Her. After reaching Kailāsa, the Lord again asked Her to repeat those verses. Instead of reciting them, She wrote them on a rock. Bhagavatpāda was then in *samādhi* and directed His mind towards Kailāsa. He saw the *ślokas* on the boulder. He read seventy-four stanzas. Meanwhile, Pārvatī had finished the hundred verses and had started erasing them one by one. As Bhagavatpāda could not see the final twenty-six verses, He composed them on His own. It is said that Bhagavatpāda had mentioned this incident in a disguised manner in the seventy-fifth verse."

Sri Srinivasa Sastry said, “I have heard that the Divine Mother had given milk from Her breast to Bhagavatpāda.” The *Jagadguru* asked Him to narrate the story that He was having in His mind. Sri Srinivasa Sastry proceeded to do so. He said, “When Bhagavatpāda was a child, He used to be given cow’s milk that had first been taken to the temple and offered as *naivedya* to the Goddess. One day, as there was some pollution in the household, no such offering was made to the Divine Mother. Hence, Bhagavatpāda’s mother, Āryāmbā, gave Him unoffered milk to drink. On imbibing a little of it, the child found it to be insipid and started weeping. He said, ‘You have given me some other milk. Give me some milk which I can first take to the Divine Mother.’ So she gave Him another tumbler of milk. He took it with great joy to the temple and beseeched the deity to partake of it. As the milk was delicious, the Goddess drank the whole of it and left nothing for Him. The child began to cry. At this, the Divine Mother embraced Him and gave Him the milk of Her breast. When He narrated this incident to the members of His family, they were sceptical. It is said that His consumption of the milk of knowledge contributed to His unique greatness.”



The *Jagadguru* asked Sri Srinivasa Sastry if this story had been narrated by His mother. He answered in the affirmative.

Another evening, during the chanting of *antādi-ślokas*, it was Sri Srinivasa Sastry’s turn to recite a verse beginning with ‘*ma*’. He intoned a *śloka* that began with the words “*mano na me*” and meant, “*My mind does not incline towards the breasts of women or to a young disciple or to gold. I only know the delight of the lotus feet of Śiva.*” The *Jagadguru* asked Him, “Who is the author of this verse?” Sri Srinivasa Sastry indicated Vaidyanatha Sastry. The latter, however, stated that it was not his composition but was that of the *Jagadguru* Himself. “I heard it when Your Holiness was in an indrawn state,” said Sastry.

The *Jagadguru* asked him whether there were other such verses. Sastry replied that he had noted down a few. The *Jagadguru* asked him to bring his notes the next day. When the jottings were brought and read out, the *Jagadguru* selected one verse and

wanted Sastry to give its meaning later. The verse's thrust is, "*Śiva, in His manifestation as Dakṣiṇāmūrti, indicated through His silence and cinmudrā that the Ātman is without a second, is of the nature of consciousness and is all pervading. The book, snake and flame (in His hands) evidence this.*" {The *cinmudrā* is characterised by the tips of the index finger and the thumb of the right hand touching one another, and the other fingers being held straight. This is deemed to be the sign of knowledge of the non-dual Truth, with the touching of the tips of index finger and thumb pointing to the non-difference of the individual soul and the Supreme. As for the Lord teaching through silence, Bhagavatpāda has recounted in His *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, a Vedic account of Bāskali approaching the sage Bādhva and requesting to be instructed about the Supreme Brahman. Bādhva remained silent. Bāskali repeated his request; Bādhva remained silent. When Bāskali made his request for the third time, Bādhva said, "I have already taught you (by my silence) but you have failed to comprehend. This *Ātman* is quiescence."}



The next day, scholars of the *Maṭha* also came to the Kālabhairava Temple. They were unable to go beyond the basic meaning of the verse and explain what the book, snake and fire stood for and how they evidenced the non-dual Truth. Vaidyanatha Sastry emphasised that the book stood for *Advaita*, the serpent for knowledge and the fire for all-pervasiveness. Although the leaves of the book are separate, there is unity in a book. This indicates *Advaita* or non-duality in the midst of the appearance of variety. The example of a rope mistaken for a snake is common and shows that with the dawn of knowledge, illusion disappears. Fire represents all-pervasiveness. Just as the whole world is pervaded by the heat of fire, so also the *Ātman* is omnipresent. This explanation did not satisfy the *Jagadguru*.

Sri Srinivasa Sastry then remarked that the book, snake and fire indicated the scripture, reasoning and direct experience respectively. {The book, understandably, represents the scripture, which is the fundamental means of right knowledge of the non-dual Truth.

Though learning from the scripture that there is just the non-dual Truth, one may be assailed by the doubt about how this could be so as the world of duality is seen. The snake stands for the illusory snake of the well-known rope-snake example. Just as a snake that is mistakenly seen in the place of a rope does not affect either the actual non-duality or the intrinsic nature of the rope, the perceived world of duality, being like the snake of the example, does not affect the Truth, which is non-dual. In this fashion, the snake held by Lord Dakṣiṇāmūrti is suggestive of reasoning that is in consonance with the scriptural teaching and serves to dispel any doubt about the non-dual Truth. The Lord has said in the *Bhagavadgītā*, “*O Arjuna, just as a well-kindled fire reduces wooden fuel to ashes, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all karma to ashes.*” In this and several other places, direct realization of the Truth has been presented as analogous to fire. So the fire held by Lord can indicate direct experience.} Thus, according to the *Jagadguru’s* verse, Lord Dakṣiṇāmūrti teaches the non-dual *Ātman*, of the nature of consciousness, through His silence and the *cinmudrā* and, as explained by Sri Srinivasa Sastry, the book, snake and fire in His hands represent the scripture, reasoning and direct experience, the means to rightly know that non-dual *Ātman*. Neither the *Jagadguru* nor any of the scholars had any objection to Sri Srinivasa Sastry’s profound explanation, which was advanced by Him on the spot and that too when He was just twelve years of age and without prior exposure to *Vedānta*.







## CHAPTER 3

# Young Ascetic

The scripture points out that dispassion towards worldly and heavenly pleasures is vital for securing enlightenment and liberation. For instance, the *Mahānārāyaṇa-upaniṣad* teaches, “Not by work (rites), progeny or wealth did they attain immortality. It is by renunciation that some have attained immortality.” The *Jagadguru* emphasised detachment to Sri Srinivasa Sastry. One evening, after Vaidyanatha Sastry had informed the *Jagadguru* that he had noted down some verses uttered by Him when He had been in an inward-turned state, the *Jagadguru* directed him to recite one of them. He was, at that time, proceeding to the Kālabhairava Temple with the students. Sastry recited a verse, the meaning of which is, “A mortal should never have the sense of ‘mine’ with regard to even his body. The packs of jackals in the crematorium deem it to belong to them when the body lies there.” The *Jagadguru* then proceeded to explain the worthlessness of attachment to the body. He concluded His instruction by quoting a verse of the *Prabodha-sudhākara*, attributed to Bhagavatpāda. This verse conveys, “People felt joy on seeing a person (their king) seated on the royal throne. However, they shut their eyes upon seeing that very person when he is pulled by Death.”

The following day, He directed Vaidyanatha Sastry to come to Him with just Sri Srinivasa Sastry. When His directive was complied with, He said, “Today, we shall discuss the comparative merits of being a householder and a *śamnyāsīn*. You first explain the advantages of family life.” In obedience to His command, Sri Srinivasa Sastry and Vaidyanatha Sastry spoke of the plus points of one being a householder. The *Jagadguru* then detailed the disadvantages of that stage of life. He gave many examples and also chanted two verses, the combined meaning of which is, “Who indeed knows which day shall be his last? Even when young, one should practise righteousness; life is decidedly transient. During childhood, one is shorn of discriminative insight. While a youth, one is engrossed in the experience of sensual pleasures. Later, what success can an infirm old

*man achieve after the dawn of discrimination?”* At the end, He asked, “Now, tell me. Is it better to become a householder or a *saṁnyāsin*?” Bereft of any hesitation, Sri Srinivasa Sastry averred that taking up *saṁnyāsa* was, indeed, superior.

Subsequently, Sri Srinivasa Sastry posed some queries to Vaidyanatha Sastry. These were:

(i) I have heard that the eldest son in the family must compulsorily get married. Is it so?

(ii) Our *Guru* embraced monasticism after becoming highly erudite. Is it obligatory that one acquire a deep knowledge of the scriptures prior to renouncing the world?

(iii) I have heard that when one is born, immediately a set of debts accrue to one. Some of these are repaid by serving one’s parents, some by worshipping the *devas* and yet others by begetting progeny. Is this indeed the state of affairs?

(iv) Is one permitted to enter another *āśrama* only after dwelling for long as a *brahmacārin* in the hermitage of the *Guru*?

(v) Can a young boy like me take up *saṁnyāsa* if he desires to? Parents may not grant permission. Can *saṁnyāsa* be taken up without their consent?

Vaidyanatha Sastry was not in a position to reply satisfactorily to Him. That evening, the *Jagadguru* went on His evening walk to the Kālabhairava Temple accompanied by both of them. On the way, He recited a verse from the *Prabodhasudhākara*, the literal meaning of which is, “*The Veda says that ‘loka’ is not there for one bereft of a son. What is that ‘loka’? Is it liberation or transmigration or another world? It cannot be the first one.*” He then directed Vaidyanatha Sastry to recite the next two verses of the *Prabodhasudhākara* and give their meaning. Sastry gave the overall meaning as follows:



“It cannot be said that begetting a son confers liberation. This is because not all people who have sons have attained the exalted state. Further, if mere procreation were to yield emancipation, then the cycle of transmigratory existence itself would cease since numerous people do have children. A son cannot necessarily be the cause of happiness in this world and the next. The reason is that to attain a higher world, the *Veda* prescribes the performance of special rites, such as the *jyotiṣṭhoma*. It does not explicitly declare begetting of progeny as constituting the means. The *Veda* clearly proclaims that wealth, progeny and the like cannot serve to confer liberation. Only the realisation of the *Ātman*, by hearing the Truth, cogitating upon It and focusing one’s mind on It, yields immortality.

“Marriage is compulsory only for a person who wants to enjoy sensual pleasures. It is not obligatory on one who has strong dispassion and is disinclined to lead a householder’s life. Further, there is no *Vedic* injunction that a dispassionate one should get married.”

- The *Jagadguru*

“Utterances of the *śruti* to the effect that a son is essential should be understood as merely eulogising the performance of sacrifices, such as the *putreṣṭi*. The *putreṣṭi-yāga* serves to obtain a son. To induce people who have a desire for children to perform it, its importance is stressed. The *Veda*, which is like a mother, certainly does not intend to compel one without desires to perform such sacrifices.”

After this, the *Jagadguru* proceeded to give a detailed exposition. He said that marriage is compulsory only for a person who wants to enjoy sensual pleasures. It is not obligatory on one who has strong dispassion and is disinclined to lead a householder’s life. Further, there is no *Vedic* injunction that a dispassionate one should get married. The *Vedas* indicate remedies for the removal of desires and never exhort the gratification of longings or procreation. Just as fond parents would only try to save their child from falling into fire and would not induce it to tumble into it, so too do the *Vedas* indicate the means for people to abstain from bad ways and to proceed in the holy path. In fact, the moment one becomes extremely dispassionate, one can renounce and become an ascetic. Thus, a man can become an ascetic regardless of whether he is a celibate or a householder or a forest-dweller.

He went on to explain the futility of begetting a child. He strengthened His explanations by various citations and firmly drove home His points. For instance, He said that only rarely does one beget a son who is endowed with all good qualities. Even on such a son being born, if the lad were to be short-lived or diseased or were to later have no children, the parents would have to put up with mental suffering. If a young child were to suffer on account of diseases or planetary influences, the grief of the parents would know no end. If the child were to grow up a little but were to be stupid, then too the parents would be far from happy. Further, if after *upanayana*, the boy were to fail to become learned or, having become learned, were to refuse to get married, then also the parents would be unhappy.



The *Jagadguru* explained that *śrāddha* (a rite performed for the deceased) is an obligatory duty that purifies the performer. He emphasised that the manes do not sustain themselves exclusively on the *piṇḍa* (ball of cooked rice) that is offered during the *śrāddha* ceremony. He went on to add that the stories found in texts like the *Mahābhārata* about the necessity of offspring are not meant for advanced spiritual aspirants who have strong dispassion. All the queries raised earlier by Sri Srinivasa Sastry to Vaidyanatha Sastry were thus categorically answered by the *Jagadguru*; in fact, neither of them had mentioned any of the questions to the *Jagadguru*.

At times, circumstances seemed to aid the *Jagadguru's* imparting of instructions about detachment. For instance, on one occasion, when He was proceeding to the Kālabhairava Temple together with His students, a funeral procession was visible. He spontaneously identified the deceased one as a wealthy man and gave out his name. He went on to say that that man was young and had been living in comfort. However, the Lord of Death, Yama, had not chosen to spare him.

At this juncture, Vaidyanatha Sastry cited a verse that the *Jagadguru* had composed when in a state of seclusion. Its meaning is, "Though having much wealth, grains or

*objects of enjoyment, who says at the end of his life that he has been contented for long? On seeing in front of him the teeth of Yama bared in wrath, what can even a king do?” On hearing this, the Jagadguru said, “There is a verse in the Prabodha-sudhākara that is fitting on this occasion and worthy of being cited.” All but Sri Srinivasa Sastry remained silent. He chanted the verse that conveys, “The body that slept on a bed adorned with flowers is now taken, tied by ropes to logs, and consigned to fire.”*

“Though having much wealth, grains or objects of enjoyment, who says at the end of his life that he has been contented for long? On seeing in front of him the teeth of Yama bared in wrath, what can even a king do?”

-The Jagadguru

The Jagadguru explained the significance of the verse. He pointed out that the dead man had, even on the previous night, been in the midst of all comforts. His heart had suddenly collapsed while he was asleep and so he now lay tied by ropes to bamboos. He was about to be consigned to fire. This would be the fate of all without any exception. He quoted half a verse from the *Nārada-purāṇa* and then half a verse from the *Hitopadeśa*. The combined meaning of these is, “Death is ever at hand. Hence, one should accumulate dharma. One should practise dharma (without delay) as if one’s tuft were in the grip of Death.”

He proceeded to say, “We should perform our *dharma* and purify the mind so that we can obtain the realisation of the *Ātman* and become liberated from all misery. Only then will the goal of our lives be reached.” As He spoke, the Jagadguru’s gaze was constantly on Sri Srinivasa Sastry’s face. At that juncture, a woman’s wail was heard. Seeing the pitiful face of the dead rich man, his mother had given the cry of anguish. “Even the

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son that I gained after the observance of many a fast and vow has not lasted. Had he not even been born, I would not have had to suffer my present deep anguish. Having got married, he has now left his young wife a destitute. Is this the only benefit of begetting progeny?” wailed the disconsolate mother. Sri Srinivasa Sastry noted all this. “Is this the worth of ephemeral existence? I do not want this at all,” He muttered. These words were heard by Vaidyanatha Sastry. From His facial expression, the Jagadguru could readily

comprehend His disciple's state of mind. He looked glad that His teachings were having the desired effect.

“No amount of learning, wealth or enjoyment can confer total freedom from sorrow and everlasting bliss. Only the realisation of the Truth can do so. Kingship, divine weapons, heavenly damsels and the power to even create a new universe did not, for instance, free Viśvāmitra from all unhappiness.”

- The *Jagadguru*

On several occasions, the *Jagadguru* spoke to Sri Srinivasa Sastry in private about detachment and *brahmacarya*. What follows is a brief account of the advices given in some of the private sessions; they were described to me in detail by His Holiness, partly in 1977 and partly in 1984.

(i) No amount of learning, wealth or enjoyment can confer total freedom from sorrow and everlasting bliss. Only the realisation of the Truth can do so. Kingship, divine weapons, heavenly damsels and the power to even create a new universe did not, for instance, free Viśvāmitra from all unhappiness. In the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad*, it is narrated that though versed in the *Vedas* and various *śāstras*, Nārada continued to experience sorrow; he transcended all sorrows only when he received enlightenment from Sanatkumāra. Bhagavatpāda has said, “*So what if learning respected by the sovereign himself has been acquired? So what if unsurpassed affluence has been obtained? So what if a belle has been enjoyed? What is there for him who has not realised his own Ātman?*”

Enlightenment dawns only in a very pure mind. Desires are impurities that sully the mind. To render the mind pure and fit for enlightenment, they must be assiduously eradicated.

(ii) Sense objects are not the source of happiness. It is a mistake to think that they are. Were an object intrinsically a source of joy to a person, he ought not to ever find it to be a pain. However, it is well known that objects are sometimes liked and sometimes disliked. For instance, to a person who develops severe nausea during a meal, the very dishes he found delectable appear to be unappealing and a burden to consume. How can an object intrinsically be a source of happiness to a person when, though remaining just the same, it is at times a bane to the very same person?

“Sense-objects are not the source of happiness. It is a mistake to think that they are. Were an object intrinsically a source of joy to a person, he ought not to ever find it to be a pain.”

- The *Jagadguru*

When a desire for an object arises in the mind, the mind loses peace and the period of longing is not one of joy. When the desired object is obtained, the desire that agitated the mind becomes temporarily quieted. With the calming of the mind, there is joy. Thus, calmness gives happiness and not desire or a sensory object. In deep sleep, when no sensory object whatsoever is apprehended and the mind is in a state of latency, there is very great happiness. The sage whose mind is very calm and focused on the Supreme has unsurpassed happiness.

Stable mental calmness can never be had by the gratification of longings. Though briefly quieting a desire, gratification only leads to the growth of the desire; the desire manifests again later, with increased strength. Desiring and striving for sense objects constitute, therefore, the wrong approach to obtain happiness, which is what all want. By discerning that sense objects are never the cause of happiness, one should develop detachment towards them. The dispassionate one is calm and happy.

(iii) There is great benefit in observing perfect *brahmacharya*. For this, complete control over the mind is important. To achieve such mastery, one should avoid thinking of sense objects. The reason is that as one thinks of sense objects, one gradually develops a degree of attachment to them. When attachment is allowed to grow, it becomes an intense desire. When a powerful longing is permitted to manifest, checking and uprooting it becomes difficult. When a man strongly desires some object or honour and a person or situation thwarts the consummation of his longing, he becomes irritated.

When a man gives way to anger, he loses his power of proper discrimination between right and wrong. It is well known that an irritated man may be disrespectful even to his *Guru*. From delusion, the recollection of what one has been taught regarding righteous conduct is lost. This destruction of memory disrupts the functioning of the intellect and the man in this state is as good as destroyed. The seed of all this evil is thus thinking about sensory objects. So if you wish to control your mind, you must not allow your mind to cogitate upon the objects of the organs.

(iv) Married life is a big source of bondage. A householder has to cater not only to his own requirements but also to those of his family. Hence, he cannot devote

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himself entirely to meditation and such spiritual practices. Many are the people who get married and think that that course of life is good for them. Actually, for a discriminating person, family life is so full of misery that it is better to stand on burning coal rather than to get married.

“Married life is a big source of bondage. A householder has to cater not only to his own requirements but also to those of his family. Hence, he cannot devote himself entirely to meditation and such spiritual practices.”

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The body is made up of skin, blood, flesh, bones and so on. It contains within it urine and faeces. The body of even the female whom the undiscriminating consider to be extremely beautiful is only of this kind. Bhagavatpāda has taught, “*Seeing the breasts and the navel region of a woman, do not fall a prey to delusion. The female form is but a modification of flesh, fat, etc. Reflect well thus in your mind, again and again.*” Such recourse to discrimination enables one to combat lust and be established in *Brahmacarya*.”

{His Holiness has told me, “My *Guru* was so kind that even when I was too young to be afflicted by passion, He emphasised the worthlessness of sensory pleasures and stressed the importance of dispassion and thereby precluded any scope for even the seed of passion finding a place in my mind. He rendered me fit for *samnyāsa*.”}

In the first quarter of 1931, Sri Srinivasa Sastry developed high fever one night and became delirious. He started to speak incoherently. When the matter was reported to the *Jagadguru*, He neither authorised medical attention nor did He give *vibhūti* (sacred ash) as *prasāda* as He had done in the case of the other students when they had taken ill. He, however, specifically instructed Vaidyanatha Sastry

to note whatever Sri Srinivasa Sastry uttered while delirious and inform Him. Sri Srinivasa Sastry's words primarily comprised an unusual combination of dedication to the *Jagadguru* and a declaration of the Truth. He kept saying, "*sadguro śaraṇaṁ śivo'haṁ śivo'ham* (O Sadguru! You are my refuge. I am Śiva. I am Śiva)." Three days passed without His condition improving. He was awaiting *vibhūti-prasāda* from the *Jagadguru*. To assuage Him, Vaidyanatha Sastry told Him a lie to the effect that the *Jagadguru* would be gracing Him in person. Thereafter, He started to continuously chant, "*sadguro pāhi, sadguro pāhi* (O Sadguru, protect me. O Sadguru, protect me)."

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When the *Jagadguru* was proceeding the next day, an *ekādaśī*, to the river for His afternoon bath, He heard Sri Srinivasa Sastry's chant. After ascertaining that only Vaidyanatha Sastry was around, He abruptly entered the room where Sri Srinivasa Sastry lay. On seeing the *Jagadguru*, Sri Srinivasa Sastry got up and then prostrated in such a way that His forehead rested on His *Guru's* feet. Vaidyanatha Sastry was shocked as it was not customary for anyone to touch the *Jagadguru* like this. The *Jagadguru*, however, showed no signs of disapproval. Gently raising His disciple, He placed His hand on Sri Srinivasa Sastry's head. He innocently asked, "Have you still got fever?" and added, "Do not worry. Go and lie down." He then left. Sri Srinivasa Sastry's fever promptly vanished. Following the *Jagadguru's* touch, He became relatively introverted and avoided casual conversations.

That night and on the subsequent ones, the *Jagadguru* audibly prayed during His *Candramoulīśvara-pūjā*, "*sarvajñaṁ śrīnivāsaṁ kuru śiva-dayite satvaraṁ mad-vinamram* (O beloved of Śiva, quickly make Srinivasa, my disciple, omniscient)." Interestingly, decades earlier, when the *Jagadguru* was a *brahmacārin*, His *Guru* (*Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī*, the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff) had prayed, during *pūjā*, "*O beloved of Śiva, quickly make Narasimha, my disciple, omniscient.*"

Days later, He felt the impulsion of Goddess Śāradā to choose Sri Srinivasa Sastry as His successor. That night, He had a dream in which His *Guru* (the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff) fully approved

of the choice. The next day, He communicated His resolve to Srikanta Sastry, the Agent of the *Maṭha*. The latter expressed his concern that Sri Srinivasa Sastry's health was fragile. Without any hesitation, the *Jagadguru* declared, "Śāradāmbā will take care of everything."

A letter in this regard was sent to Rama Sastry, who was at Bengaluru. The contents of that letter put him in a quandary. Sensing his discomfiture, Venkatalakshmamma sought to know the reason.

Venkatalakshmamma: Why are you so silent after reading the missive?

Rama Sastry: Nothing is the matter. The letter has come from Sringeri.

Venkatalakshmamma: Is our child doing well?

Rama Sastry: Yes, he is.

Venkatalakshmamma: Then why are you lost in thought?

Rama Sastry: There is some information in that letter. I need to ask you about it.

Venkatalakshmamma: What is it?

Rama Sastry: The *Jagadguru* desires to give *saṁnyāsa* to Srinivasa and make him the successor designate. For that, his mother's permission is desired. I have been asked to consult you and send a reply. I was wondering how I could pose the matter to you.

Venkatalakshmamma: I am very glad. Please reply that I have given my approval. Our family shall attain good. One must be extremely fortunate to take *saṁnyāsa* like this.

He then conveyed her consent to the *Maṭha*. {These details were provided by Rama Sastry to Subbarattinam Iyer, the author of the Tamil book *Śrīmad-Abhinava-Vidyātīrtha-Vijayam*.}



The *Jagadguru* decided that as Sri Srinivasa Sastry would be soon entering the *saṁnyāsa-aśrama*, He should go to Bengaluru and see His parents before that. Sitarama Holla was told to escort Him. Sri Srinivasa Sastry was to be first taken to Mysuru and then to Bengaluru. The *Jagadguru* had informed the Maharaja of Mysore (Mysuru), Krishnaraja Wodeyar, about His intention to make Sri Srinivasa Sastry His successor designate and the king had readily given his full consent. While the *Jagadguru* had the right to select His successor, He duly informed the monarch in keeping with the tradition in the *Maṭha*. Sri Srinivasa Sastry and Holla left Sringeri for Tarikere by bus. That night they proceeded from Tarikere to Mysuru by train. At Mysuru, Holla took Him to the residence of Krishna Sastry, Srikanta Sastry's brother. Srikanta Sastry was already there. He had arranged for a medical check-up for Sri Srinivasa Sastry. The doctor gave Him a clean bill of health. After the scheduled visit to the palace, He left for Bengaluru that night, accompanied by Holla. Srikanta Sastry too travelled by the same train. At Bengaluru, He was taken to His former home and brought back to the station at the scheduled time by Rama Sastry. From Bengaluru, Srikanta Sastry and Sri Srinivasa Sastry, accompanied by Holla, left by train for Tarikere. The *Maṭha's* car came there to pick up Srikanta Sastry.

The public announcement about the initiation ceremony was through a *śrī mukha* (benedictory epistle) of the *Jagadguru*. The content of that *śrī mukha* in English is: "It is known to the people of our country, from the *Setu* (the place of Lord Rāma's bridge in the South) to the Himalayas (in the North), that the ancient Sringeri Math, endowed with pristine purity and renowned as the *Dakṣiṇāmnāya-pīṭha* (the southern, *Vedic* seat) is one of the four *Āmnāya-pīṭhas* (*Vedic seats*) established by Śaṅkara-bhagavatpādā to propagate noble religion and virtuous conduct. Following the path showed by our *Paramaguru* (Jagadguru Śrī Nṛsimha Bhāratī, the 32<sup>nd</sup> pontiff), a personage endowed with powers, a foreseer realising the obstacles propped up by *Kali* (the personification of the present, 'iron age') to the institution of *dharma* and personages propagating *dharma* and aware of the differences in opinions arising amongst people every moment, we came to know that from now onwards it is necessary that a *Guru* and *śiṣya* should be present together in the *Maṭha* to implement to the extent possible the directives of our revered *Guru* (Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Narasimha Bhāratī, the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff). Hence, with our mind impelled by the will of the glorious World-mother Śāradāmbā and our revered *Guru*, we have resolved to bestow *saṁnyāsa* and accept as disciple on Friday, the fifth day (*pañcamī*) of the bright fortnight (*śukla-pakṣa*) of the month of *Jyeṣṭha* of the cyclical year *Prajāpati* (that is, on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 1931), Sri Srinivasa Sastry, a young celibate born in a

noble family, endowed with the meritorious deeds of past births, possessed of qualities such as humility, and the son of Rama Sastry, residing in Bengaluru. We bless that you, who, through a line of forefathers who were disciples (of the *Maṭha*), are a disciple and have great reverence, come to Sringeri on the occasion, participate to the extent possible and, having aided in the completion of the proposed function, become the recipient of the grace of Śāradāmbā and our *Guru* and fulfil your objectives.”

The said *śiṣya-svīkāra* (‘acceptance-of-disciple’) ceremony was scheduled to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1931. Rama Sastry and his family arrived from Bengaluru a few days before that. As they waited for the *Jagadguru* at the *samādhi* of the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff, one of the members of the family underscored to Sri Srinivasa Sastry, who came there, that He would be very soon becoming an eminent *Guru*. Sri Srinivasa Sastry’s poignant response was, “A seed is sown. The hope is that it will gradually grow into a big tree yielding fruit that may be eaten. If someone were to want the fruit on the very next day, it would be most surprising.” He indicated that it would be erroneous to presume that He would suddenly become spiritually great on being initiated into *saṁnyāsa* and made a successor-designate.

That night, the relatives got an opportunity to converse privately with Sri Srinivasa Sastry and were enthusiastically doing so. A short while later, Srikanta Sastry came there. He firmly said, “All the people who are here may leave. He has important work to do tomorrow. For that, He needs to awaken early.” After saying so, he softened and added, “Very close relatives may, however, stay on for another five to ten minutes if they so desire.” Accordingly, five or six relatives remained and the others left. An elderly person among them told Sri Srinivasa Sastry that even after His becoming a *Jagadguru*, He should have special affection for the close relatives who were present there. Upon hearing these words, He responded, “It is improper for elderly people like you to speak thus” and made known that He would be the same towards all and would not have any favouritism towards relatives.

On the day prior to *saṁnyāsa*, Srikanta Sastry told Sri Srinivasa Sastry, “Tomorrow, you are going to take up *saṁnyāsa*. Thereafter, it will not be possible for you to prostrate before your father. Hence, you may do so now itself.” {In keeping with teachings, such as, “A *saṁnyāsin* is decidedly fit to be saluted by his father,” a *saṁnyasin* is not supposed to prostrate before his father and, it is the father, a householder, who should prostrate before him.} Sri Srinivasa Sastry promptly prostrated before Rama Sastry and Venkatalakshamma and obtained their blessings.



On a night before the ceremonies, He dreamt that He had gone to the temple to have the *darśana* of Śāradāmbā and was standing amidst a large crowd of persons. His *Guru* beckoned to Him and asked Him to enter the sanctum sanctorum. On His entering, the door was closed. Śāradāmbā took Him on Her lap and said, “Your good times are ahead. Even kings will pay obeisance unto you. Do not become proud. Continue to worship Me and be with your *Guru*. Wear this crystal necklace to remind you of Me.” So saying, She put the necklace on His neck and permitted Him to leave. Thereafter, the *dīpārādhana* took

place; at the same time, the necklace disappeared. The dream ended there. One may conjecture that the Divine Mother had felt that as He had firmly lodged Her in His heart, there was no need for any external cue to remind Him of Her and so had caused the necklace to vanish in that dream.

The ceremonies began on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 1931, the day prior to the initiation into *saṁnyāsa*. After His morning bath in the river, He did *sandhyā-vandana*. He then paid His respects to His *Guru* and received His blessings and consent for all functions of that day and the next. In keeping with the norm that Lord Gaṇapati should be invoked at the commencement of religious activities, a *Gaṇapati-homa* was performed.

After its completion, He prostrated at the *samādhi* of the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff and crossed over to the northern side of the river from Narasimhavana. There, He paid obeisance at the *samādhis* of the previous pontiffs, such as that of the 32<sup>nd</sup> pontiff, Jagadguru Śrī Nṛsiṃha Bhāratī, and at the temples, including those of Bhagavatpāda and Goddess Śārādāmbā. On His return to Narasimhavana, He had a bath. After this, He performed the *aṣṭa-śrāddhas*. One of these eight rites was the *ātma-śrāddha*. Herein, He made offerings even to Himself as done to the manes. With this, He completed once and for all His ritualistic obligations to His progenitors and became decoupled, as it were, from His life so far. His head was then tonsured; just a few strands of hair were left unshaven in His tuft. Having bathed in the river, He performed some purifying rituals, such as *brahma-vandana*, and then did *daṇḍābhiṣeka*, involving ritualistic pouring of water on the staff that He would bear after *sarṇnyāsa*. He fasted that day. At night, He performed ‘*brahma-anvādhāna*’, involving the setting up of a fire in a *homa-kuṇḍa* in accordance with the scriptural prescriptions and then making a single offering into it. He sat in its vicinity, keeping vigil the whole of the night, with His mind on God; He mentally repeated the *Gāyatrī-mantra*.

The next morning, after bathing in the river and completing His *sandhyā-vandana*, He performed the *Puruṣa-sūkta-homa* and *Virajā-homa*. In doing so, He chanted the pertinent *mantras* and poured an oblation of a sacrificial faggot (*samit*), *caru* (comprising rice, barley and pulse boiled for presentation to the *devas*) and ghee at the end of each *mantra* into the fire that He had tended. The *mantras* of the former, potent *homa* are those of the well-known *Vedic hymn*, *Puruṣa-sūkta*, which commences with the words “*sahasra-śiṛṣā puruṣaḥ (God as the Cosmic Person has a thousand heads, that is, the very many heads of all the beings).*” The *Virajā-homa* is specially meant to completely purify one and the *mantras* pertaining to it are found in the *Mahānārāyaṇa-upaniṣad*. Three significant *mantras* there convey, “*By this oblation, may earth, water, fire, air and space (the five elements constituting my body) become purified. Freed from all obstructing sins and passions (the sins’ causes),*

“By this oblation, may sound, touch, colour, taste and smell become purified. Freed from all obstructing sins and passions, may I become the Light. *Svāhā!* By this oblation, may I not have any suppressed feelings of egoism. Freed from all obstructing sins and passions, may I become the Light. *Svāhā!*”

may I become the Light (the Supreme Brahman of the nature of consciousness). Svāhā! By this oblation, may sound, touch, colour, taste and smell (the qualities of the five elements) become purified. Freed from all obstructing sins and passions (the sins' causes), may I become the Light (the Supreme Brahman of the nature of consciousness). Svāhā! By this oblation, may I not have any suppressed feelings of egoism. Freed from all obstructing sins and passions (the sins' causes), may I become the Light (the Supreme Brahman of the nature of consciousness). Svāhā!”

After completing the *Virajā-homa*, He proceeded to Sandhya-mandapa situated at the riverside in Narasimhavana. There, He entered the river and stood in waist-deep water. He then performed “*sāvitrī-tyāga* (giving up of *Sāvitrī*, that is, giving up of the *Gāyatrī-mantra*).” {*Paramahaṃsa-saṃnyāsins* (the highest of the four types of *saṃnyāsins*, the other three being the *kuṭīcaka*, *bahūdaka* and *haṃsa saṃnyāsins*) do not wear the sacred thread and have no tuft and, hence, are not supposed to chant the *Gāyatrī-mantra*. For them, ‘om’ substitutes for the *Gāyatrī-mantra*.} In the course of the ‘*sāvitrī-tyāga*’, He chanted the *Gāyatrī-mantra* once, for the final time, and discarded into the flowing water His *yajñopavīta* (sacred thread) and tuft (by plucking out the few strands of hair that were left there after tonsuring on the previous day). By discarding His *yajñopavīta* and tuft, He renounced His entitlement to perform scriptural rites and to chant the *Gāyatrī-mantra*. He discarded His upper garment, lower garment and even His loincloth and stood stark naked. The



*Sandhya-mandapa*

*paramahaṃsa-saṃnyāsins* should discard not only any longing for this world but also that for the next higher world and even heaven. Accordingly, as prescribed, He repeated thrice “*om bhūh saṃnyastam mayā; om bhuvaḥ saṃnyastam mayā; om suvaḥ saṃnyastam mayā; om bhur-bhuvaḥ-suvaḥ saṃnyastam mayā* (I renounce this world. I renounce the higher intermediate world. I renounce heaven. I renounce, this world, the intermediate world and heaven).” This is termed ‘*praiścāraṇa* (the declaration of renunciation)’. He then recited the words that mark the vow of *ahimsā* of a monk: “*abhayaṃ sarva-bhūtebhyo mattaḥ svāhā* (I grant freedom from fear to all beings. Svāhā).” This is





termed '*abhaya-pradāna* (the granting of freedom from fear)'. With His '*praiṣoccāraṇa*' and '*abhaya-pradāna*', He became a *saṁnyāsin*. He then moved towards the north in the river. {According to texts on *saṁnyāsa*, the new *saṁnyāsin* may go away and, thereafter, live, without any possessions, as a wandering monk, centred on the Supreme Brahman. Alternatively, He could, in response to his *Guru*'s call, turn back and approach His *Guru*. Thereafter, He should serve and learn from His *Guru*, strive to realize the Truth taught and, after attaining full enlightenment, may go away with the consent of His *Guru*.}

The *Jagadguru* had been silently watching the scene. When His

disciple had taken a few steps, He called out, "*bho āyusman, ita ehi (O long-lived one, come here).*" {Ganapati Subrahmanya Avadhani told me, in 1977, that some astrologers had predicted that Sri Srinivasa Sastry would be short-lived and that, as the words of the sages cannot be in vain, the *Jagadguru* set to naught this possibility by addressing His disciple that day as "O long-lived one." It was in 1979 that His Holiness told me about how His *Guru* had called out to Him but He did not mention any reason for this.} On His *Guru* calling Him, His Holiness approached the senior *Jagadguru* with all humility. The senior *Jagadguru* gave Him an ochre *kaupīna* (loincloth), *kaṭisūtra* (thread tied around the waist to hold up the loincloth), lower garment and upper garment. His Holiness donned the ochre clothing. He applied a little *vibhūti*, sacred ash, on the crown of His head and three stripes of *vibhūti* on His forehead, neck, chest, stomach and arms.

A *saṁnyāsin* of the *paramahansa* order holds a single *daṇḍa*, staff, in his hand. This sacred *daṇḍa* is made of bamboo and must not have any hole passing through it. The length of the bamboo stick is regulated. When placed upon the big toe, it should either reach up to the tip of the nose or the level of the eyebrows or the head. In its upper part is tied the '*paraśu-mudrā*', which resembles

a small flag, and little below it is wound a thread with special set of knots. The senior *Jagadguru* gave His Holiness, who was clad in ochre, the *daṇḍa* and then a '*kamaṇḍalu* (water-pot)'.

Then the senior *Jagadguru*, followed by His Holiness, proceeded to the *samādhi* of the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff. There, in the room adjoining the sanctum sanctorum, the senior *Jagadguru* sat facing east and told His Holiness to sit near Him, facing north. He then chanted some *mantras* and placed His right palm on His disciple's head. This step by a *saṁnyāsin-guru* is said to characterise the new, spiritual birth of the *saṁnyāsin-disciple* and is the basis of the *saṁnyāsin-disciple* being deemed to one who is '*kara-kamala-sañjāta* (born of the lotus-like hand)' of the *saṁnyāsin-guru*. The senior *Jagadguru* then initiated His Holiness into the *mantra* 'om' and into the *mahāvākyas*. The *mahāvākyas* are profound sentences that occur in the scripture and make known the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme. Four of them, one belonging to each of the four *Vedas*, are particularly esteemed. The *Aitareya-upaniṣad* of the Ṛg-veda contains the *mahāvākya*, "*prajñānam brahma* (Consciousness is Brahman)." The *mahāvākya* of the *Yajur-veda* occurring in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* is, "*ahaṁ brahmāsmi* (I am Brahman)." The *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* of the *Sāma-veda* has the *mahāvākya*, "*tat-tvam-asi* (You are That)." The *mahāvākya* of the *Atharva-veda* occurring in the *Māṇḍūkya-upaniṣad* is, "*ayaṁ-ātmā brahma* (This Ātman is Brahman)." As the senior *Jagadguru* and His Holiness belonged to the *Yajur-veda*, He first initiated His disciple into the celebrated *mahāvākya* of that *Veda*. He also softly uttered in His Holiness's right ear the '*yoga-paṭṭa*', post-*saṁnyāsa* name, chosen by Him for His disciple.

Years ago, His Holiness specified (in a communication sent from the *Maṭha*) the following criteria bearing on the selection of a successor to the Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Sharada Peetham:

1. He should belong to the *Yajurveda*.
2. With the exception of Sureśvarācārya, all the *ācāryas* who have adorned this *pīṭha* have been celibates. Hence, the person chosen should be a celibate and not a householder.
3. He should come from a good family.

The senior *Jagadguru* named His successor-designate "Abhinava-Vidyātīrtha." It is apparent that He chose this name, which literally means 'The new Vidyātīrtha', in memory of Śrī Vidyātīrtha, the 10<sup>th</sup> pontiff of the Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham.



Śrī Vidyātīrtha

So important was Śrī Vidyātīrtha in the *Maṭha's Guru-paramāpara* (line of *Gurus*) that one of the honorifics of all the pontiffs of the Sringeri Math after Him is, "Worshipper of the lotus-feet of Vidyāśaṅkara (=Śrī Vidyātīrtha)" and the seal of the *Maṭha* bears, to this day, just his name. Śrī Bhāratī-tīrtha, the renowned author of several influential works on *Vedānta* was amongst His disciples and so was Śrī Vidyāraṇya, who was instrumental in the establishment of the Vijayanagar Empire and was a prolific and authoritative writer, as also Śrī Sāyaṇa, the author of the esteemed and traditionally-studied commentaries on all the

four *Vedas*. So deeply revered was Śrī Vidyātīrtha that obeisance has been paid to Him in the following manner: "Having saluted the Supreme *Ātman* present in the form of Śrī Vidyātīrtha..."; "May Vidyātīrtha, the great God, who is immutable, who knows the true import of the *Vedas*, *Smṛtis* and the *Itihāsas*, be pleased..."; "I salute the great God, Vidyātīrtha, whose breath is the *Veda*..."; "He who delights in *lambikā-yoga* and is none other than Lord Śiva..."; "He whose compassion for anyone He has accepted never wanes..." and, "Vidyātīrtha, the greatest of *samnyāsins*, excels the sun (that dispels the darkness outside during daytime) as He dispels the darkness (of ignorance) that is within people (in the mind) and outside them (as projected in the form of objects) and by day and by night." He was a consummate *vedāntin* and *yogin*.

This great sage spent His last years in *lambikā-yoga*, freed from hunger and thirst. He entered an underground chamber prepared for this purpose, having ordered that the entrance be sealed after His entry. He had had a stone sculpture made prior to His entering and this is seen even today in a small shrine in Simhagiri (near Sringeri) and is known as *Caturmūrti-vidyeśvara*. Three of its four faces contain images of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara. In the front portion is an image of Śrī Vidyātīrtha in a sitting posture. The top portion of the sculpture contains a *liṅga*. This sculpture signifies that the *Guru* is Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśvara and indeed, the Supreme. Śrī Vidyātīrtha indicated that after twelve years in the underground chamber, His body would become akin to that idol. He, however, warned that under no circumstances should the cave be opened before twelve years. Three years passed. When the next pontiff, Śrī Bhāratī-tīrtha, was on tour, curiosity got the better of some of the *Maṭha's* staff. They opened the cave to see how Śrī Vidyātīrtha was sustaining Himself within. To their chagrin, they found that the sage's body had completely disappeared. They saw there only a *liṅga* corresponding

to that on the upper portion of the model in Sīmhagiri. Subsequently, Śrī Bhāratī-tīrtha had a dream in which Śrī Vidyātīrtha said that on account of the indiscretion, His body would no more assume the shape specified earlier and instructed that the cave be again closed and the *liṅga* be installed above it. The Vidyāśankara Temple, an architectural wonder seen in Sringeri, is built above the place where He disappeared and its sanctum sanctorum houses that *liṅga*.



*Vidyāśankara Temple*

Being greatly percipient, the senior *Jagadguru* perhaps felt that His Holiness would go on to equal or excel Śrī Vidyātīrtha and so chose the name ‘Abhinava Vidyātīrtha’ or ‘the new Vidyātīrtha’. Be that as it may. After the senior *Jagadguru* had initiated His Holiness into the *praṇava* and the *mahāvākyas* and mentioned the *yoga-paṭṭa* in His disciple’s ear, they moved to the northern side of the river.

His Holiness crossed the river in a boat. Such crossing of a river by a new *saṁnyāsin* is symbolic of the crossing of the ocean of transmigratory existence. On the riverbank on the other side, He performed ‘*paryaṅka-śauca*’, a formalised cleansing of the body involving balls of mud and water. The senior *Jagadguru* and His Holiness then went to Goddess Śāradāmbā’s temple.

The texts on *saṁnyāsa* prescribe that the *Guru* should worship the disciple on the day of initiation, seeing the Divine in the latter and that thereafter, the disciple should worship the *Guru*. In the elevated southern corridor of the temple of Goddess Śāradā was kept, facing north, a venerated seat termed ‘*Vyākhyāna-simhāsana*’. The word ‘*vyākhyāna-simhāsana*’ literally means, ‘The throne of exposition’; it has been translated in the *Maṭha* as ‘The throne of transcendental wisdom’. Only the head of the *Śāradā-pīṭha* or his chosen successor-designate is permitted to occupy it. Going to it, the *Jagadguru* seated His Holiness on it and placed on His head a *śālagrāma* (a special stone that is regarded as symbolic of Lord Viṣṇu and as ever-sanctified by His presence). He then sat near His Holiness’s feet, facing east, and commenced His worship. He proceeded to perform *abhiṣeka* to the *śālagrāma* by pouring water on it with a conch. After performing *ārati*, the senior *Jagadguru* lay prostrate before His Holiness. His Holiness sat still and silent throughout this worship. After the senior *Jagadguru* finished the worship and removed the *śālagrāma* from His Holiness’s head, He occupied the *vyākhyāna-simhāsana*.

His Holiness sat near His *Guru's* feet, worshipped them and prostrated before them. After this worship was complete, the senior *Jagadguru* made public His Holiness's *yoga-paṭṭa*. With the conclusion of the functions at the *vyākhyāna-simhāsana*, the initiation of His Holiness into *saṁnyāsa* was formally complete.

Thereafter, on behalf of the Maharaja of Mysore, Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, his representative, Rama Rao, submitted, as a mark of respect, '*khillats* (in the form of special clothes)' to the senior *Jagadguru* and His Holiness and received blessings. Following this, other distinguished devotees paid their respects, one by one, by presenting their '*khillats*'. The Mysore Government was represented at the ceremony by the Revenue Commissioner. Srikanta Sastry had, since a few years, been expressing his wish to take retirement. The senior *Jagadguru* granted his wish that day and announced that he deserved rest after the strenuous work that he had put in for the *Maṭha* for decades. Sastry was presented with a diamond and gold necklace as a mark of appreciation. The senior *Jagadguru* nominated Rao Bahadur Nanjundaiah as the next Agent. The initiation ceremony attracted over 5000 disciples to Sringeri; elaborate arrangements had been made for the boarding and lodging.



That evening the *Guru* and disciple were to be taken through the streets of Sringeri in golden and silver palanquins respectively. In keeping with the tradition based on Harihara I and Bukka I, the first rulers of the Vijayanagar Empire, reverentially submitting royal insignia to their preceptor, Śrī Vidyāraṇya, They were attired in royal robes. The senior *Jagadguru* held out His index finger and His Holiness gently grasped it. He was so fond of His disciple that as He walked, He kept turning back to see His Holiness's face. He led the way till they reached the silver palanquin, with the golden palanquin still ahead of them. Here, He made a surprise

move. He withdrew His finger and sat down in the silver palanquin. This was strange, for He was supposed to occupy the golden palanquin and His Holiness, the silver palanquin. He asked His Holiness to move ahead and sit in the golden palanquin. This act of His resulted in confusion in the minds of those present nearby. Srikanta Sastry, Nanjundaiah as also some others approached the senior *Jagadguru* and requested Him to proceed to the golden palanquin as that was the tradition. He replied, "Let this be the tradition now. Have you forgotten the essence of the occurrences of today? If so, try to recall it and keep it fresh in your memories. Henceforth, all the honours pertaining to this *pīṭha* must be shown to Him and not to me. I desire to withdraw from worldly activities." The procession commenced, with His Holiness seated in the golden palanquin and going in the front and with the senior *Jagadguru* sitting in the silver one and following.

The scripture says that a disciple should follow his *Guru* and not go ahead of him. Further, the seat of the *Guru* is to be respected and not occupied by the disciple; the golden palanquin was the one that the senior *Jagadguru* had used for years. The senior *Jagadguru's* directive to His Holiness to move ahead and occupy the golden palanquin required His Holiness to break these rules. Further, the large number of people who had gathered in the streets of Sringeri to witness the procession could not be expected to know the reason for His Holiness occupying the golden palanquin and could have censured Him, at least mentally, for this apparent breach of propriety. Notwithstanding such considerations and though He was just thirteen and a half years of age at that time, He experienced no confusion whatsoever. He just did as He was told to do and occupied the golden palanquin. In 1983, I referred to this incident and asked Him, "What did Your Holiness feel on receiving such a difficult instruction from the senior *Jagadguru*?" "What was there to feel? 'My *Guru's* command is inviolable. As a disciple, it is my duty to carry it out.' That was my only thought then," He replied.

In a benedictory address delivered, in Kannada, in Bengaluru on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 1987, His Holiness described as follows what had transpired earlier that day: "At that time, He (the senior *Jagadguru*) told Srikanta Sastry, 'Hereafter, I will not sit in a palanquin and will not come for functions.' Sastry wondered, 'What is all this? What is to be done now?' My *Guru's* point was, 'I have chosen a disciple. Why should I come for any function?' Sastry said, 'This decision of Yours is unacceptable to *śiṣṭas* (decorous people). I know of Your extreme dispassion. However, in accordance with the worldly custom followed in the *Maṭha*, you must come in a palanquin, donning royal robes, along with Your disciple.' My *Guru* then said, 'Oh! So in accordance with the worldly custom, I have



to come. All right.' I learned this directly from my *Guru*. Srikanta Sastry also told me this. Such was His dispassion. He found pontifical functions such a burden that though at that time He had only given me *saṁnyāsa* and not yet trained me, He readily maintained, 'I have prepared one to handle the *Maṭha's* activities.'"

The following was narrated to me by Narasimhaya in 1984. The senior *Jagadguru* and His Holiness were proceeding that evening to the inner chamber in Goddess Śāradā's temple. The senior *Jagadguru* stopped at the threshold and said, "We are going to the Mother's chamber. She is no ordinary mother; She is transcendent and grants all wishes. Whatever you wish for, She will confer. Enter with full faith and tranquillity."

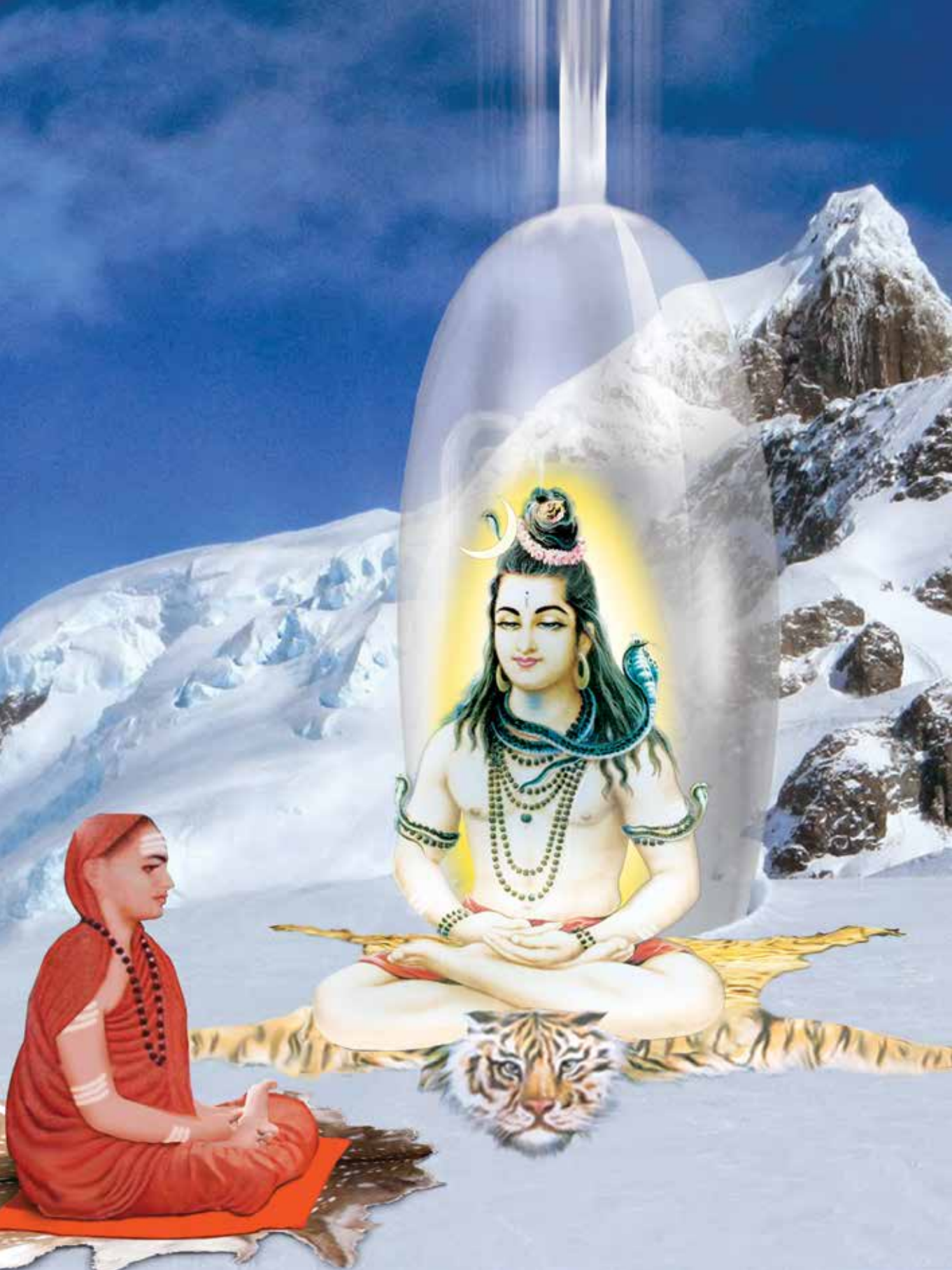
The day after *saṁnyāsa*, when His Holiness was walking in Narasimhavana, a cobra partially crossed His path, a little further down. It then moved towards Him and stopped just in front of Him. It raised its hood. Its upraised hood was directly above His feet. He stood still, admiring the snake and not in the least fearful of it. The snake, for its part, remained motionless. After some time, it lowered its hood and went away. Maharṣi Patañjali has aphorised in the *Yoga-sūtras*, "In the presence of one who is established in *ahimsā*, even inimical creatures abandon their hostility." Recalling this incident in 1974, His Holiness told me, "It was not as though the snake did not fear me because I believed in *ahimsā*. All I can say is that I derived great joy because I regarded it as a good sign."



So firm was His commitment to *saṁnyāsa* that He successfully observed its norms even in His dreams. In May 1975, in response to a question of mine, His Holiness told me, “Two days before taking *saṁnyāsa*, I had thought, ‘Dreams are not under my control. Mistakes committed in them do not result in sin. Nevertheless, my renunciation should be so sincere and firm that after being initiated into *saṁnyāsa*, I should not see myself in any dream as clad in white as I am now. I love chanting the *Gāyatrī-mantra*. Yet, as *Gāyatrī-japa* is disallowed for *paramahansa-saṁnyāsins*, I should not engage in it even in my dreams from the day after tomorrow.’ By God’s grace, till today, this has come to pass.”







## CHAPTER 4

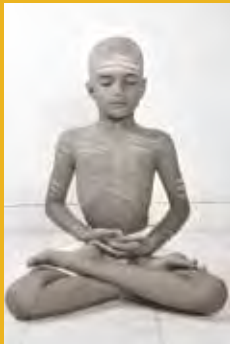
# Hatha-yoga Mastered

His Holiness was exhausted when He retired for the night on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1931, the day He was initiated into *samnyāsa*. As was usual, He fell asleep almost the moment He shut His eyes. That night He had a dream that He could vividly recall even decades later. In it, He found Himself on the amazingly scenic summit of a tall, ice-clad mountain. Though the mountain was icy, He felt no cold. In front of Him, at a distance of about twenty feet, He saw a huge, crystal *Śivaliṅga*. A torrent of water was falling on it in a column from above. He could not see the source of the water. He could hear the chanting in chorus of the *Vedic Rudra-praśna* but no chanter was visible. Suddenly, there was a great flash of light and from the *liṅga*, Lord Śiva manifested.

The Lord appeared as possessed of one face and two arms. He was extremely fair and radiant. His hair was matted and was tawny in hue. On beholding Śiva, His Holiness was so struck with awe that He stood unmoving. The Lord smilingly looked at His Holiness and raised His right hand in a gesture of blessing. His Holiness felt a great power entering into Him. Automatically, He began to chant 'om' mentally. Śiva gestured to Him to sit down. A seat of deer skin with an ochre cloth spread on it appeared where His Holiness was standing. He did *namaskāra* and, strictly in obedience to the Lord's wish, sat down even though Śiva was standing.

The Lord appeared as possessed of one face and two arms. He was extremely fair and radiant. His hair was matted and was tawny in hue. On beholding Śiva, His Holiness was so struck with awe that He stood unmoving. The Lord smilingly looked at His Holiness and raised His right hand in a gesture of blessing. His Holiness felt a great power entering into Him.

The Lord came near Him. A big tiger skin appeared on the ground and Śiva sat on it. He positioned His legs in the *padmāsana* and told His Holiness to do the same. While His Holiness knew even earlier how to adopt the *padmāsana*, Śiva’s approach was particularly graceful and His Holiness imitated it as best as He could. Then Śiva assumed the *siddhāsana*. In response to the Lord’s directive, His Holiness copied Him. With His hands, the Lord corrected His Holiness’s posture. The correction consisted in adjusting the left heel to be in better contact with the perineum.



*Padmāsana*



*Siddhāsana*



*Prāṇāyāma*

Seated in the *siddhāsana*, the Lord demonstrated how to perform *prāṇāyāma*. Exhaling the air within, He began to smoothly inhale through the left nostril. On the completion of *pūraka* (inhalation), He blocked both His nostrils with His fingers and lowered His chin to His chest to form the *jālandhara-bandha*. At the close of *kumbhaka* (retention), His Holiness saw Him deeply pull in and upward His abdomen to adopt the *uḍḍiyāna-bandha*. His body smoothly rose to about a foot above the ground. Raising His head, He exhaled smoothly through the right nostril. As He did so, His body gradually descended to the ground. He then repeated the process by inhaling through the right nostril and exhaling through the left nostril.

{The *Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā* defines the *jālandhara* and *uḍḍiyāna bandhas* thus: “Having contracted the throat, the chin should be held firmly at the chest. This is the bandha called *jālandhara*. It destroys old age and death. The abdomen above and below the navel should be drawn against the back. This is the *uḍḍiyāna-bandha*. It is the lion that kills the elephant of death.” About when these two *bandhas* should be practised during *prāṇāyāma*, it is said therein: “The bandha named *jālandhara* should be practised at the close of inhalation. The *uḍḍiyāna* should be practised towards the end of retention and the start of exhalation.” The commentary *Jyotsnā* explicates that the *uḍḍiyāna-*

*bandha* should be adopted before the retention of breath is concluded and exhalation is commenced. This description of these *bandhas* and the specification of when they are to be practised during *prāṇāyāma* tally with those contained in some minor *Upaniṣads*, such as the *Yogaśikhā-upaniṣad* and *Yogakuṇḍalī-upaniṣad*.}

By seeing the position of the Lord's fingers on His nostrils and by observing His midriff, His Holiness could judge when Śiva was engaged in *pūraka* (inhalation), *kumbhaka* (retention) and *recaka* (exhalation). As His Holiness had been spontaneously chanting the *praṇava* (*om*) in the dream, He discerned, with the number of *praṇavas* as basis, that the Lord's *kumbhaka* lasted four times His *pūraka*, while His *recaka* was twice His *pūraka*. He made this determination during the Lord's second round of *prāṇāyāma*. Having demonstrated the practice of *prāṇāyāma* in the *siddhāsana*, the Lord did it in the *padmāsana*.

“When breath is active, so is the mind. When breath is still, the mind is calm. As a result of *prāṇāyāma*, the mind becomes fit for fixed attention. Just as the impurities of ores are burnt by the furnace-blast, the faults of the organs are sined by the restraint of *prāṇa*.”

After this the Lord cited three passages, the combined import of which is, “When breath is active, so is the mind. When breath is still, the mind is calm. As a result of *prāṇāyāma*, the mind becomes fit for fixed attention. Just as the impurities of ores are burnt by the furnace-blast, the faults of the organs are sined by the restraint of *prāṇa*.” As His Holiness heard the Lord's words, the understanding that automatically dawned on Him was, “When the mind is agitated, breathing is not slow and rhythmic. On the other hand, the breathing is gentle and rhythmic when the mind is calm. This common observation suggests that there is a relationship between one's mental state and

breathing. Not only does one's mental state influence one's breathing, the converse is also true. Breathing is a gross manifestation of the activity of *prāṇa*. The correlation is fundamentally between the activities of the mind and *prāṇa*. By controlling *prāṇa*, the mind can be controlled. Through the control of breath, the practitioner of *prāṇāyāma* checks the activity of *prāṇa* and thereby that of the mind. *Prāṇāyāma* is a great purifier.” The Lord remained silent for the few moments during which all this spontaneously registered in His Holiness's mind.

Thereafter, Śiva demonstrated how *prāṇāyāma* can be done with breathing being suspended after exhalation rather than after inhalation. Finally, He showed

His Holiness the various kinds of restraint of *prāṇa* like *sūryabhedana*, *ujjāyī*, *sītkārī*, *śītalī* and *bhastrikā* in such a way that His Holiness could clearly understand and distinguish them.

{About *sūryabhedana*, *ujjāyī*, *sītkārī*, *śītalī* and *bhastrikā*, the *Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā* says:

*Now, sūryabhedana is spoken of. Seated in a firm āsana on a comfortable seat, the yogin should slowly draw in air from outside through the right nostril. He should retain it to the limit till he feels it right from the hair on his head to the tips of his toe nails. Then, he should slowly exhale the breath through the left nostril.*

*Now, ujjāyī is described. Having closed the mouth, one should draw in air slowly through both the nostrils such that it is felt to be sonorous from the throat to the heart. Then, the breath should be retained as in sūryabhedana and exhaled through the left nostril. This eradicates the defect of phlegm in the throat and intensifies the fire of digestion.*

*Now, sītkārī is presented. One should inhale through the mouth, making a hissing sound (by placing the tongue between the teeth). Exhalation should be only through the nostril. By practising thus, one becomes attractive like the god of love.*

*Now śītalī is spoken of. One should inhale air through the tongue (kept protruding and curled to resemble a bird's beak). Kumbhaka should be done as in sūryabhedana. Then, the wise one should slowly exhale the air through the two nostrils.*

*Now bhastrikā is spoken of. Having properly adopted the padmāsana and kept the body and the neck erect, the wise man should close his mouth and forcefully exhale through the nostril such that there is sound from the heart and throat to the skull. Then, he should rapidly inhale air up to the region of the heart. He should repeatedly exhale and inhale in this fashion.}*

When the Lord finished His demonstration of *bhastrikā*, His Holiness's dream ended and He awakened. The time was about two o'clock in the night. His mental chanting of the *Praṇava*, which had begun when the Lord blessed Him in the dream, persisted throughout the dream, inclusive of when He heard the passages voiced by the Lord. On waking up, He noticed that He spontaneously continued to recite in His mind the *Praṇava*.

Impelled by some force, He stood up, with His legs somewhat apart. He slightly bent forward and gripped His thighs with His hands. Then, He gradually exhaled and pulled His abdomen towards His back and upwards to adopt the *uḍḍiyāna-bandha* in a standing posture. Though He could not understand why He was doing all this in the middle of the

night, He felt amazed to see the extent to which a deep cavity had formed in the region of His abdomen. After some moments, He gradually exhaled and straightened up.

Directed further by the force, He sat down in the *siddhāsana* and started to perform *prāṇāyāma*. He inhaled for a shorter duration than had the Lord. This simplified the practice; however, it was not the result of any decision of His. At the end of *pūraka*, He adopted not only the *jālandhara-bandha* but also the *mūla-bandha*, characterised by the contraction of the anus. He had not identified the Lord's performance of the *mūla-bandha* in His dream and was unfamiliar with it.

{The *Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā* describes the *mūla-bandha* thus: "Pressing the perineum with the heel, one should contract the anus and draw up *apāna*. This is called *mūla-bandha*."}

His Holiness's having practised the *uḍḍiyāna-bandha* in a standing posture facilitated His doing it during *prāṇāyāma*. Though His *pūraka* was shorter than the Lord's, as in Śiva's case, His *kumbhaka* lasted four times the *pūraka* and *recaka* two times the *pūraka*. Having performed two *prāṇāyāmas* in the *siddhāsana*, He did the same in the *padmāsana*. Throughout, there was no planning on His part and the mental chanting of the *praṇava* proceeded without any interruption. After doing *prāṇāyāma* in the *padmāsana*, He lay down and fell asleep. He awoke very fresh, well before sunrise. The dream was crystal clear in His mind. After spending some minutes practising the different kinds of restraint of *prāṇa*, such as *śitalī*, His Holiness went for His ablutions. No one knew about His having done *prāṇāyāma* at night or before daybreak.



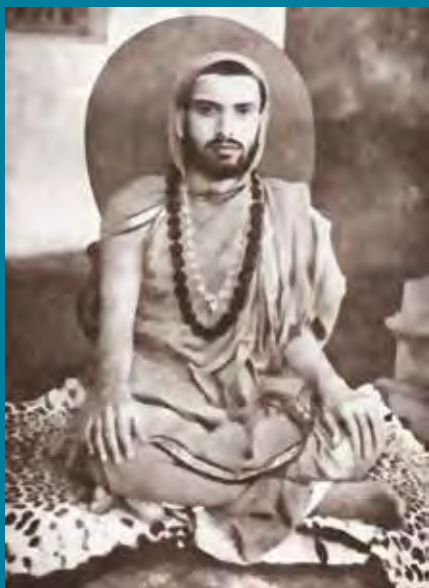
His Holiness performing *prāṇāyāma* during *pūjā*

{Having most kindly blessed me with all the aforesaid details in May 1975 at Sringeri, His Holiness said, “I had no words to express my gratitude to Bhagavān for having extraordinarily graced me in spite of my being so unworthy and that too on the very day of my new life. I did not have an iota of doubt that the Lord would ever take care of

and guide me. All I needed to do was not give room to egoism.” I asked Him, “Did the mental chanting of the *Praṇava* persist spontaneously after Your Holiness woke up?” He responded, “No. The Lord had, by His blessing, initiated the chanting and given me an understanding of how natural, uninterrupted and delightful it can be. I felt that the Lord intended that I should practise such chanting to the extent of it becoming effortless. Accordingly, I began to engage voluntarily in mental *Praṇava-japa* within a minute of my awakening. By Bhagavān’s grace, within a year, such *japa* became as effortless and uninterrupted as in the special dream. It continued even in dreams and while I conversed.”}

On that and the next several days, the senior *Jagadguru* personally familiarised His Holiness with the performance of *āhnika* and other duties. He also initiated His Holiness into *mantras* such as the *Śrīvidyā*. His Holiness regarded it as inappropriate to take any more of His *Guru’s* time by reporting His experiences to Him and so abstained from doing so till later.

“I had no words to express my gratitude to Bhagavān for having extraordinarily graced me in spite of my being so unworthy and that too on the very day of my new life. I did not have an iota of doubt that the Lord would ever take care of and guide me. All I needed to do was not give room to egoism.”



*His Holiness performing āhnika*

On the night of 23<sup>rd</sup> May, His Holiness had a dream in which the Lord continued His teaching. Śiva first gave a demonstration of *kevala-kumbhaka*. His breathing stopped all of a sudden and He remained motionless for some time, with His eyes closed. His Holiness began to experience tremendous peace. His breathing too stopped without any reference to the preceding state of inhalation or exhalation. Gradually, the Lord started to breathe again and opened His eyes. As Śiva did so, His Holiness realised that this *kumbhaka* is superior to and is the fruit of the practice of restraint that considers *pūraka* and *recaka*.

{Mahaṛṣi Patañjali has described *kevala-kumbhaka* thus in his *Yogasūtrās*: “The fourth (*kevala-kumbhaka*) is that which follows when the spheres of the external and internal are transcended.” After detailing the practice of *prāṇāyāma* in which *kumbhaka* and *recaka* are respectively four and two times the *pūraka*, the *Yogatattva-upaniṣad* presents and eulogises *kevala-kumbhaka* thus: “Thereafter, he acquires the capacity to restrain his breath for as long as he wishes. From such stoppage of breath, there accrues the attainment of *kevala-kumbhaka*. On his attaining *kevala-kumbhaka*, which is not associated with inhalation and exhalation, nothing in the three worlds is difficult for him to achieve.”}

During that dream and the ones on the succeeding five nights, the Lord demonstrated numerous *yogāsanas* and *kriyās* such as *navli*. No human adept could have performed even a quarter of the number of *āsanas* in the same time.

During that dream and the ones on the succeeding five nights, the Lord demonstrated numerous *yogāsanas* and *kriyās* such as *navli*. There was no repetition. He performed the *āsanas* very swiftly but with unmatched grace and with each step unmistakably clear. No human adept could

have performed even a quarter of the number of *āsanas* in the same time. He did not name any *āsana*. Also, He did not direct His Holiness to do any *āsana* before passing on to the next. However, whenever He performed one, His Holiness automatically understood whether this was just for His information or for His practice later. Such was the impact of and imprint created by the Lord’s teaching that even decades later His Holiness was in a position to vividly recall the Lord’s demonstration of any *āsana* that He wished to see.

On the seventh night, that is, on the night of 28<sup>th</sup> May, towards the close of His teaching in His Holiness’s dream, the Lord threw light on the *khecarī-mudrā*. Sitting in the *padmāsana*, He stretched out His tongue. In moments, the membrane connecting it with the lower part of the mouth began to give way gradually as if it were being cut



with a knife. Simultaneously, the tongue became thinner and longer. Soon, it resembled that of a dog. The Lord turned it upwards. It reached up to the head. His Holiness automatically understood that the normal procedure involved cutting the fraenum, little by little, over a long period and elongating the tongue by shaking and pulling it.

Having transformed His tongue into a thin long one, Śiva directed His gaze to between the brows. He then turned His tongue backwards and inserted it into the cavity at the back of the throat that leads to the nose. Thereafter, the Lord remained motionless and with no perceptible signs of breathing. At that time, His Holiness's breathing too stopped. He felt something cool and very pleasant to taste descend into the back of His mouth. It greatly invigorated Him. The understanding dawned that this fluid obviates hunger, thirst, weakness and dullness. As the Lord lowered His tongue, His Holiness's experience ended. The next moment, Śiva's tongue became normal.

{The *khecarī-mudrā* has been described and eulogised in the *Upaniṣads* such as the *Yogakuṇḍalī* and in *haṭha-yoga* texts. The *Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā* says: "The tongue should be gradually lengthened by cutting, shaking and stretching till it reaches the middle of the eyebrows. Then *khecarī* is successfully accomplished. Turning back the tongue, it should be put into the path of the three *nādīs* (that is, into the cavity in the roof of the palate). This is the *khecarī-mudrā* that is also known as *vyoma-cakra*. He who knows the *khecarī-mudrā* is free from disease, death, dullness, sleep, hunger, thirst and clouding of the mind."}

Śiva taught His Holiness *nāda-anusandhāna*. With His fingers, He closed His nose, mouth and ears. Then He concentrated on the ocean-like sound heard in the right ear. His Holiness comprehended that the Lord was doing so because, without any effort, His Holiness's attention locked on to such a sound in His own right ear.

Finally, Śiva taught His Holiness *nāda-anusandhāna* (contemplation on the internal sound). With His fingers, He closed His nose, mouth and ears. Then He concentrated on the ocean-like sound heard in the right ear. His Holiness comprehended that the Lord was doing so because, without any effort, His Holiness's attention locked on to such a sound in His own right ear. His Holiness also got the feeling that with practice one can focus on this sound even without closing the ears. Soon, His Holiness heard different sounds in succession. Finally, all sounds ceased and He was overwhelmed with bliss. The next moment, His Holiness's experience ended. The Lord took His hands away from His face.

The Lord then raised His right hand in a gesture of blessing and got up. His Holiness promptly prostrated before Him, placing His head on Śiva's lotus feet. As His Holiness rose, the Lord walked towards the crystal *liṅga* from which He had manifested. A flash of light preceded His disappearance into that *liṅga*. At this point, His Holiness's dream ended. The Lord had not left His seat at the close of the preceding six extraordinary dreams. Hence, when His Holiness woke up at His usual time, He knew that this was the last of this series of dreams.



In the course of the seven dreams, the Lord had demonstrated hundreds of *asanas*. These included all those described in the authoritative works such as *Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā* and numerous others not referred to in any text. His Holiness did not think even an expert with a highly supple body would be able to do more than a few of the many *āsanas* of the latter kind. The Lord demonstrated the various *kriyas* but not *vasti*; also, He did not take up the *vajrolī-mudra*.

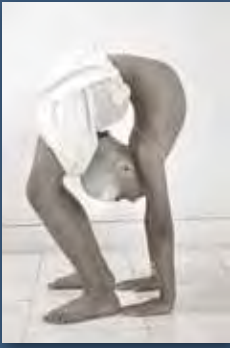
{The six *kriyās* are *dhauti*, *vasti*, *neti*, *trāṭaka*, *navli* and *kapālabhāti*. These serve to purify the body. The *Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā* describes their practice thus: "One should slowly swallow, as taught by the Guru, a wet cloth that has the width of four fingers and is fifteen spans long. One should then draw out the cloth. This is the *dhauti-kriyā*. One should sit in *utkaṭāsana* in water reaching up to one's navel with a tube inserted into the anus. Then, one should contract the anus (draw in water and expel it). Such washing is the *vasti-kriyā*. One should insert into a nostril, a smooth thread that is a span (or more) long and draw it out through the mouth.



*Pārśva-koṅāsana*



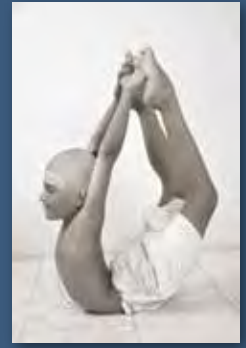
*Pūrṇa-bhujaṅgāsana*



*Cakrāsana*



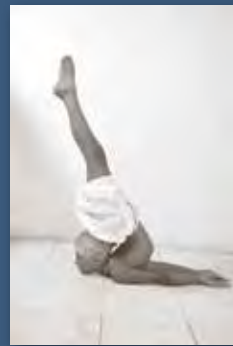
*Dhanurāsana*



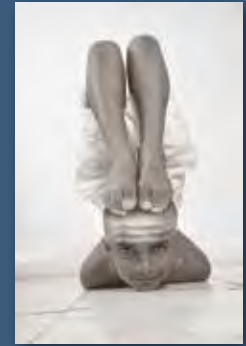
*Pādāṅguṣṭha-dhanurāsana*



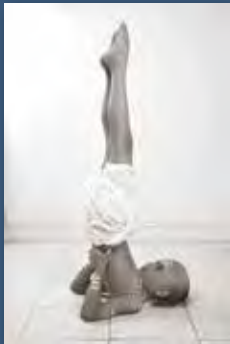
*Paścimottānāsana*



*Pūrṇa-śalabhāsana*



*Śalabha-śīrṣāsana*



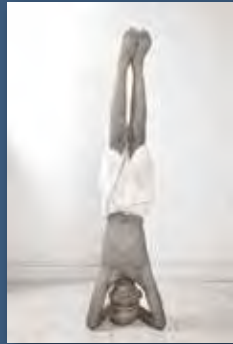
*Sarvāṅgāsana*



*Halāsana*



*Matsyāsana*



*Śīrṣāsana*

“I began to devote half an hour exclusively for āsanās and kriyās and half an hour for prāṅgyāma. I performed some āsanās, such as śīrṣāsana, sarvāṅgāsana, matsyāsana, paścimottānāsana and ardha-matsyendrāsana, and kriyās such as nauli, on all days.”

- His Holiness



*Īrdhva-kukkuṭāsana*



*Tittibhāsana*



*Upaviṣṭa-koṅāsana*



*Gaṅḍa-bheruṅḍāsana*



*Piñca-kokila-vriścikāsana*



*Padma-vriścikāsana*



*Eka-pāda-vāmadeva-vriścikāsana*

“To the extent that I could accommodate within the available time, I did other āsanās from my repertoire.”

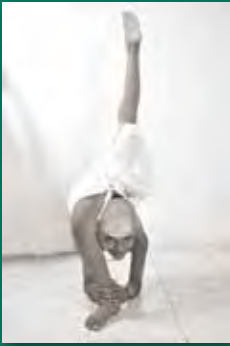
- His Holiness



*Dvipāda-vāmadeva-śalabhāsana*



*Dvipāda-vāmadeva-śalabhāsana*



*Eka-pāda-viparīta-daṇḍāsana*



*Omkārasana*



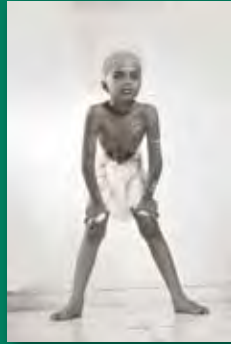
*Gheraṇḍāsana*



*Ardha-mat-syendrāsana*



*Mukhotthānāsana*



*Nauli-kriya*



*Śavāsana*

*The siddhas call this neti. One should gaze steadily with a focused mind at a minute object till tears fall. Teachers regard this to be trāṭaka. With shoulders lowered, one should rotate the abdomen to the left and right with the speed of a swift eddy. Siddhas reveal this to be nauli. One should draw in and push out air rapidly like the bellows of a blacksmith. This is called kapālabhāti. It destroys phlegmatic defects.” As described in the Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā, the practice of the vajrolī-mudra begins with gradually inserting a tube into the penis. Having cleared the passage by blowing, one learns to draw water through it. An aim is to be able to draw ejaculated semen back into the penis.}*

After the dreams, while His Holiness was able to perform the simple āsanās such as śīrṣāsana in the first attempt, the tougher ones such as gheraṇḍāsana and mukhotthānāsana needed effort and practice.

As the Lord did not demonstrate vasti, His Holiness never practised it. However, having once witnessed its performance, He knew how to do it. He mastered the other kriyās easily and practised dhauti, neti and nauli regularly.

About His mastering *dhauti*, His Holiness told me in 1973, “I took a long thin piece of muslin cloth, and swallowed some of it. Then, I gently pulled it out. I did this two or three times. The next day, I swallowed a much greater length. By the fourth day, I could comfortably put as much of the cloth as I wanted into the throat and stomach and slowly pull it out. I found that this *kriyā* helped to clear any phlegm in the throat.”

Describing His practice of *neti*, He said, on the same occasion, “I used my index finger to push a soft cloth or thread into a nostril as far as I could. Closing the other nostril, I inhaled in jerks and exhaled through the mouth. By the suction and the guiding force from outside, the thread went well into the nostril and came down to the back of the mouth. In the initial stages of practice, I found the thread going slightly into the wind pipe or gullet and producing a funny sensation. However, I soon learnt the remedy. When the inserted material appeared at the back of my throat, I cleared my throat with a sound. At the same time, I inserted my index finger and thumb into the throat and, grasping the thread, pulled it to make it protrude from the mouth. The pulling should be done slowly to avoid damage to the nasal tissues. Thereafter, I oscillated the cloth or thread by pulling and releasing its opposite ends. This too should be done slowly. After this, I pulled out the thread through the nostril and repeated the whole process through the other nostril. I found this *kriyā* to be quite useful in clearing the phlegm blocking the nostrils.”

After speaking of *neti*, His Holiness demonstrated how He did *nauli*. He stood with His legs separated and His palms pressed against His thighs. Having fully expelled air from the lungs, He deeply pulled in His abdomen. He then controlled His muscles to make the abdominal region resemble a cavity with a vertical tube in the middle. He then made the tube swing from side to side and execute a churning motion. Finally, He restored His abdomen to its normal form and said, “This used to be my favourite *kriyā*.”

In May 1975, subsequent to hearing His Holiness’s account of the seven dreams, I asked Him, “How many of the *āsanas* demonstrated by Śiva but not mentioned in books did Your Holiness master?” He said, “Six. Close the door. I will show you one of them and you can see how tough it is.”

This conversation took place in the hall extending from east to west in the upper storey of Sacchidananda Vilas. As directed, I shut the door on the eastern side that led to the stairs. By the time I returned to his Holiness, He had removed His upper garment and was spreading His *dhoti* on the ground to serve as a mat. He was attired in just an ochre loin cloth. I watched thoroughly spellbound as, step by step, His Holiness assumed an

extremely complex, inverted pose. Such was the tight knot into which He tied Himself that it appeared that His body was made of highly elastic rubber and comprised no bones. Having held the final pose for about a minute, He gradually unwound Himself and put on His lower and upper garments.

He then told me, “The first two times that I tried to do this, I failed. The third time I succeeded only partially. On my next attempt, I somehow managed to adopt the final position but became stuck in it. I found that I was just unable to release the knot that bound my hands and legs. I called to mind Bhagavān’s performance of this *āsana*. In imitation of what He had done, I emptied my lungs and used my middle fingers to release myself a little. The rest was manageable. From the fifth try onwards, I had no difficulty.”

I asked His Holiness, “When teaching me *āsanas*, Your Holiness had told me, ‘When I was young, I asked Kāśī-svāmin (Śrī Išvarānanda Sarasvatī, a very dispassionate *samnyāsin* and an adept at performing *āsanas* who had learnt the *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya* from senior *Jagadguru* and was close to the senior *Jagadguru* and His Holiness) if I could watch him perform *āsanas* in order to do them myself. In those days, *bairāgīs* (dispassionate, wandering mendicants) used to come to Sringeri, stay for a time and go away. I saw them practising various *āsanas*. My curiosity was aroused and I carefully noted how they performed them. As my body was supple, I did not have difficulty in mastering the *āsanas* and *kriyās* that I had observed them do. Further, I enjoyed doing them and so the learning process was expedited. I used to get clarifications whenever necessary to ascertain that what I was doing was right.’ It is now clear to me that Bhagavān had taught Your Holiness. I am, however, unclear as to how to reconcile this understanding with Your Holiness’s earlier statement.”

His Holiness replied, “I have not done any *āsana* or *kriyā* that Śiva had not shown me in the dreams. However, I practised the *āsanas* and *kriyās* only after learning, as it were, a number of them from Kāśī-svāmin and the *bairāgīs*. Further, I did come to know the names of *āsanas* from Kāśī-svāmin and the *bairāgīs* and, later, from books.”

{When interviewed in the 1980s, Kāśī-svāmin said that when young, His Holiness had approached him and watched him perform the *uḍḍiyāna-bandha* and *āsanas*, such

“I have not done any  
*āsana* or *kriyā* that Śiva  
had not shown Me in the  
dreams.”

- His Holiness

as *gorakṣa*. His Holiness did not do the *āsanas* in his presence. Regarding the *kriyās* such as *dhauti*, Kāśī-svāmin stated that he did not practise them. Presumably, it was only the *bairāgīs* who did the *kriyās* that His Holiness referred to.}

I then queried, “What was the reason for Your Holiness postponing doing *āsanas* and *kriyās* till having seemingly learnt many of them from humans?” His Holiness said, “I felt that this is what God wanted me to do. Because of this, there was no scope for the *Math* staff and others to wonder how I was abruptly able to practise *haṭha-yoga* without having been taught. As for *prāṇāyāma* and the *bandhas*, I initially did them secretly at about three in the night and then went back to sleep. Subsequently, for some time, I did them privately during my *āhnikā*. It is only after having supposedly learnt them from others that I practised them without being secretive. As for *nāda-anusandhāna*, I did it once a week along with my *āhnikā*. I believe, I only did as God intended me to when I started doing *prāṇāyāma* with the *bandhas* after the first dream and *nāda-anusandhāna* after the seventh dream.”

About the number of *āsanas* He used to perform every day and the number of cycles of *prāṇāyāma* with the *bandhas*, His Holiness said, “The number of *āsanas* varied. Within a few years after *saṁnyāsa*, I began to devote half an hour exclusively for *āsanas* and *kriyās* and half an hour for *prāṇāyāma*. I performed some *āsanas*, such as *śīrṣāsana*, *sarvāṅgāsana*, *matsyāsana*, *paścimottānāsana* and *ardha-matsyendrāsana*, and *kriyās* such as *nauli*, on all days. Apart from these, to the extent that I could accommodate within the available time, I did other *āsanas* from my repertoire. I ended with five minutes of *śavāsana*. I required a week to complete one cycle of all the *āsanas* that I practised. After *śavāsana*, I took up *prāṇāyāma* with the three *bandhas*. I did 16 cycles with *pūraka*, *kumbhaka* and *recaka* lasting for 16, 64 and 32 seconds respectively or eight cycles with the timings being 32, 128 and 64 seconds. Over the course of every week, I also briefly accommodated the forms of restraint of *prāṇa* such as *śītalī*. After *prāṇāyāma*, I spent about 15 minutes on stamina and strength building exercises before going for my morning bath.”

In response to my asking Him whether He had straightaway started doing *prāṇāyāma* with the retention lasting for over two minutes, His Holiness stated, “No. Over the course of two weeks, I raised the retention time from about a minute to this. Within a month of practice, I could retain my breath comfortably for five minutes. However, the idea of performing *prāṇāyāma* regularly with so long a *kumbhaka* did not appeal to me for, then, I could not have done even four cycles within my scheduled half an hour. Though it is many years since I casually retained my breath for five minutes, I shall demonstrate this to you now.”



A thought crossed my mind whether during such prolonged retention He would slow down His metabolism and lower His pulse rate. Immediately, He laughed and said, “You can note my pulse now and in the final minute.” I measured His pulse rate and found it to be 67 beats per minute. Then, His Holiness fully emptied His lungs, pressed His nostrils shut and performed the *jālandhara-bandha*. His eyes were open and there was a light smile on His face. At the end of the fourth minute, I began counting His pulse and did so till the end of the fifth minute. His pulse rate was just 29 beats per minute. As I withdrew my hand from His Holiness’s wrist, which He had held out to facilitate my measurement, He released the pressure on His nostrils and smoothly took a couple of deep breaths.

{His Holiness has given the following clarification about guidance and directives received in dreams:

It is certain that all that is seen in a dream is false. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* states, “*There are no chariots, horses or paths there.*” In the *Brahmasūtras*, it is said, “*But the dream creation is a mere illusion on account of its nature of not being manifest with the totality of the attributes (found in the waking state, such as adequate space, time and circumstances and not being nullified).*” Nevertheless, what is encountered in a dream may, uncommonly, form a basis for spiritual practice. In the *Yogaśūtras*, it is said: “*Alternatively, the mind reaches the state of steadiness by having as its object of focus a perception had in dream or sleep.*” Explaining this, Vācaspati has said (in his gloss *Tattvavaiśārādī*) that a person may see in a dream an exquisite, well-decorated image of Śiva in a forest. After waking up, the person concerned can recall that image and meditate upon it.



Rarely, a person may have a dream in which he receives initiation from God or the *Guru* into a *mantra*. In the *Mahābhārata*, there is an account of a dream in which Arjuna received instructions from Śiva. Having vowed to slay Jayadratha by sunset the next day, Arjuna was worried about how he could achieve success. When he fell asleep, he had a dream in which Kṛṣṇa came to him and led him on an aerial journey to the summit of the Kailāsa Mountain. There, they beheld Śiva and eulogised Him. In response to Arjuna’s prayer, the Lord directed them to fetch His bow, *pināka*,

and His *pāśupata-āstra* from a celestial lake. When they did so, a *brahmacārin* emerged from Śiva's side and taught Arjuna how to discharge the *pāśupata* arrow. The Lord also taught Arjuna the *mantras* for invoking the weapon. Arjuna's memory of the instructions about the use of the *pāśupata* that he had received much earlier from Śiva was thereby restored. On waking up, he was in a position to invoke with *mantras* and employ the irresistible *pāśupata*, if needed.

A dream in which one sees the *Guru* or God is good and can be viewed as a sign of divine grace. However, one ought not to indiscriminately assume that whatever instruction one has received in the dream is indeed the directive of the *Guru* or God and blindly carry it out. For instance, it would be a grave error for one to harm another because of having dreamt of being commanded to do so. One should not implement what is contrary to one's *dharma* nor give weight to a teaching that is discordant with the actual position of the scriptures and one's *Sadguru*.

Rare are the dreams in which one is actually blessed with the instructions of God or the *Sadguru*. A sceptic who hears of a dream of this kind would, perhaps, dismiss it as a fabrication of the narrator or seek to explain it in some other way such as that the apparently new information acquired is actually based on knowledge unwittingly gained earlier. The extraordinary nature of such dreams and the appropriateness and worth of the guidance received through them are, however, generally unmistakable to the one who has them.}



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## CHAPTER 5

# Everything unto God

[The following conversation took place in October 1987 at the Sringeri Shankara Math, Bengaluru. When I went to His Holiness during His morning āhnikā to offer my namaskāras, I saw Him wiping tears of joy.]

**His Holiness:** I just completed the *japa* of the *Narasimha-mantra*. Suddenly, I remembered what happened when my *Guru* graced me with initiation into the *Narasimha-mantra* subsequent to His giving me *saṁnyāsa*. The memory brought tears of joy to my eyes. During the initiation, when my *Guru* was about to start voicing the *dhyāna-śloka*, I found myself spontaneously visualising Narasimha in my heart. As I heard and repeated the *dhyāna-śloka*, I realised with surprise and happiness that the form of Narasimha described therein and the one I was seeing matched.



*Lakṣmī-nṛsimha*

{The import of *dhyāna-śloka* concerned is: "I worship Lakṣmī-nṛsimha whose essential nature is absolute existence, consciousness and bliss, who is immaculate, who is established in yoga, whose countenance is very pleasing, who is glorious with numerous ornaments, who has three eyes, who bears (in His four hands) the (*sudarśana*) cakra, the *pināka* (bow) and the signs of granting fearlessness and boons, who is lustrous like

*the sun, who is fair in complexion like the moon, who has (the set of hoods of) the king of snakes (Śeṣa) serving as an umbrella over Him and who dwells in the middle of the ocean of milk.”*

In 1976, in the course of His evening walk, His Holiness casually chanted this verse and then told me, “God, who is formless and of the nature of absolute existence, consciousness and bliss, appears as Śiva, Viṣṇu, Ambā (Divine Mother) and so on for the sake of His devotees. The form of Narasimha described in this *dhyāna-śloka* is itself suggestive of the actual non-difference between Śiva and Viṣṇu. That Narasimha is an incarnation of Viṣṇu is well known. Here, He is spoken of as being with Lakṣmī, the consort of Viṣṇu, as bearing the *cakra*, the weapon of Viṣṇu, and as having the hoods of Śeṣa as His umbrella, like Viṣṇu. Further, He is said to be in the middle of the ocean of milk. This too fits Viṣṇu. However, Narasimha is presented here, like Śiva, as three-eyed. He bears the *pināka*, the bow of Śiva. Further, like Śiva, and unlike Viṣṇu, Narasimha is described as very fair in complexion.”}

**His Holiness:** The words relating to the ‘*pañcopacāra-pūjā* (worship with five offerings, done after saying the *dhyāna-śloka*)’ took only some seconds for my *Guru* to utter and

for me to repeat. Yet, I experienced no shortage of time in elaborately worshipping the Lord mentally in my heart with offerings of sandal paste, flowers, incense, lamp, food and so on. I can attribute only to divine grace the irresistible urge that led me to begin the worship. During *naivedya*, I served the Lord a variety of dishes in a jewel-studded golden plate, put a little food into His mouth, waited for Him to masticate and swallow and only thereafter offered another morsel. It was as if the several seconds miraculously became extended to over half an hour from my perspective. Even while performing the worship with concentration and dedication, I was able to see my *Guru* and repeat His words without delay.



{The '*pañcopacāra-pūjā* (worship with five offerings)' is performed as follows:

Simultaneously touching the middle joint of the little finger with the tip of the thumb in both the hands and saying words to the effect, "*lam* (the *bīja*, seed-syllable, of *pṛthvī*, earth)! I present sandal paste to Him who is the essence of *pṛthvī*, earth." Touching the upper joint of the thumb with the tip of the index finger and saying words to the effect: "*ham* (the seed-syllable of space)! I offer flowers to Him who is the essence of space." Touching the middle joint of the index finger with the tip of the thumb and saying words to the effect, "*yam* (the seed-syllable of air)! I submit the fragrance of incense to Him who is the essence of air." Touching the middle joint of the middle finger with the tip of the thumb and saying words to the effect, "*ram* (the seed-syllable of fire)! I show a lamp to Him who is the essence of fire." Touching the middle joint of the ring finger with the tip of the thumb and saying words to the effect, "*vam* (the seed-syllable of water)! I serve an offering of divine food to Him who is the essence of ambrosia." Touching the tips of the fingers of a hand with the tips of the corresponding fingers of the other hand and saying words to the effect, "*sam* (the seed-syllable of *jagat*, the world)! I offer worship with all articles of homage to Him, who is the essence of all."}

**His Holiness:** When my *Guru* started to utter the *Narasimha-mantra* (after the *pañcopacāra-pūjā*), He placed His right palm on my head. He did not do this when He initiated me into other *mantras* such as the *Medhā-dakṣiṇāmūrti* and *Śrīvidyā*.

{The overall meaning of *mantra-rāja* of *Narasimha* is, "*I salute Nṛsimha, the fierce, heroic, great one who pervades all, the lustrous one with faces everywhere, the fearsome one, the auspicious one and the destroyer of death.*"

His Holiness told me, in 1976, "Every word of this *mantra* is deeply significant. I shall illustrate this by briefly considering three of the words. A term describing the Lord in the *mantra* is '*jvalantam*'. That *Narasimha* is lustrous is a simple meaning. Consciousness is the light of lights; but for it, no luminary like the sun or a lamp would be visible. *Narasimha* ever shines as the light of consciousness. This is a deeper meaning. Another term of the *mantra* is '*sarvatomukham*'. This literally means that He has faces on all sides. The *Upaniṣads* teach that though devoid of all organs, the Supreme grasps everything everywhere. In this sense, *Narasimha* is '*sarvatomukhaḥ*'. The *mantra* speaks of the Lord as '*bhīṣaṇam*'. The word literally means, 'fearsome'. The *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* conveys that when *Narasimha* slew *Hiraṇyakaśipu* and continued to be fierce, the gods and even *Lakṣmī* feared Him. The term fits the Lord in another way too. The Supreme ordains and enforces order in the universe. The laws of Nature are His. It is said, 'Out of

fear of Him, the wind blows. Out of fear of Him, the sun rises.’ In this sense, Narasimha is ‘bhīṣaṇaḥ’. The *Nṛsimha-pūrvatāpanīya* and *Nṛsimha-uttaratāpanīya upaniṣads* deal extensively with this *mantra*.”}

**His Holiness:** The moment my *Guru* chanted the *mantra* once and, following Him, I too did so, an amazing event occurred. He abruptly withdrew His hand from my head, joined His palms and gazed at me silently with deep reverence. My breathing stopped. The form of Lakṣmī-nṛsimha that I was seeing within me vanished. However, I began to experience the Lord as my *Antaryāmin* (Inner Controller), refuge and intimate well-wisher as clearly as one can see a fruit in one’s open palm. I ceased to regard the body, *prāṇa*, organs, mind and intellect as mine; everything was just His. I do not know how long I remained thus, motionless and immersed in bliss. All along, I did see my *Guru* keeping His palms joined and looking in my direction.



*Śrī Candraśekhara Bhārati Mahāsvāmin*

The form of Narasimha then reappeared and my breathing resumed. My mental state reverted to what it had been during my chanting of the *mantra* but with the difference that I now felt extremely intimate with Narasimha. At the same time, my *Guru* lowered His hands. He then recited the *mantra* two more times, giving me time to repeat His words.

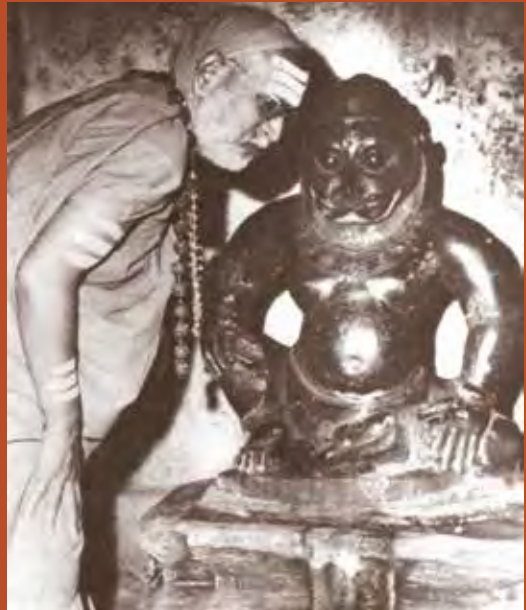
After completing the initiation, my *Guru* said, “After you had said the *mantra* once, I saw just Narasimha in your place. That is why I jerked back my hand from your head and offered my salutation to Him. When His form disappeared and you reappeared, I proceeded with the initiation. Dedicate everything to Him.” All this came to my mind a short while ago.

{His Holiness stopped speaking and continued with His *āhnikā*. I prostrated before Him three times. As I did not wish to disturb Him and take His time further, I did not ask Him about the short-term and long-term impacts of the experiences. As I was starting to leave, He smiled and Himself provided the answer.}

**His Holiness:** Throughout that day, offering everything to Narasimha was extremely easy. For instance, when I had my afternoon bath, I automatically felt that I was performing *abhiṣeka* to Narasimha who abided within me. During my *bhikṣā* (meal), I promptly visualised Him as accepting from within and eating whatever I put into my mouth. When I read a book after *bhikṣā*, He appeared to be listening from inside my heart as if I were reading to Him. As I walked, it spontaneously seemed that I was taking Him, who was within me, for a stroll. The next day onwards, however, I needed to consciously practise dedicating all my activities and their fruits to Him. I also started spending some time every day just for offering Him mental worship. The experiences of the day of initiation greatly facilitated both these and served as models. In a few months, *karma-yoga* became natural. From the time of initiation, Narasimha became very dear to me. As I have told you on several occasions, He takes care of me like a child, guides me, provides clarifications and sets right all the foolish things I say and do.



Conversing with Narasimha



Listening to Narasimha







## CHAPTER 6

# Contemplating the Self

*[The following is my rendering into English of a portion of His Holiness's benedictory address delivered in Kannada, at the Sringeri Shankara Math, Bengaluru, on September 5, 1987. This discourse was the last of a series of six by His Holiness on His Guru. The occasion was a "Smarana-Saptaha (A week of Recollection)" organised at the Math in which various speakers talked about H.H. Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī.]*

"When staying in Narasimhavana with my *Guru*, I used to go every evening to behold Śāradāmbā and remain there for up to an hour.

"On my return, He once asked me, 'You have crossed the river and come. What thought arose in your mind?'

" 'What thought?' I wondered and replied, 'I perceived various objects.'

"(He:) What was new?

(I:) Nothing. I saw what was in front of me.

(He:) Must you see whatever is in front of your eyes?

(I:) If the eyes be kept closed (to abstain from perceiving objects), it would not be possible to walk.

(He:) You must see and yet not see.

(I:) How is that possible?



*His Holiness crossing river Tuṅgā*

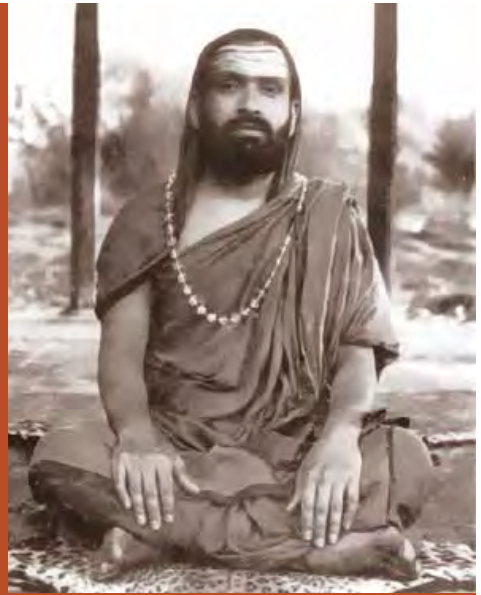


*“I am a wave in the ocean called Ātman”*

“To this, He said, *‘ātmāmbhodhes-taraṅgo’smy-aham-iti gamane (When walking, one should think that one is a wave in the ocean that is the Ātman).’* This is how we should conduct ourselves. When we get up from a seated position and start walking, the feeling should not be, ‘We are walking and going somewhere.’ In the big ocean - the *Ātman* - a wave has arisen. That wave is moving forward. This is the supposition. There is no difference between the wave and the ocean. Yet, because one walks (and thus moves forward like the wave), one should think of oneself as the wave. When the occasion to walk arises, one should contemplate, ‘I am a wave in the ocean of the bliss, in the ocean of the *Ātman*.’

“His advice surprised me. He went on, ‘At all times - even when you talk to someone - repeat this idea in the mind.’ With practice, one uninterruptedly carries on this repetition even while speaking. Experience confirms this.

“What should be the thought when one is seated? He advised, *‘bhāvayann-āsanasthaḥ saṁvit-sūtrānuviddho maṇir-aham-iti vā’smi (When seated, one should think that one is a gem strung on the string of consciousness).* A gem has been strung on the thread of knowledge. The gem cannot be removed; the thread is made of unbreakable consciousness. I am that gem. Contemplation must be done in this manner.’



*"I am a gem strung on the string of Consciousness"*

*"(My Guru further said:) 'indriyārtha-pratītau draṣṭo'smy-ātmāvalokād-iti (When perceiving sense-objects through the senses, one should think that one is seen since the Ātman is beheld). Whenever some object is seen, the reflection should not be, 'This object is now visible.' One must think, 'Aha! Objectless consciousness has now become associated with objects. The Ātman was manifest earlier but now its manifestation*



Whenever some object is seen, the reflection should not be, 'This object is now visible.' One must think, 'Aha! Objectless consciousness has now become associated with objects. The Ātman was manifest earlier but now its manifestation has waxed.'

has waxed.’ On receiving a blow, we become markedly aware of the body; do we not? We normally do have awareness of the body but this awareness increases when we are beaten. Similar is the case here. Accordingly, even when perceiving some external object, one should cogitate that apprehension of the *Ātman* has occurred.

“(My *Guru* further said:) ‘*śayana-vidhau magna ānanda-sindhau* (When lying down, one should think that one is immersed in the ocean of bliss). Do not just fall asleep. When lying down, contemplate, ‘I am now immersed in an ocean of bliss’ and, with this feeling, begin to sleep.’

“Doing so is very good. Whoever wants can test the difference between simply lying down and going to sleep and sleeping after voluntarily eradicating all thoughts from the mind while lying down, generating a feeling of bliss and retaining it for some minutes till sleep overtakes one. The great joy that this approach to sleep yields becomes apparent once it is experienced for a few days.



*“I am now immersed in an ocean of bliss”*

“(My *Guru* concluded:) ‘*antar-niṣṭho mumukṣuḥ sa khalu tanubhṛtām yo nayaty-evam-āyuh*. Amongst the embodied, that seeker of liberation who leads one’s life contemplating in this fashion is indeed the one who abides within, in the *Ātman*. Therefore, when walking, sitting, perceiving objects and even when lying down, this is how we must conduct our life.’

“This is the advice My *Guru* gave me.”

When His Holiness first told me, in 1980, about His Guru's aforesaid advice, which was centred on the 12<sup>th</sup> verse of *Bhagavatpāda's Śataślokī*, He compassionately graced me with the following additional information:

**His Holiness:** "I was seated in front of my *Guru* when He gave this explanation. No sooner had He completed His instruction about the attitude to be maintained when seated than I strove to put this teaching into practice. I did not think it appropriate to delay doing so even slightly. However, though I promptly generated the thought, 'I am a gem strung in the thread of consciousness,' the intensity of my contemplation was poor. A reason was that I was then primarily concentrating on what my *Guru* was telling me about the attitudes relating to perception and sleep. Further, while *karma-yoga* and *japa* had become effortless for me at that time, such contemplation was new to me. As I walked to my room after my *Guru* had finished, I contemplated, 'I am a wave in the blissful ocean that is the *Ātman*.' The intensity of this contemplation was much better.

"While I sincerely strove to practise what my *Guru* had taught Me, I did experience two difficulties. This contemplation clashed now and then with my *karma-yoga* (involving dedicating all actions and their fruits to God). My *Guru* resolved this difficulty by telling me two days later, 'The time has come for you to go beyond the stage of *karma-yoga*, which you have mastered. Now, direct your efforts to contemplating on the *Ātman*.' The second difficulty I had was that this contemplation partially came in the way of my enjoying the presence of Śāradāmbā in the temple, mentally worshipping Narasimha and the like. This is because I did these while seated and now I had been advised to contemplate when seated that I am a gem strung in the thread of consciousness. My *Guru* Himself clarified, 'While the knowledge of the *Ātman* of a *jīvanmukta* (one liberated while living) remains undisturbed by any thoughts and bodily activity, the case of contemplation by a spiritual aspirant is different. Hence, for the present, do your mental worship and the like as before and practise contemplation on the *Ātman* at other times.'

"The time has come for you to go beyond the stage of *karma-yoga*, which you have mastered. Now, direct your efforts to contemplating on the *Ātman*."

- The senior *Jagadguru*

"Though I no more had any fundamental problems, my contemplation suffered from occasional discontinuities. Such breaks mainly occurred when I was speaking and when I got carried away by the beauty of the river and the surroundings. One evening when



River Tuṅgā

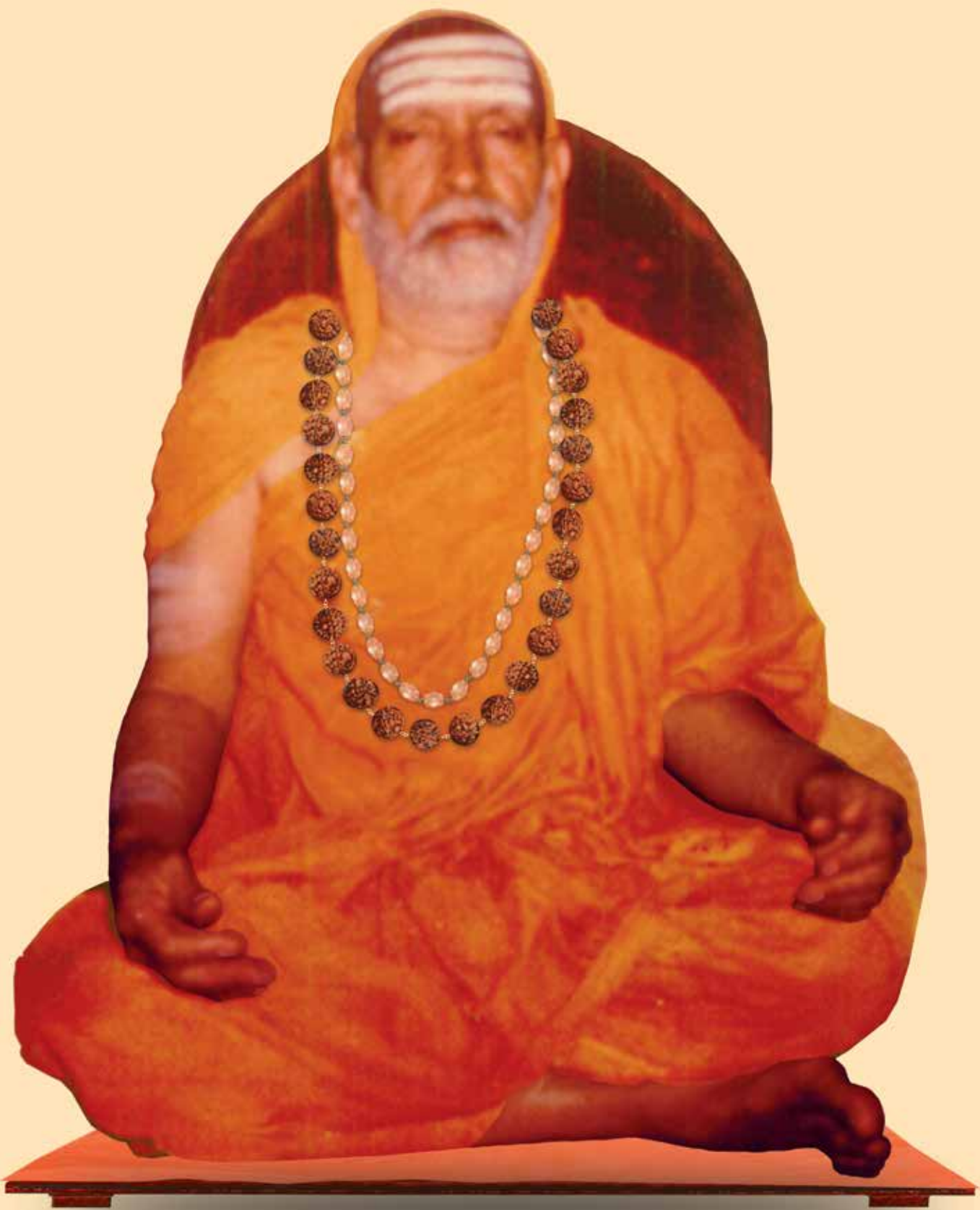
I went to my *Guru's* presence, He asked, 'Where are you coming from?' 'From Ambā's temple,' I replied. 'What did you see on the way?' He queried. A break had occurred in my contemplation while crossing the river Tuṅgā. Understanding the thrust of His question, I said that I beheld fish playing in the Tuṅgā. 'Did you contemplate correctly at that time?' was my *Guru's* next query. 'I was contemplating before and after that but, for a few moments, the process became disrupted,' I admitted. My *Guru* said, 'Never give room for

such breaks.' I hung my head in shame and resolved that I should not be such a useless disciple. Thereafter, by my *Guru's* grace, such discontinuities in contemplation did not occur. In a few months, the four forms of contemplation became effortless."

{The senior *Jagadguru* advised His Holiness about the fourfold contemplation on the *Ātman* in the year *Āngīrasa*, which ended on March 27, 1933. The contemplation advocated became effortless for His Holiness sometime before His birthday on *āśvina-kṛṣṇa-caturdaśī* in the cyclical year *Śrīmukha*, that is, prior to His completing 16 years of age on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1933.}







## CHAPTER 7

# Meditation on God - Start to Finish

One morning in January-February, 1934, corresponding to the cyclical year *Śrīmukha*, when His Holiness went to offer His *namaskāras* to His *Guru* during the latter's *āhnikā*, the senior *Jagadguru* asked Him, "When performing various *japas* during your *āhnikā*, you contemplate in accordance with the *dhyāna-ślokas* of the *mantras* chanted. Do you not?" His Holiness answered that He did. "How do you begin?" questioned the senior *Jagadguru*. His Holiness replied, "I take up the rosary and commence a *japa*, keeping my eyes partially or fully open. Simultaneously, I just imagine the form described in the *dhyāna-śloka* concerned as present in my chest in a red lotus with eight petals." His *Guru* said, "Your mind does not wander when you contemplate. However, you are aware of your body and surroundings. Am I correct?" His Holiness answered in the affirmative. "Independent of the requirements of your *āhnikā*, would you like to practice deep meditation on divine forms?" queried the senior *Jagadguru*. His Holiness expressed His keenness on doing so.

Having instructed Him to sit down, His *Guru* told Him, "I will tell you a simple method that will help you to start any meditation that you wish to do. During meditation, there is no need for you to use a rosary. Instead of straightaway picturing a *devatā* in your heart, first direct your gaze to the middle of your eyebrows. While doing so, you could chant a *mantra*, such as 'om'." Demonstrating

the method, the senior *Jagadguru* focused His eyes on the space between His brows and remained thus for a few moments. He then said, "Turning the eyes upwards can well be done with the eyelids partially closed. I have found this to be more convenient, but equally

"I will tell you a simple method that will help you to start any meditation that you wish to do. During meditation, there is no need for you to use a rosary. Instead of straightaway picturing a *devatā* in your heart, first direct your gaze to the middle of your eyebrows. While doing so, you could chant a *mantra*, such as 'om'."

-The senior *Jagadguru*

effective. You will experience a tingling sensation between the brows. After you mentally apprehend a light in that region for some time, picture the divine form that you wish to meditate on. Then focus on that form. You may, when you feel like it, use this method even in connection with the visualisation of a form during your usual *japa*."

Deciding to try out what the senior *Jagadguru* had taught Him, His Holiness went a little later to Goddess Śāradāmbā's temple. There, He sat next to the sanctum, facing Her idol. As He looked at the idol, a jewel on the face glittered in the light of the oil lamps. From His position, it appeared bluish. When He shifted His face a little, it appeared green. After seeing the



Goddess Śāradāmbā

blue light for a short while, He half-closed His eyelids and directed His eyes towards the space between His brows. Simultaneously, He mentally chanted 'om' repeatedly in a slow, lengthened manner. In a matter of seconds, He could feel a tingling sensation between His brows. This gradually increased in intensity. He also began to see an attractive, blue disc of light. This resembled the light from the jewel on the Mother's face. The main difference was that this was diffused. He then visualised a diminished version of Her idol emerging from the disc and occupying the lotus of His heart. The great clarity of the image in His heart and the readiness with which He had been able to visualise it pleasantly surprised Him. He focused on the form. His chanting of 'om' stopped.

Moments later, He opened His eyes. Actually, about half an hour had passed. During this time, He was unaware of the surroundings and His body. He realised that while it is perfectly possible to picture a form without adopting the procedure taught by His *Guru*, the method facilitates the visualisation of, and focus on, the form. Further, He understood

that the light apprehended mentally can be related to the light seen before gazing at the space between the brows.

That evening, He went to the Kālabhairava Temple. After prostrating before the idol, He sat down facing east. He could see the clear blue sky in front of Him. He directed His eyes, with partially closed eyelids, to the middle of the brows. Simultaneously, He mentally chanted the *Bālātripurasundarī-mantra*. This time, following the onset of a tingling sensation, He beheld a luminous expanse of blue. He first visualised in His chest the heart-lotus, in bloom. He then imagined the form of Goddess Bālā described in the *dhyāna-śloka* condensing from the blue light and entering His heart. The form was clear. As for His *japa*, it automatically stopped. This time too, He lost awareness of His body and surroundings. He remained in meditation for about 45 minutes.



*Bālātripurasundarī*

On both these occasions, the light mentally apprehended between the brows had semblance to that seen outside earlier. He decided to test whether He would mentally apprehend any light and, if so of what kind, if He were to begin His meditation in a dark place. Hence, He woke up that night at about two o'clock. In a seated posture, He directed His gaze to between the brows, while mentally chanting 'om'. He promptly felt a tingling sensation there. In a few seconds, He could see a disc of blue light akin to what He had perceived in Śāradāmbā's temple. He did not proceed further. He reasoned that one's earlier experience can well serve as a basis for the apprehension of light between the brows. An extraneous light is not a requirement. He then lay down and went back to sleep.

The next day, He examined whether He would necessarily apprehend a light of the colour seen before meditation. For this, He sat facing the evening sun and began His meditation. The light that made its appearance then was not orange, but blue. He understood that past experience can be an overriding factor. He assumed that a person may, on the first occasion, even see a colour that he expects to see and thereafter this experience can influence the succeeding ones. Over the next few days, He perceived not only a blue light but also a green one. The size, shape and intensity were not always the same. However, such differences did not affect His subsequent visualisation of a divine form and concentration on it.

In this period, He also reflected on the possible reasons why the new procedure facilitated concentration. He knew from experience and observing others that the eyes move not merely when one deliberately shifts one's gaze but also involuntarily when one is looking at an object that is not minute and when one thinks. Prior to *samnyāsa*, He had noted that the eyeballs of even a person whose eyelids are closed and who is asleep may move, and quickly too. He conjectured that such movement is associated with dreams. It was only years later that He read that eye movements have been recorded by scientists in persons who are dreaming. He reasoned that as eye movement is associated with shifting of attention, arresting of eye movement by looking fixedly at the middle of the brows could help in arresting attention. The analogy that came to His mind was the checking of the mind through the control of breath.

When an ant or mosquito bites, one's attention is drawn to the site of the bite. The rest of the body is momentarily ignored to a greater or lesser extent. Likewise, the tingling or slightly painful sensation arising between the brows could help in drawing attention away from the surroundings and the rest of the body. This was another reason that came to His mind.

One can comfortably do *japa* with the eyes open. However, it takes some practice to keep repeating a *mantra* mentally while talking to someone. This suggests that a verbal activity especially interferes with a concomitant verbal, rather than visual, activity. So mental chanting of a *mantra* while looking at the space between the brows ought not to disrupt the apprehension of a light there. However, it should impede one's thinking about some conversations or mentally talking to oneself and thereby becoming distracted. Likewise, the apprehension of a light between the brows should act against one becoming distracted by recollecting or imagining some visual situations. He thought that in these two ways also, the procedure could favour meditation. At that time, He did not think of whether it is relevant that the *ajñā-cakra* is located in the region towards which the eyes are directed. In any case, as far as He was concerned, the primary reason for the effectiveness of the method in His case was that His *Guru* had, with blessings and grace, taught it to Him.

He started using this method every day prior to some of the *mantra-japas* performed by Him during the morning *āhnikā*. He regularly resorted to it before commencing the *japa* of the *Nārāyaṇa-aṣṭakṣarī*. In the case of the other *mantras*, He used it before one *mantra* on one day and before another *mantra* on another day. The visualisation of the forms described in the *dhyāna-ślokas* concerned was facilitated by it. However, because, in keeping with traditional practice, He used a rosary when performing

*mantra-japas* during His *āhnikā* He did not focus on the forms with such intensity as to forget the body and the surroundings. Further, He ensured that there was not even a temporary pause in His chanting of the *mantras*.

His Holiness, in His infinite kindness, recounted the aforesaid details to me in June 1976, at Sringeri. On that occasion, I asked Him whether this procedure may be used to advantage by all practitioners of meditation. His Holiness said, “No. One may resort to it if one’s doing so is approved of by one’s *Guru*. Those for whom it is unsuited will not derive benefit from it. Moreover, they may even experience some negative effects, such as poorer meditation and headache.”

What follows was made known to me by Him in March 1981, at Sringeri.

For about a fortnight prior to the senior *Jagadguru* teaching Him the method to initiate meditation, His Holiness had, in response to an inexplicable urge, been doing prolonged *japa* of the *Bālātripurasundarī-mantra* in the mornings. While engaged in such *japa* with His eyes open, He had, on some days, imagined Her form as remaining in His heart facing in the same direction as Himself. On others, He had imagined a bigger version of the same form as present in front of and facing Him. The special attention that He had been paying to Goddess *Bālā-tripurasundarī’s mantra* and form motivated Him to meditate on Her on His first engaging in meditation at the *Kālabhairava Temple*.

Initially, He meditated twice a day; in His room in the afternoon and at the *Kālabhairava Temple* in the evening. The idea of meditating just before or immediately after His morning *āhnikā* and of going for His bath earlier than usual to facilitate this appealed to Him. However, He did not implement it for a couple of weeks. The reason was that He was not in a position then to predict or regulate the duration of His meditation. As He used to go after His morning *āhnikā* to the senior *Jagadguru’s* presence to offer *namaskāras*, He did not want to take the risk of becoming delayed because of unintentionally meditating for too long.

With regard to the estimation and regulation of the duration of meditation, He reflected as follows:

“Once I lose awareness of the body and the surroundings and my mind locks on to the divine form, I have no awareness of the passage of time. So I am not in a position then to decide how long more I am to continue meditating. Even during deep sleep, I am unaware of the passage of time and am in no position to determine how long more to remain in that state. Yet, it is not as though the duration of my sleep is quite unpredictable. Further, it is not that I cannot, on my own, alter the time for which I normally sleep.

“Habit influences how long a person sleeps at night. Other factors being the same, he is likely to sleep at night for as many hours as he usually does. Moreover, if he has the habit of sleeping for half an hour every afternoon, he is likely to awaken on his own after a half-an-hour siesta. Presumably, if I were to regularly meditate for fixed periods in the mornings, afternoons and evenings, my mind will spontaneously emerge from deep meditation at the end of these periods. Just as one can choose to go back to sleep, I should be able to revert to a state of deep concentration. By doing so for some days, I should be able to increase the time after which my meditation tends to lighten.

“When, on some night, I decide before sleeping that I must get up at a particular time, I awaken at that time on my own notwithstanding my having slept much less that night than usual. In like manner, I should be able to influence the duration of a session of meditation by making a resolve about the duration before beginning to meditate.”

His experiences of the first two weeks accorded with this analysis. Confident that He could now estimate and regulate the duration of His meditation, He ceased to have any inhibition about having a session of deep meditation even before going for His *Guru's darśana*. So He began to regularly meditate before starting His morning *āhnikā* procedures; apart from this, He continued to meditate in the afternoon and evening, as before.

Before He became a *samnyāsin*, He had heard a person say, “I went to get my eyes tested. At some distance in front of me, there was a chart with letters of different sizes. I found that the letters in the bottom were hazy and unreadable. The doctor put a spectacle frame on me. I immediately felt that I could see the chart better and told him so. I was surprised when the doctor smilingly said that he was yet to put any lens into the frame.” A little later, for the fun of it, He had thought, “Let me try to imagine that there is a leaf in front of me on the road.” Having done so for a few seconds, He had told himself, with as much conviction as He could muster, “There is a leaf there that I am seeing.” This had somehow facilitated the visualisation.

Recalling all this that had happened some years earlier, before His *samnyāsa*, He reasoned as follows:

“It should be better to regard the form meditated upon in the heart as present there and visible like an external object rather than as something that one has to try to imagine and keep conceiving. God is indeed present in the heart of everyone and, though intrinsically formless, can manifest there with a form for the sake of His devotee. *Mantras* have the power to reveal their *devatās*. The *dhyāna-ślokas* describe the divine forms associated with the

*mantras*. Sages have chanted *mantras*, meditated on the prescribed divine forms and thereby obtained, in due course, the direct vision of God in such forms. There is thus additional justification for one to feel, 'God is indeed present in my heart in the scripturally-prescribed form in which I meditate on Him.' Moreover, one would feel more drawn to a form deemed divine and real than to one regarded as fanciful."

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- His Holiness

Having thought on these lines, He adopted two means to facilitate His viewing the form meditated upon as realistic and divine. He sought to see the form as emerging from the light apprehended by Him on His directing His gaze to between the brows. Even when He initiated His practice of meditation at Śāradāmbā's temple, He deliberately visualised a small version of Her idol as manifesting from the blue disc of light that He perceived between His brows. Another practice He resorted to was to deem that His eyes were looking inwards and perceiving the form as it emanated from the light and as it entered and abided in the lotus of His heart. He incorporated this in His meditation on the day following the one on which His *Guru* instructed Him about meditation.

After meditating at the Kālabhairava Temple in the evenings for over a month, He started doing so on the top of a nearby hill. The Malahānikareśvara Temple, situated atop a hill in the town of Sringeri, lay due west and could be seen from there. On the day He first went there to meditate, it was about half an hour before sunset. As He sat down facing west, He thought, "I have been meditating on Narasimha as shining just by His own lustre. I could try to see Him today in the light of the setting sun." He





started by first focusing on Lord Narasimha as usual. He then pictured the Lord graciously curtailing His brightness. Lord Narasimha then resembled the moon seen through a thin cloud. After this, He visualised Lord Narasimha being bathed in the orange glow of sunset. The meditation went on smoothly and lasted an hour. This experience led Him to understand that at the commencement of deep meditation, the luminosity of the divine form focused upon and the intensity and colour of the background lighting, if any, can be comfortably adjusted. He confirmed this in His subsequent sessions of meditation.

A few days later, after perusing a text, He reflected, “At any instant, the portion of the page that I focus on appears far clearer than the portion distant from it. While meditating, I seek to apprehend a divine form as if I were seeing it with my eyes. So the portion towards which my attention is particularly directed, such as the face, is presumably clearer to me than a portion that is removed from it.” In the next session of meditation, He found that such was actually the case. It was not as though any portion was unclear; only, a portion was clearer. When He tried to remedy the situation by simply trying to see every part of the form equally clearly, He experienced difficulty in doing so. He, therefore, completed that session by meditating as He usually did.

He subsequently thought as follows:

“Rather than forcefully attempt to grasp the complete form with uniform clarity, let me expand the particularly clear zone in stages. To facilitate this, I could rid myself of the notion that during meditation my vision is subject to the same limitations as when perceiving an external object. Next, I could increase the intensity of my concentration. This should enhance the clarity of the other portions of the form.”

Over the next three sessions, by implementing what He had planned, He learnt to see the entire divine form in the heart with total clarity.

It then occurred to Him, “I have so far been meditating only on a *devatā*’s full form. I can now try to meditate not just on the complete form but also on parts of it, such as the feet. This should be straightforward because I am already used to thinking of just Narasimha’s feet when I wash them while mentally worshipping Him every day.”

The next time He meditated, He first visualised Narasimha as He normally did. He then focused exclusively on His feet. Promptly, they occupied the entire range of His vision. As He had already learnt to see the full form with uniform clarity, seeing the feet in the same manner required no special effort. Though He saw just the feet, He did not forget

that they were a part of Narasimha. Towards the end of His meditation, He again visualised Narasimha's full form. Subsequent to this session of meditation, He sometimes meditated on parts of a *devatā's* form too. However, whenever He chose to do so, He always started and ended with the complete form.

On all these days, He had been meditating only on the forms of Bālā and Lakṣmī-Narasimha and that too in keeping with the *dhyāna-ślokas* of their *mantras*. This was because He felt that it would be inadvisable for Him to take up other divine forms till He had acquired proficiency in meditation by repeatedly concentrating on these two. He was sure that when His preparations were adequate, God would, in some way, make this known to him. He received such a sign soon.

One evening, without any premeditation or effort on His part, the form of Kṛṣṇa emerged from the light that He apprehended between His brows and entered His heart. Clad in a yellow vestment, He wore the *vaijayantī* garland. Peacock feathers adorned His crest and flowers His ears. He held a flute to His lips and was breathtakingly attractive. His Holiness felt, "The charming form would be even more attractive, if it were bigger." So He promptly imagined that Kṛṣṇa's feet rested not in a lotus in the chest but in one at the level of His navel. Then He pictured the Lord's body as expanding till Kṛṣṇa's crest was at the level of His neck. As the intensity of His concentration increased, He beheld Kṛṣṇa's complete form with uniformly great clarity and with much joy. The form of Kṛṣṇa that had spontaneously appeared tallied with that described in the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* as follows: "*With peacock feathers forming a head ornament, karṇikāra flowers on His ears and wearing a golden yellow vestment and the vaijayantī garland, He (Kṛṣṇa), whose body is like that of an excellent dancer and whose glories are sung by the throng of cowherds, entered Vṛndāvana, made lovely by His footprints, while filling the openings of His flute with the nectar of His lips.*"



Kṛṣṇa

The next morning, He spontaneously beheld a form of Viṣṇu as a child lying on a fig-leaf emerging from the light seen between the brows and occupying His heart-lotus. This form corresponded to that described in a verse of the *Bālamukunda-aṣṭaka* as follows: “I call to mind the child Mukunda (Viṣṇu) who is lying in the concavity of a fig-leaf, putting His lotus-like foot into His lovely mouth by means of His beautiful hand.” Picturing the Lord as a child filled Him with the feeling of *vātsalya* (parental love). That afternoon too, a divine form manifested without any volition on His part. It was that of Viṣṇu with eight, rather than four, arms. The Lord displayed in His four right hands the *sudarśana-cakra*, a rosary, the *kaumodakī* mace and the symbol of granting fearlessness. In His four left hands were the *pāñcajanya* conch, the *śārṅga* bow, the *nandaka* sword and the symbol of granting boons. He was adorned with various ornaments, such as a diadem, armlets and bracelets, and wore a garland.



*Child Mukunda*



*Viṣṇu with eight arms*

For some time, His Holiness found Himself mentally chanting the *Nārāyaṇa-aṣṭākṣarī*. Thereafter, His mind locked on to just the form. By the time He regained some awareness of His body, over an hour had passed. Even after He got up, He continued to see the form in His heart. That evening, He meditated on this form itself. The next morning, as He started His meditation, He found this form, which He had been perceiving since the previous day, replaced by one in which the Lord held just a rosary. The Lord’s visage was extremely calm and He radiated peace. His Holiness continued to apprehend the new form in His heart even after His meditation ended.

That afternoon, at the start of His meditation, the form underwent a change and He now saw



*The Lord with rosary*

Lord Viṣṇu not merely without weapons but also without ornaments, such as a diadem. His evening meditation began with His focusing on this form. Abruptly, His attention was drawn to just the Lord's smiling face. Up to almost the close of the hour-long session, His focus was exclusively on the Lord's face. Till He completed His bath the next morning, He could see in His heart, the Lord as bereft of ornaments and weapons and holding just a rosary. The form then vanished.



*Without ornaments*

When He reported His experiences with the forms of Viṣṇu to His *Guru*, the latter said nothing. However, a little later, the senior *Jagadguru* sent Him a copy of the *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* with an empty sheet of paper kept in it to draw attention to a portion of the text. In the portion specified by His *Guru*, His Holiness found verses describing the very forms that He had seen and advising meditation on them in the same order in which He had done. The meaning of those verses is, *"The yogin should, O king, concentrate his mind thoroughly on the Lord, as adorned with a diadem, garland, armlets, bracelets and the like, as having in His (eight) hands, the śārṅga (bow), conch, mace, sword, discus, rosary and the signs of granting boons and fearlessness and as wearing rings of gems in His fingers, till his attention becomes steady there. Success is to be understood as achieved when this thought does not leave the mind even when walking, standing or engaging*

*in some activity of choice. Thereafter, the wise man should contemplate the form of the Lord as tranquil, with a rosary, and bereft of a conch, mace, discus, śārṅga and so on. After that focus becomes as firm as before, he should think of God as devoid of adornments, such as the diadem and armlets. Next, the wise man should fix his mind on a prominent part of the Lord."*

After these experiences, He did not deliberately limit His meditation, as He had done earlier, to just the forms of Bālā and Narasiṁha. He started meditating on other divine



His Holiness focused on Śiva as seated with Pārvatī, as Ardhanārīśvara, as Dakṣiṇāmūrti and as Naṭarāja; on Viṣṇu with four hands bearing the *sudarśana-cakra*, *pāñcajanya* conch, *kaumodakī* mace and a lotus; on Rāma; and on Gaṇapati.

forms too. For example, He focused on Śiva as seated with Pārvatī, as Ardhanārīśvara, as Dakṣiṇāmūrti and as Naṭarāja; on Viṣṇu with four hands bearing the *sudarśana-cakra*, *pāñcajanya* conch, *kaumodakī* mace and a lotus; on Rāma; and on Gaṇapati.

He found that short *mantras* such as 'om' are more convenient to chant mentally while directing the eyes to between the brows than long ones like the *Śrīvidyā*. The length of a *mantra* hardly made any difference after His conceiving a divine form. Hence, He often commenced His meditation with the mental chant of 'om' and then switched to the *mantra* of the *devatā* meditated upon. The chanting of the *mantra* occasionally persisted till the end of a session of meditation but generally it automatically stopped after a short while and, thereafter, only the form remained.

Whenever He did not go in the evening for meditation to the Kālabhairava Temple or to the nearby hill, such as during the *Śaṅkara-jayantī* celebrations and *cāturmāsya*, He largely compensated by meditating more in the mornings and afternoons. It was during the *cāturmāsya* of the cyclical year *Bhava*, that is, in the period 26<sup>th</sup> July to 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 1934, that He gained proficiency in readily setting, at the time of beginning to visualise a form, the level of His concentration. For instance, He could adjust the intensity of His focus to block out the sound of a loud peal of thunder or to allow it to be heard but not the sound of rain or a not-so-loud peal of thunder. If He felt like chanting a *mantra* throughout a session of meditation, He pegged the intensity of concentration on the form at a lower level than otherwise. He did not, however, normally curtail the depth of His meditation.

He had heard people say that their minds wander when they perform *japa* or when they try to meditate on a form. From the time He began meditating, He had not experienced this difficulty. To appreciate the problem of mental wandering, He once experimented, during the said *cāturmāsya*, with progressively lowering the level of His concentration on the form. He found that when the concentration fell to a level far below that during His normal meditation, His mind started to wander a little to extraneous sounds. By deliberately keeping the intensity of focus low enough to allow some distractions, He determined, during a couple of sessions, over a dozen aids to deal with the disturbances. Chanting the *mantra* with greater vigour, temporarily holding the breath and stressing the importance of meditation were some of them.

Months passed. Sometime in the period April-July, 1935, that is, sometime after the commencement of the cyclical year *Yuva* and before the *cāturmāsya* of that year, one morning, when He was about to visualise the form of Lakṣmī-ṅṣimha, the form of Goddess Bālā made its appearance. He meditated on Her. That afternoon, He felt a strong urge to meditate upon Her as remaining in front of and facing Him and did so. It was months since

He had focused on Her in this fashion. After the session, He thought, “Today, God is explicitly determining the form I am to meditate upon just as He had done nearly a year ago when He had caused me to focus on Kṛṣṇa with the flute, child Mukunda and Viṣṇu with eight arms.” He somehow felt sure that the evening session would be extraordinary.

When He commenced His evening meditation at the Kālabhairava Temple, in response to a powerful urge, He thought of Bālā in the same way as He had done in the afternoon. While He was focusing as usual on the full form of the Goddess, His mind suddenly locked on to Her feet. He had always been seeing Her form clearly. However, the experience of that day was

extraordinary. He vividly beheld the Goddess’s feet; the sense of reality of the vision was intense and left no room for doubts. This was His first experience of *savikalpa-samādhi*. During this *samādhi*, He almost totally forgot Himself and that He was meditating; Goddess Bālā’s feet alone manifested.

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Mahaṛṣi Patañjali has aphorised in his *Yogasūtras*: “*Dhāraṇā* (fixation) is the binding of the mind to one place. *Dhyāna* (meditation) is the continuance there of the presented idea. The same (*dhyāna*) when shining forth as the intended object alone and devoid, as it were, of its own nature, is *samādhi*.” Explaining the scriptural position about the term *savikalpa-samādhi*, His Holiness has said, “As the name implies, *savikalpa-samādhi* is *samādhi* with *vikalpa*. *Vikalpa* here refers to the triad of the concentrator, concentration and the object of concentration. In this *samādhi*, while the object of concentration manifests clearly and steadily, an awareness of the form, ‘I am meditating’ is almost, but not totally, absent. The awareness of the distinction of the concentrator, concentration and the object of concentration is thus not fully obliterated.”

After remaining for one and a half hours in *savikalpa-samādhi* with His mind locked on to Goddess Bālā, He regained awareness of the body and opened His eyes. He could literally see Her in front of Him within the temple. He reached out and touched Her feet with His hands. A few moments later, She disappeared.



His next four *savikalpa-samādhis* had, without any premeditation on His part, Lakṣmī-Nṛsiṃha, Kṛṣṇa with a flute, child Mukunda and Viṣṇu with eight arms as the objects of focus. It may be recalled that these forms had much earlier manifested spontaneously, in this order. After these five *savikalpa-samādhis*, which occurred before the *cāturmāsya* of the year *Yuva*, He was easily able to attain *savikalpa-samādhi* with any form of His choice as the object.

One morning, His Holiness thought of just testing whether He could experience *savikalpa-samādhi* even while lying down. So when doing *śavāsana* (in the course of which one lies flat on one's back), He pictured His heart-lotus as facing upwards rather than towards His head and then visualised Lakṣmī-nṛsiṃha as seated in it. Thus, while He lay supine, Lakṣmī-nṛsiṃha was seen as seated with His back vertical. His Holiness concentrated on the divine form and quickly went into *savikalpa-samādhi*. The next day, while performing *śavāsana*, He conceived of the heart-lotus and Narasiṃha's back as being in line with His body, as usual, but to avoid any sense of oddity, He deliberately ignored His supine position. He kept in mind only the position of Narasiṃha relative to His own head. In moments, He was in *savikalpa-samādhi*. These two experiences convinced Him that, if necessary, such as in times of illness, He could become absorbed in *savikalpa-samādhi* on a divine form even while lying down.

A few days later, He thought, "While I am in *samādhi*, my back and neck remain erect. It is likely that even if I were to enjoy *samādhi* while in *śīrṣāsana* (wherein one stands on one's head), my back and neck will remain in a line." He performed *śīrṣāsana* near a wall to arrest a fall, if it occurred during meditation. He then visualised Narasiṃha as seated normally in an upward-facing lotus in His chest and attained *savikalpa-samādhi*. When He regained awareness of the body after some time, He found that He remained in *śīrṣāsana* exactly as before. On the next day, without any precaution to cater for a fall, He performed the *śīrṣāsana*. He then deliberately ignored His being inverted and meditated on Narasiṃha as seated in His heart-lotus with the Lord's head towards His own, as usual. In moments, He was in *savikalpa-samādhi*. He did not bother to go into *samādhi* in *śīrṣāsana* in the future.

His Holiness reported His experiences with meditation to His *Guru* on several occasions. The senior *Jagadguru* expressed His satisfaction and approval. About meditation on the Supreme as possessed of attributes such as form, His Holiness has pointed out, in the light of the scriptures, that it is a very great purifier, a means to obtain the special grace of God and enables one to focus on and realize the Supreme Brahman, which is intrinsically devoid of all attributes.







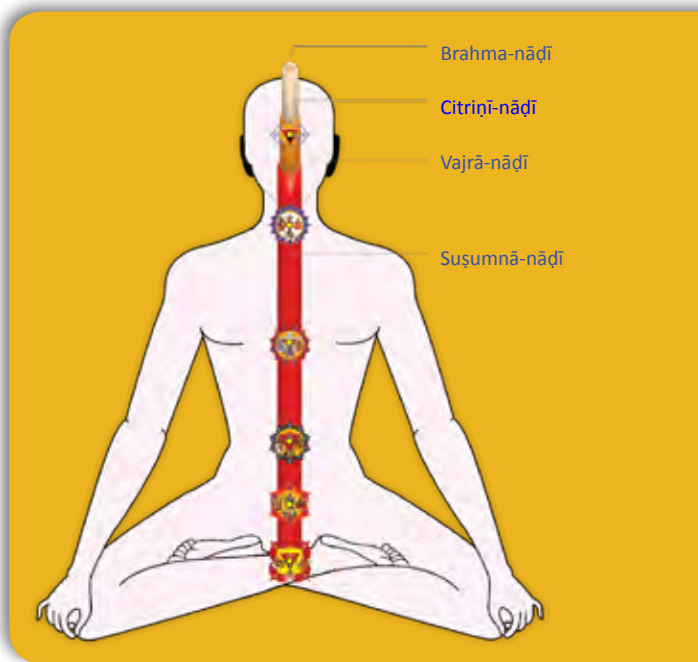
## CHAPTER 8

# Headway in Kuṇḍalinī-yoga

His Holiness's first experience of the *kuṇḍalinī* and the *cakras* took place a few months after His initiation into *saṁnyāsa* on May 22, 1931.

He had just finished His morning *āhnika* and was about to get up. Without premeditation, He joined His palms and said, “*śrī-śāradāyai namaḥ (Obeisance to the glorious Śāradā).*” Abruptly, He felt an upsurge of joy and stopped being aware of His surroundings. It began to seem that His body was becoming transparent and that He was seeing His backbone from some vantage point in front of His chest. The backbone stood out, whitish in colour, with the silhouette of the body appearing dark like a shadow. The backbone then seemed to become translucent to reveal a canal in its interior. In moments, the canal's width became greatly magnified. He could then see a tube, red and bright like fire, traversing the length of the canal. A mellifluous female voice announced, “*iyam suṣumnā-nāḍī (This is the suṣumnā-nāḍī).*” He just heard the words but did not perceive the speaker.

The width of this fiery canal then expanded and a section along the length vanished to reveal another canal within. This one was coloured like the sun half an hour after sunrise. The same mellifluous female voice informed Him that this was *the vajrā-nāḍī*. The width of this canal too abruptly increased and a section along the length faded away. A pale tube looking like



Nāḍīs

the moon seen through a thin layer of cloud became visible within the earlier tube. At this juncture, He was told, in Sanskrit, “*This is the citriṇī-nāḍī. The brahma-nāḍī is here. It is even termed suṣumnā.*” The meaning that flashed in His mind was that the pale tube was called *citriṇī*, its hollow interior formed the *brahma-nāḍī* and that the name *suṣumnā* has been employed even to denote the *citriṇī* or *brahma-nāḍī*. The fiery, sun-like and pale canals did appear to form a unit.

The scene underwent a change. He could then discern that the triad of *nāḍīs* stretched from between the anus and the penis on the lower side to above the level of the eyebrows, into the head, on the upper side. Next, there appeared a moon-coloured tube that was distinctly coupled to the triad both at the base of the latter and between the eyebrows. On its upper side, this tube continued from the junction between the eyebrows to the left nostril. On its lower side, it ended at the right testicle. Between the two junctions, it formed arches on the triad’s left and right sides, with the crossovers occurring at the levels of the throat, chest, navel and genital. For a moment, this shape was replaced by one



*Three shapes of the ida and the pingala nadis*

in which the tube formed a bow-like arch between the lower and upper junctions and towards the body’s left side. His Holiness felt that both the forms may be met with.

After the earlier shape was restored, He was told that this was the *ida-nāḍī*. Something appeared to be moving through this tube in synchrony with His breathing, which, He somehow felt, was taking place through just the left nostril. Also, the flow within this tube seemed to have a cooling effect.

In moments, this tube disappeared. Instead, another tube manifested that was red and bright. This too was clearly coupled to the triad between the brows and at the lower end of the triad but, unlike the *ida*, continued to the right nostril and the left testicle. Between the

upper and lower junctions, it formed arches on the sides of the triad, with crossovers at the levels of the throat, chest, navel and genital. However, wherever the previous tube traversed from left to right this crossed from right to left and vice versa. Then, for a moment, the shape changed and the tube resembled a bow between the upper and lower junctions, lying on the right side of the triad. He was informed that this was the *piṅgalā-nāḍī*. He began to feel that His breathing was taking place through just the right nostril. In synchrony with the breathing, He could apprehend something moving through this tube. The flow seemed to have a heating effect.

A few moments later, the moon-hued tube that had disappeared again came to sight. He could then see both the arching tubes simultaneously. Next, His breathing shifted from the right nostril to the left nostril and, with this, He noticed the activity in the reddish tube giving way to that in the moon-hued tube. Shortly, He felt that breathing was taking place through both the nostrils; He could then apprehend activity in both the tubes.

{On a later occasion, His Holiness explicated, “Three shapes of the *iḍā* and the *piṅgalā* have been spoken of. The first is characterised by each of the two *nāḍīs* forming arches alternately on the left and right of the *suṣumnā*. The second form is that of a near straight line from the base of the *suṣumnā* to the middle of the brows; the *iḍā* remains on the left, while the *piṅgalā* lies on the right of the *suṣumnā*. The third shape is roughly like that of a bow in the chest lying on one side of the *suṣumnā*. The first and the third shapes are the ones that are poles apart; the second can be regarded as a variant of the third in which the bow’s curve is negligible with respect to its length.”}

The scene soon underwent a change and centred on the lower end of the triad of tubes. There, He could see a beautiful lotus with four petals that were deep red in colour. The mellifluous female voice announced that this was the *mūlādhāra-cakra*. At the pericarp of the lotus, there was a *śiva-liṅga*. A cobra lustrous like lightning lay with its body making about three and a half turns around the *liṅga*. The serpent’s hood rested on the upper end of the *liṅga* and its mouth effectively blocked the passage to the triad of tubes. The serpent was motionless and appeared to be fast asleep. Yet, it was somehow unmistakable



*Mūlādhāra*

to His Holiness that it was the embodiment of unbounded power. He was told that this was the *kuṇḍalinī*.

Then, for a few moments, He saw on each of the four red petals, a distinct, bright golden letter; the letters were *varṁ*, *śarṁ*, *ṣarṁ*, and *sarṁ*. Simultaneously, He could apprehend a yellow, square region enclosing the pericarp. Inside this yellow square was an inverted red triangle; the *kuṇḍalinī* lay in the red triangle. The letter “*laṁ* (the *bīja* of *pṛthvī*, earth)” appeared in the square accompanied by the smell of earth at the start of a spell of rain. He immediately understood that it was being made known to Him that the *mūlādhāra-cakra* is associated with the element *pṛthvī* (earth), which is characterised by the quality of smell.

Then, there manifested within the yellow square a white elephant with multiple tusks. On it was seated a *deva* with four arms, holding a thunderbolt in one of them. He further saw a swan on which sat a *deva* with four heads. A red-eyed *devī* with four arms was also visible. From the voice, He learnt that the elephant was Airāvata and the divinity on it was Indra; the other *deva* was Brahma, while the *devī* was Dākinī. The divinities then disappeared and He could see just the lotus with the *liṅga* and *kuṇḍalinī*. His Holiness promptly felt that the *kuṇḍalinī* was primary and that a way of contemplating on the *mūlādhāra-cakra* was in association with the letters and divinities as seen by Him.

Thereafter, the scene shifted up the *suṣumnā* to around the level of the root of the penis. There, He beheld a lotus with six vermilion-hued petals. He was told that this was the *svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra*. The central region of the lotus was white and comprised a figure resembling the crescent-moon. Then, the letter “*vaṁ* (the *bīja* of *āpas*, water)” manifested briefly in that region and, simultaneously, He felt the taste of water. He understood that the *svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra* is associated with the element *āpas* (water), which is characterised by the quality of taste. Simultaneously, there appeared on the six vermilion petals, one bright letter



each; the letters were *barṁ*, *bharṁ*, *marṁ*, *yarṁ*, *rarṁ* and *larṁ*. In the white zone, He could see a crocodile on which was seated a *deva* with a noose. Further, He beheld the figure of Viṣṇu seated on an eagle and bearing in His four hands, a conch, *cakra*, mace and lotus. A dark, three-eyed *devī* was also visible. The voice informed His Holiness that the *deva* on the crocodile was Varuṇa and that the *devī* was Rākiṇī.

The scene shifted farther up the *suṣumnā*. At the level of the navel, He could see a lotus with ten petals that were dark like rain-bearing clouds. In the interior, there was an inverted red triangle. The voice pointed out that this was the *maṇipūra-cakra*. On the ten petals flashed blue letters *ḍarṁ*, *ḍhamṁ*, *ṇarṁ*, *tarṁ*, *tharṁ*, *darṁ*, *dhamṁ*, *narṁ*, *parṁ* and *pharṁ*. The appearance of the letter “*rarṁ* (the *bīja* of *agni*, fire)” within the red triangle together with a sensation of heat led Him to understand that this *cakra* is associated with the element fire, which is characterised by the quality of heat. He also saw in the red region a *deva* with four arms seated on a ram, Rudra smeared with ashes and seated on a bull and a dark *devī* with three faces wearing a yellow dress. He was told that the *deva* on the ram was Agni (Fire) and that the *devī* was Lākiṇī.

Partly from the hint provided by the shift of focus up the *suṣumnā* from one *cakra* to the next, and primarily on His own, He developed the conviction on seeing the *svādhiṣṭhāna* that this was a centre to which the *kuṇḍalinī* could ascend through the *brahma-nāḍī*. A similar certitude arose about the *maṇipūra*.

From the *maṇipūra*, the scene shifted up the *suṣumnā* to the level of the chest. He could see a lotus with twelve red petals. The voice informed Him that this was the *anāhata-cakra*. In its interior, there was a smoke-coloured, hexagonal region formed by an upright and an inverted triangle. An inverted triangle lay within this and contained a lustrous *liṅga*. This *cakra* with a *liṅga* seemed to be a pure and sacred place. A non-vocal, internal sound became audible. He spontaneously felt that sound that was in an undifferentiated form in the *mūlādhāra* passed on to a slightly less subtle state in the *maṇipūra* and then reached the stage prior to spoken and heard speech here.



*Maṇipūra*

After this, the letters *kaṁ*, *khaṁ*, *gaṁ*, *ghaṁ*, *ṅaṁ*, *caṁ*, *chaṁ*, *jaṁ*, *jhaṁ*, *ṅaṁ*, *ṭaṁ* and *ṭhaṁ* manifested for a few moments on the petals. In the hexagonal region, He saw the letter “*yaṁ* (the *bīja* of *vāyu*, air)” and simultaneously felt a slight breeze. This led Him to understand that the *anāhata-cakra* is associated with *vāyu* (air), characterised by the quality of touch. He further saw in the hexagonal region, a four-armed *deva* of a smoky hue seated on an antelope, a very attractive three-eyed *deva* displaying the *abhaya* and *varada-mudrās* (symbols of granting fearlessness and boons) and a *devī*.

The voice announced that the *deva* on the antelope was *Vāyu*, the other *deva* was *Íśa* (*Śiva*) and that the *devī* was *Kākinī*.



*Anāhata*

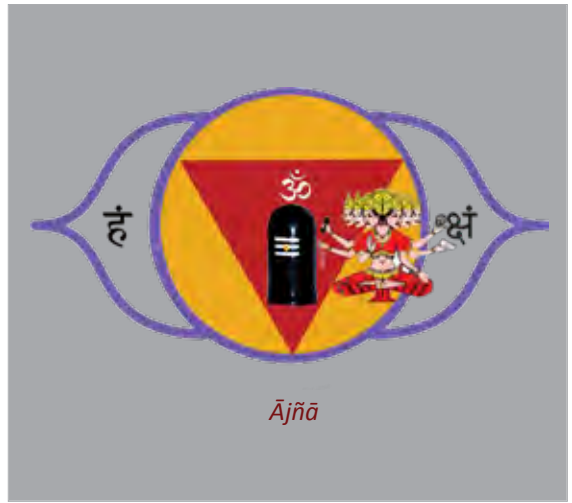


*Viśuddha*

His focus shifted up the *suṣumnā* to the level of the throat. There, He beheld a lotus with sixteen petals that were smoky in hue. The voice conveyed that this was the *viśuddha-cakra*. In its interior, there was a white circular region. For a few moments, the vowels manifested in red on the petals. The appearance of “*haṁ* (the *bīja* of *ākāśa*, space)” in the circular region accompanied by the feeling of His being in vast expanse led Him to comprehend that this *cakra* is associated with *ākāśa*, space. He beheld a *deva* seated on a white elephant, *Śiva* with five faces and ten arms together with *Pārvaṭī*, and a *devī* clad in a yellow dress. The voice announced that the *deva* was *Ambara*, that the Lord was here as *Sadāśiva* and that the *devī* was *Śākinī*. This *cakra* gave the impression of being an exalted centre.

and ten arms together with *Pārvaṭī*, and a *devī* clad in a yellow dress. The voice announced that the *deva* was *Ambara*, that the Lord was here as *Sadāśiva* and that the *devī* was *Śākinī*. This *cakra* gave the impression of being an exalted centre.

The scene moved even farther up the *suṣumnā* to the level of the eyebrows. He could see a glorious lotus with two white petals. The voice informed Him that this was the *ājñā-cakra*. In its central region, there was an inverted triangle wherein there was a *liṅga*. Above the triangle was a crescent. Then, the letters *haṁ* and *kṣaṁ* manifested in the two petals and the letter *om̐* in the interior region. He could also see a *devī* with six faces. He was told that she was Hākinī. Beholding this *cakra* itself gave great joy.



Then, above the end of the *suṣumnā* and within the head, He saw a lotus with many white petals hanging downward and arranged in multiple layers. All the fifty letters of the Sanskrit alphabet could be seen here. The voice told Him that this lotus with one thousand petals was the *sahasrāra*. At the pericarp of the lotus was a region that resembled the full moon and shed nectarine rays. Inside this was a bright triangle. In a mellifluous female voice, He heard the words, “*atra paramaśivaḥ sthitaḥ (Herein abides Paramaśiva).*”



While He could somehow sense the presence of a few zones between the *ājñā* and the *sahasrāra*, He did not directly apprehend them. Even without hearing any words to that effect, He felt certain that the ascent of the awakened *kuṇḍalinī-śakti* ends at the *sahasrāra*, wherein Śakti unites with Paramaśiva.

At this point, His experience ended. As He opened His eyes, He was a bit bewildered whether He had been dreaming or vividly hallucinating or had had a divine experience. Without giving the matter any further thought, He got up and left for His *Guru*'s presence as it was time for Him to offer His obeisance to the senior *Jagadguru*.



{His Holiness most compassionately blessed me with the above details in May 1978 at Sringeri while He was seated upstairs in the eastern side of Sacchidanda Vilas. At this point of His narration, I asked Him, “How long did the experience last?” He responded with the counter question, “What do you think would have been the duration?” I answered, “Between half and one hour.” He started laughing and said, “It lasted less than five minutes.” Clearly amused at my surprise on hearing this, He asked, “What is the time now?” Looking at my wrist watch, I said, “4:43.” I was seated cross-legged in front of His Holiness with my arms resting on my legs and with my palms joined. He leaned forward and grasped my joined palms in His right hand. Closing His eyes, He called out, “Ambā (Divine Mother)!” Suddenly, all that He had described began to unfold before me with great clarity. I even heard the voice that He had spoken of. My experience ended where He had told me His had ended.

I regained awareness of my body and surroundings and saw Him withdrawing His hand from mine. “What is the time now?” He asked. After checking, I reported that it was 4:46 p.m. “As you can see, less than five minutes has passed,” remarked His Holiness, with a smile. He then instructed me to describe what I had seen in the hands of Hākinī in the *ājñā-cakra*. As the vision had been very clear and the memory fresh, I promptly said, “The *abhaya-mudrā*, the *varada-mudrā*, a book, a skull, a *ḍamaru* (small drum) and a *rudrākṣa* rosary.” With a nod, He said, “Yes. That is just what I saw then. I asked you about what I had not described earlier to confirm the similarity of our visions. They being similar, it would be reasonable to take it that both lasted for the same duration rather than that your vision lasted for three minutes and mine for half to one hour.”

I then asked Him whether He had read about the *kuṇḍalinī* and the *cakras* before this experience or whether the senior *Jagadguru* had spoken to Him about them. He said, “Neither. I was thoroughly unfamiliar with *kuṇḍalinī-yoga* at that time. If someone had asked me then ‘What do you know about the *kuṇḍalinī*?’ perhaps I would have just said that it is a name occurring in the *Lalitā-sahasranāma*!”}

While His Holiness performed *namaskāras* to the senior *Jagadguru*, the latter silently continued with His *āhnikā*. He gave no indication of having noticed His Holiness’s presence. Not wanting to disturb His *Guru*, His Holiness started to leave quietly. Abruptly, the senior *Jagadguru* looked up at Him and said, “Yes, tell me.” His Holiness submitted, “Some minutes ago, I had an unexpected experience that seems to be of the nature of a divine teaching. However, I am not certain that it was not a day-dream or hallucination.” The senior *Jagadguru* gazed at His Holiness but said nothing. So, His Holiness proceeded to give the details. When He finished, the senior *Jagadguru* said, “All right,” and readied Himself

to perform *daṇḍa-tarpaṇa*. Feeling happy that His *Guru* had graced Him with the opportunity of making His submission, His Holiness left.

That day, the morning *Candramaulī-śvara-pūjā* was performed by the senior *Jagadguru*, not the *arcaka*. In the afternoon, after *bhikṣā*, He sent for His Holiness. When His Holiness went to His *Guru's* presence and paid obeisance, the latter gestured to Him to sit down. Then the senior *Jagadguru* said, “You had sensed something moving in the *iḍā* and *piṅgalā nāḍīs* in association with breathing through the left and right nostrils. The movement was that of *prāṇa*. Your feeling that sound that is in an undifferentiated state in the *mūlādhāra* acquires a less subtle state as it reaches the *maṇipūra* and then attains a stage prior to articulated speech at the *anāhata* was correct. *Śabda* is said to have four forms: *parā*, *paśyantī*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī*. Each form is grosser than the preceding one. Articulated speech is of the fourth kind.”

The senior *Jagadguru* then cited the Veda to the effect, “*Four are the definite grades of speech. Those brāhmaṇas who are wise know them. Three are deposited in secret and are motionless. Men speak the fourth grade of speech.*” He continued, “*Vāyu* arising from the *mūlādhāra* ascends through the levels of the navel, heart and throat and produces audible sound. At these four levels, it has the appellations *parā*, *paśyantī*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī*. The *mūlādhāra* and the other *cakras* that you saw have been spoken of in the *Upaniṣads* and the *Tantras*.” He then quoted from the *Yogacūḍāmani-upaniṣad* two verses that give the names of *cakras*, present them as lotuses and specify the number of petals of each lotus. Then He picked up an authoritative text, *Ṣaṭcakra-nirūpaṇa* (*Delineation of the six cakras*), and told His Holiness, “As is discernible from the title, it delineates the *cakras*. I shall read out and briefly explain the three verses about the *maṇipūra*. You will find that what you saw is in conformity with what is described here.” Upon hearing the



*Jagadguru Śrī Candrasekhara Bhārati*

verses and the explanation of His *Guru*, it was clear to His Holiness that what He had seen of the *maṇipūra-cakra* tallied with the description contained in the text.

At that point, two doubts arose in His Holiness's mind. Are the *cakras* actual constituents of the gross body that can be seen within it, by surgeons, like flesh and bones? Have some aspects of the *cakras* and the forms of the divinities to be contemplated therein been described in authoritative texts in more ways than one? What prompted the second doubt was that He had perceived the *iḍā* and *piṅgalā* in two forms each. Even without His asking anything, the senior *Jagadguru* Himself said, "The *cakras* are subtle and cannot be seen with our eyes. They and the *kuṅḍalinī* can, however, be apprehended in meditation by adepts. There do exist some differences in the descriptions of the *cakras* and the *devatās* therein. It is not necessary to consider them now."

After clearing His Holiness's unvoiced doubts, the senior *Jagadguru* lightly patted Him on His left cheek and said, "You are blessed. Śāradāmbā has directly taught you today and that too, of Her own accord. I am reminded of the fact that She Herself had expounded *yoga* to my *Guru* (Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī, the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff). My *Paramaguru* (Jagadguru Śrī Nṛsimha Bhāratī, the 32<sup>nd</sup> pontiff) had earlier told my *Guru* that She would do so. My *Guru* has explicitly stated this in His *Śrī-Śāradā-śataślokī-stavaḥ*." The senior *Jagadguru* then cited the pertinent portion of the hymn wherein the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff has, addressing Goddess Śāradāmbā, said: "My *Guru's* authoritative utterance to me was, 'Your Mother Śāradā, the ocean of mercy, will definitely instruct you soon about *yoga*, which has eight limbs. You are Her own child.'" After this, the senior *Jagadguru* told His Holiness, "You are Her very own. So, it is but fitting that She



*Jagadguru Śrī Nṛsimha Bhāratī*

The senior *Jagadguru* told His Holiness, "You are Her very own. So, it is but fitting that She chose to instruct you. She will teach you further. My *Guru* used to receive Her guidance not only when awake but also in dreams. You too shall do so."

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{While the senior *Jagadguru* did not make any mention of even His having been directly taught by Śāradāmbā, this fact is clear from a pair of verses of His own composition, *Śrī-śāradā-stuti-mañjarī*. Therein, praising Goddess Śāradā, He has stated, “Earlier, I beheld Śāradāmbā in a dream as coming to my abode adorned with earrings and with a joyful face. At all times, the Goddess has, with great compassion, again and again called me, uttering my name, and made known everything to me.”}



*Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Sivābhinava  
Nṛsimha Bhārati*

That night His Holiness had a dream. It began with His being alone in the sanctum of Śāradāmbā. The Goddess Herself manifested in the place of the idol and She seated Him on Her lap. Then in front of Him, He saw a boy who looked like Him. That boy was seated in the *padmāsana* and was wearing just an ochre loin cloth. Somehow, His Holiness could see the boy’s *kuṇḍalinī*, in the form of a coiled serpent, asleep in his *mūlādhāra-cakra*. Goddess Śāradā lightly touched the boy with Her right hand on his back, in the region of the *mūlādhāra-cakra*.

Immediately, the sleeping *kuṇḍalinī* awoke and, hissing, raised its hood. The four petals of the *mūlādhāra-cakra* that were drooping earlier turned upward. The lotus now appeared to be in full bloom, with the letters on the petals bright and visible. Abruptly, the scene changed. His Holiness again saw the *kuṇḍalinī* asleep. This time the Goddess touched the boy between the eyebrows. The *kuṇḍalinī* awakened as before. His Holiness understood, in the dream, that the *kuṇḍalinī* can be awakened by the touch of the *Guru* and that the portion of the back corresponding to the *mūlādhāra* and the region between the eyebrows are among the places where such touch is particularly effective in doing so.

As this understanding dawned on Him, He could again see the boy’s *kuṇḍalinī* lying asleep. The Divine mother now raised Her right hand in a gesture of blessing. She did

not touch the boy. This time too his *kuṇḍalinī* awakened. His Holiness realised that the *Guru* can arouse the *kuṇḍalinī* even by a mental blessing. Next, the boy began to perform *prāṇāyāma*, together with the *jālandhara*, *uḍḍiyāna* and *mūla bandhas*. His Holiness saw a fire building up in the boy's *suṣumnā* and its flames beginning to lick his sleeping *kuṇḍalinī*. As the flames heated the *kuṇḍalinī*, it abruptly woke up and hissed fiercely. Then, it began to ascend the *suṣumnā*. His Holiness understood that the practice of *prāṇāyāma* together with the *jālandhara*, *uḍḍiyāna* and *mūla bandhas* serves to awaken the *kuṇḍalinī*.

The scene underwent a change and He saw the boy's *kuṇḍalinī* asleep yet again. It seemed to Him that He could now experience whatever was going on in the boy's mind. He sensed that the boy was visualising the *mūlādhāra* and contemplating on the *devatās* therein. Then, the lad mentally worshipped the *kuṇḍalinī*. Thereafter, he conceived of the *kuṇḍalinī* being reverentially led by him to the *svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra*. There, he clearly visualised the *svādhiṣṭhāna* and concentrated on the *devatās* therein. Having done so, he offered worship to the *kuṇḍalinī*. This worship was patently a continuation of the worship that he had commenced at the *mūlādhāra*. On apprehending all this, a conviction arose in His Holiness's mind that such visualisation of the *cakras*, meditation on the *devatās* in them and worship of the *kuṇḍalinī* help to awaken and raise the *kuṇḍalinī*. The whole process delighted Him.

The scene changed once again. He saw the boy's *kuṇḍalinī* on the verge of moving up the *suṣumnā*. There appeared to be some obstruction to its ascent. The *kuṇḍalinī*, however, forced its way up. At this point, He heard Goddess Śāradā, on whose lap He was seated in the dream, telling Him, in Sanskrit, "*Having pierced the brahma-granthi, the kuṇḍalinī is moving upwards.*" It seemed to His Holiness that the boy was willing the *kuṇḍalinī* to rise and that this exercise of will power was making a positive contribution. As the *kuṇḍalinī* in the boy reached the *svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra*, that lotus fully bloomed. The *kuṇḍalinī* soon ascended to the *maṇipūra-cakra*. Then, instead of moving upwards, she gradually descended to the *mūlādhāra-cakra* and remained inactive there. On seeing this, His Holiness comprehended that it is possible for the awakened *kuṇḍalinī* to travel partially up the *suṣumnā*, descend and become dormant.

In a few moments, His Holiness again witnessed the arousal and ascent of the boy's *kuṇḍalinī*. This time there appeared to be no obstacle to her ascent from the *mūlādhāra* to beyond the *maṇipūra*. It was at the region of the *anāhata-cakra* that the *kuṇḍalinī* seemed to encounter an obstruction. However, it forced its way through and caused the *anāhata-cakra* to bloom. At this point, the Divine Mother told His Holiness, "*The viṣṇu-granthi has been cut.*"

His Holiness then saw the *kuṇḍalinī* proceeding through the *viśuddha-cakra* to the *ājñā-cakra*. There, it overcame some obstacle and moved upwards. Goddess Śāradā announced, “The piercing of the *rudra-granthi* has occurred.” Finally, the *kuṇḍalinī* reached the pericarp of the *sahasrāra*. The Goddess pointed out, “The *kūṇḍalinī* is united with *Paramaśiva*.”

The boy’s face showed signs of his being in a state of bliss and his body was motionless. From His position on Goddess Śāradā’s lap, His Holiness could not discern the boy’s breathing. At this point, His dream ended and He woke up.

About the locations of the triad of *granthis* (knots), His Holiness later told me as follows:

“There is some direct evidence in the minor *Upaniṣads* that the *brahma*, *viṣṇu* and *rudra granthis* are at the lower end of the *suṣumnā*, the chest and between the brows respectively, which is where the *mūlādhāra*, *anāhata* and *ājñā cakras* are located. As the *iḍā*, *piṅgalā* and *suṣumnā* unite at the *mūlādhāra* and at the *ājñā cakras*, it is understandable that the first and third of the triad of *granthis* be associated with these *cakras*. However, the *Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā* hints and the commentary *Jyotsnā* on it explicitly states that the *brahma*, *viṣṇu* and *rudra granthis* are in the *anāhata*, *viśuddha* and *ājñā cakras* respectively. In his commentary on the *Lalitā-sahasranāma*, Bhāskaraṛāya contends that associated with each *cakra* is a pair of *granthis*, one below and the other above the *cakra*, and that the *brahma*, *viṣṇu* and *rudra granthis* are the pairs of knots associated with the *svādhiṣṭhāna*, *maṇipūra* and *anāhata cakras* respectively.

“A practitioner of *kuṇḍalinī-yoga* should strive to arouse the *kuṇḍalinī* and raise the *śakti* all the way to the *sahasrāra*, overcoming any obstruction in the path regardless of where it may be encountered. He does not have to take radically different steps to pierce a *granthi* than to raise the *kuṇḍalinī* from one *cakra* to the next. Further, the way to deal with a particular *granthi*, say the *viṣṇu-granthi*, does not change regardless of whether it be associated with the *anāhata*, *viśuddha* or *maṇipūra cakras*. Hence, the lack of uniformity in the specification of the locations of the *granthis* is not of practical consequence to a spiritual aspirant.”

Even during the dream, His Holiness unambiguously realised that though Goddess Śāradā was Herself making known *kuṇḍalinī-yoga* to Him, She did not intend that this be His principal *sādhana*. However, He did put into practice what all She led Him to recognize as meant to be implemented by Him. In the dream, *praṇāyāma* with the three *bandhas* had been made known as a means to arouse the *kuṇḍalinī* and this was something He had started practising even earlier. After the dream, He started the practice of visualising

the *mūlādhāra-cakra*, contemplating on the deities therein just as they had been shown to Him and then worshipping the *kuṇḍalinī* there. Next, He conceived that in response to His request, the *kuṇḍalinī* rose to the *svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra*. He visualised that *cakra* clearly, focused on the *devatās* there and continued His mental worship of the *kuṇḍalinī*. In this fashion, He carried forward the worship in the higher *cakras*. Wherever appropriate, He saw the *kuṇḍalinī* in the form of Goddess Pārvatī. He adorned Śakti with ornaments at the *maṇipūra-cakra*, performed *dīpārādhana* at the *ājñā-cakra* and at the *sahasrāra*, just conceived that Śakti and Śiva had become one. He devoutly performed, without expectation of anything, such *cakra*-based contemplation and worship every Tuesday and Friday morning for about 20 minutes.

It is quite possible for a *vedāntin* or for a practitioner of *pātañjala-yoga* to attain *samādhi* even without any explicit experience of the arousal and ascent of the *kuṇḍalinī*. In His Holiness's case, His first experience of *savikalpa-samādhi* occurred some months prior to His first explicit experience of the ascent of the *kuṇḍalinī*. The latter occurred during the *cāturmāsya* of the year *Yuva*, which was from 16<sup>th</sup> July to 12<sup>th</sup> September, 1935.

One Monday morning, His Holiness sat in the *siddhāsana* and did four *prāṇāyāmas* with the *jālandhara*, *uḍḍiyāna* and *mūla bandhas*. Then, He began His meditation as usual by directing His gaze to between His eyebrows and mentally chanting 'Om'. As happened generally, a blue hue manifested. Before He visualised any form, He suddenly felt something like an electric shock at the middle of His soles. The sensation started to move upwards, diffusing through the body. Its ascent from the soles to the base of the back was very quick; it was almost instantaneous. When it arrived at the base of His back, He momentarily saw the lotus of the *mūlādhāra* in bloom.

The *kuṇḍalinī*'s ascent from the base of the back to a little below the navel was swift. During this, He first had a fleeting view of the *svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra*. Just before the *kuṇḍalinī* rose to the level of His navel, He beheld the lotus of the *maṇipūra* facing downwards, with the ten petals almost fully closed. The lotus became upright and bloomed when the *kuṇḍalinī*

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reached it. The *kuṇḍalinī*'s upward movement thereafter was akin to that of an ant. As the *kuṇḍalinī* approached the level of the *anāhata-cakra*, He saw the 12 petals of that red lotus facing downwards and becoming upward-turned when it arrived there. Similar was the case when it rose to the levels of the *viśuddha* and *ājñā cakras*. During the ascent of the *kuṇḍalinī*, He felt intense heat and ceased to be conscious of the portion of the body below whatever level it reached. His body jerked sharply. Then, His breathing abruptly stopped. When the *kuṇḍalinī* travelled into His head, He plunged deeply into *savikalpa-samādhi*.

After He had briefly seen the *ājñā-cakra* in bloom, He experienced a bright flash of light like lightning. Next, He saw a charming, luminous, tiny blue orb. His attention locked on to it and as He could then behold only that orb, its smallness was no more apparent. Thereafter, within it, He apprehended the forms of Śiva and Pārvatī. The blue orb with the forms of Śiva and Pārvatī constituted the object of His *savikalpa-samādhi*.

Later, Śiva and Pārvatī disappeared. Thereafter, the blue orb ceased to be seen. He then felt as though He was moving downwards together with a divine power. Leaving behind the *ājñā*, *viśuddha*, and *anāhata cakras* one after the other, the *kuṇḍalinī* came to the *maṇipūra-cakra*. Without sensing any further descent of the power, He gained partial awareness of the body; the part below the level of the navel was, as it were, missing. As He became aware of the rest of the body too, He realised that He had adopted the *jālandhara*, *uḍḍiyāna* and *mūla bandhas*. He had no idea when He had done so, involuntarily. He released the *bandhas* and started to breathe normally. When He opened His eyes, He noticed that His legs were bluish. In moments, they became normal.

His next experience of the ascent of the *kuṇḍalinī* to the *sahasrāra* in the head took place the very next day, which was a Tuesday, and differed from the first one in some ways. Since a few months after His *saṁnyāsa*, He used to mentally offer worship to the *kuṇḍalinī* in the various *cakras*. He continued the worship done in one *cakra* in the next higher *cakra* after conceiving that He reverentially led the *kuṇḍalinī* there. He performed such worship on Tuesdays and Fridays, in the mornings. Accordingly, on that Tuesday too, He began His mental worship of the *kuṇḍalinī* in the *mūlādhāra-cakra* and continued it in the *svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra*. When He imagined that the *kuṇḍalinī* ascended to the *maṇipūra-cakra*, His breathing spontaneously stopped and He automatically adopted the *jālandhara*, *uḍḍiyāna* and *mūla bandhas*.

He then experienced an upward movement of the *kuṇḍalinī*. Simultaneously, He felt that the elements *prthvī* (earth), *āpas* (water) and *agni* (fire) had become sequentially absorbed into the *kuṇḍalinī*, together with the divinities of the *mūlādhāra*, *svādhiṣṭhāna* and



*maṅḍipūra cakras*. He also felt a great infusion of power into Himself. In a serpentine manner, the *kuṇḍalinī-śakti* soon reached the *anāhata-cakra*. The element *vāyu* (air) and the *devatās* of the *anāhata* appeared to become absorbed into the *kuṇḍalinī*.

From the *anāhata-cakra* to the *viśuddha-cakra*, the ascent of the *kuṇḍalinī* was not serpentine but instantaneous. He felt that the element *ākāśa* (space) and the *devatās* of the *viśuddha-cakra* became merged into the *kuṇḍalinī*. The next moment, the *kuṇḍalinī* was at the *ājñā-cakra*. He got the feeling that all the organs became absorbed into the *kuṇḍalinī* there. Then, He had a vision of Śiva as Dakṣiṇāmūrti.

The ascent of the *kuṇḍalinī* from the *ājñā-cakra* to the *sahasrāra* was not instantaneous but was swift. He obtained just a fleeting, indistinct, view of some centres in between and felt that the mind and intellect were absorbed by the *kuṇḍalinī* en route. At the pericarp of the *sahasrāra*, He had the vision of a nectar-shedding, moon-like region. This contained a triangular zone, lustrous like lightning, with a minute, apparently empty, space within. He then spontaneously went into *savikalpa-samādhi*. The object of His focus was God as inhabiting the tiny space.

As He emerged from the *samādhi*, He felt Himself descending rapidly with the *kuṇḍalinī*. At the *ājñā*, *viśuddha* and *anāhata cakras*, what had merged into the *kuṇḍalinī* during the *kuṇḍalinī's* ascent through these *cakras* reappeared. When the *anāhata-cakra* was reached, He gained mild awareness of the body. He noticed that His tongue was folded backwards and felt the descent of a few cool drops of a uniquely tasty fluid into the back of His throat. Finally, He opened His eyes. Unlike on the previous occasion, His legs were not bluish for a while. Also, this time, He straightaway regained awareness of the full body and not merely of its upper half.

His Holiness had no difficulty in identifying the fluid that He felt descending into the back of the throat to be nectar from the *sahasrāra*. While seeing Śiva's demonstration of the *khecarī-mudrā* during the dream that His Holiness had on the night of 28<sup>th</sup> May, 1931, He had experienced the descent of a fluid into the back of His mouth and understood that this removes hunger, thirst and dullness. The taste that He experienced then became imprinted in His mind. The taste of the fluid that He noticed on becoming mildly aware of the body was the same as that taste. The invigorating effect too tallied with what He had experienced in the dream; this one lasted for two days. In the dream in which Śāradāmbā had taught Him about the arousal and ascent of the *kuṇḍalinī*, He had seen the moon-like region at the pericarp of the *sahasrāra* shedding nectar. What He beheld in that dream matched what He apprehended in His meditation. So, He had

no difficulty in identifying the fluid as one stemming from the *sahasrāra*. An experience that He had three days later supported His conclusion.

That morning, a Friday, as He was about to visualise and focus on a divine form in His heart, His tongue folded backwards. Then, for a moment, He saw the Divine Mother as seated in the *sahasrāra* and pouring down nectar. He decided to meditate on Her in this

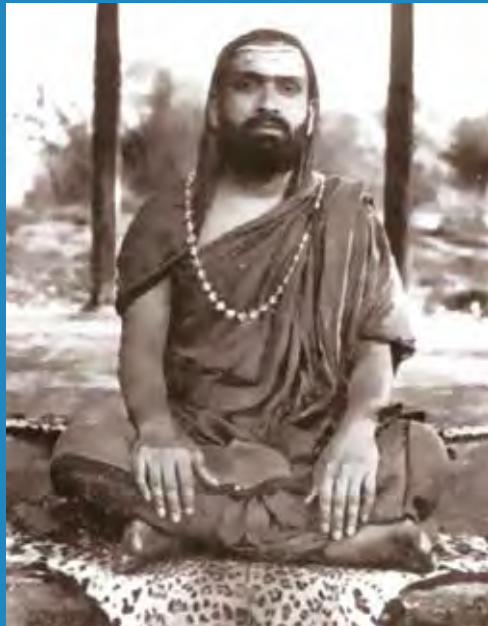
As regards Divine Mother being in the *sahasrāra* and raining nectar, the *Lalitā-sahasranāma* of the *Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa* contains the names, “*sahasrārāmbujārūḍhā*, *She who has ascended the sahasrāra lotus*” and “*sudhā-sārābhivarṣiṇī*, *She who rains torrents of nectar*” and it is said in the *Āryā-dviśatī*, attributed to Sage Durvāsa, “*The life-span on earth of those who contemplate every day on You (Mother) as present within the lotus of the head and raining cool nectar becomes great.*”

very fashion. So, He conceived of Her as He had glimpsed Her and focused on Her. He was soon in *savikalpa-samādhi*. When He regained awareness of the body, He felt a few drops of fluid descending into the back of His throat. The taste, coolness and invigorating effect were the same as on the previous occasion. As regards Divine Mother being in the *sahasrāra* and raining nectar, the *Lalitā-sahasranāma* of the *Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa* contains the names, “*sahasrārāmbujārūḍhā*, *She who has ascended the sahasrāra lotus*” and “*sudhā-sārābhivarṣiṇī*, *She who rains torrents of nectar*” and it is said in the *Āryā-dviśatī*, attributed to Sage Durvāsa, “*The life-span on earth of those who contemplate every day on You (Mother) as present within the lotus of the head and raining cool nectar becomes great.*”

As His Holiness engaged in His morning *āhnikā* after the *samādhi* that Friday, it seemed to Him that something was beginning to ooze from the crown of His head. This caused Him no discomfort.

He pushed back His upper garment from over His head and felt the spot concerned. He determined that a fluid was indeed slowly emerging from there. It looked like pure water and flowed down the side of His head. In about a minute, the oozing stopped. About a spoonful of liquid had come out by then.

On the preceding few days, the senior *Jagadguru* had been somewhat withdrawn. However, that day, when His Holiness had the *darśana* of His *Guru*, the latter gave Him an opportunity to briefly report His experiences. The senior *Jagadguru* confirmed that what His Holiness had felt at the back of the throat was nectar from the *sahasrāra*. He then revealed to His Holiness that, at times, He had spontaneously experienced the descent



of this nectar and that in His case its effect had lasted for one to three days. He further said, “Some water oozed from the crown of my head either before or after the descent of nectar. The descent of nectar and the oozing of water are not related as cause and effect. The water can be perceived and accessed by others. However, though the descent, taste, coolness and invigorating effect of the nectar can be clearly experienced by one, it is impossible for another to perceive or collect that nectar. No examination of the interior of the head, throat or stomach will show up the presence of any nectar.”

Subsequently, His Holiness discerned from personal experience too that, as stated by the senior *Jagadguru*, the descent of nectar and the oozing of fluid from the top of the head are not causally related. Occasionally, during His meditation on God, His tongue involuntarily folded back and He spontaneously experienced

the descent of a few drops of nectar, without any oozing occurring before, during or after that session of meditation. On some other occasions, He noticed the oozing, without any experience of the descent of nectar on those days.

{In September 1979, during *Navarātri*, His Holiness sent for me one morning at 6:30 a.m.; I normally had His *āhnikā-darśana* at eight o'clock. He, who was about to commence a *japa*, told me, “I have a feeling that water will ooze from my head in a few minutes. I thought that you would like to see it.” I completed my *namaskāras* and waited. His Holiness pushed back His upper garment from His head. Less than a minute thereafter, I saw a drop of liquid make its appearance at the crown of His head. The rest of His Holiness's head was dry. The weather was cool and He was not sweating at all. Slowly, some more liquid oozed out at that very spot. He bent forward and neatly collected the entire quantity in His *uddharaṇī* (spoon for taking up water). I saw that the amount collected was about 10 ml. It was colourless. Acceding to my request, He poured the liquid into my cupped right palm. I noted that it was odourless and seemed to be water. Regarding the fluid as sacrosanct, I wanted to drink it after leaving. However, His Holiness said, “Throw it away and wash your hands. It has come out like sweat. Being impure, it is unfit to be drunk.” The oozing on that day was unconnected with any descent of nectar.}

About the arousal and ascent of the *kuṇḍalinī*, His Holiness has clarified, “Some hold that the arousal of the *kuṇḍalinī* and its ascent to the *svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra* are likely to be accompanied by a temporary manifestation of intense sexual desire. It is also contended that the piercing of the *brahma*, *viṣṇu* and *rudra granthis* by the *kuṇḍalinī* on its way from the *mūlādhāra* to the *sahasrāra* is accompanied by much pain and even sickness. The laudable course is for one to first cultivate intense dispassion and to purify the *nāḍīs*. Only *sāttvika* food should be consumed. Further, *kuṇḍalinī-yoga* should be practised under the guidance of an adept and not by just referring to books. For one who ensures all this, the arousal and ascent of the *kuṇḍalinī* are definitely not accompanied by lust, pain and sickness.”





## CHAPTER 9

# An Extraordinary Blessing

It was the 5<sup>th</sup> of December, 1935, corresponding to *mārgaśira-śukla-daśamī* of the cyclical year *Yuva*, and the time was a little past 4:00 p.m. His Holiness was about to set out for His meditation spot on the hilltop with a view of the *Malahānikareśvara* Temple. An attendant informed Him that the senior *Jagadguru* had sent for Him. He promptly presented Himself to His *Guru* and performed *namaskāra*. The senior *Jagadguru* gestured to Him to sit down. On His doing so, He asked, “Were you about to leave for meditation?” On receiving an answer in the affirmative, He smiled. Then He remained silent for a minute, gazing fixedly at His disciple’s face. Smiling again, He said, “I am glad. You can start.” As His Holiness then prostrated once more before His *Guru*, the latter leaned forward and placed both His hands on His disciple’s head and loudly uttered thrice the *mantra*, “*om namaḥ śivāya* (*Om. Obeisance to Śiva*).” This was unusual. As His Holiness got up, He strongly felt, “Today, I must meditate on Śiva.”

He went to His room, picked up His *āsana-vastra* (cloth spread on a seat) and started for the hill. His attendant followed Him. He was only a short distance away from Sacchidananda Vilas when He heard the senior *Jagadguru*’s clap. The sound seemed to come from outside the building. He turned around and noticed that the





### *View of Malahānikareśvara Temple steps*

senior *Jagadguru* was standing in front of Sacchidananda Vilas, looking in His direction. He was about to rush towards His *Guru* when the latter gestured that He should move on as He was doing earlier. He, however, beckoned to His disciple's attendant. His Holiness walked swiftly and soon reached the base of the hill. He turned to see if His attendant was trying to catch up with Him but the attendant was nowhere in sight.

The idea of meditating in complete solitude appealed to Him. He nimbly ascended the hill. At its summit, He sat down at His place of meditation, facing west. The distant *Malahānikareśvara* Temple was in His line of sight. The sky was cloudless. Both the sun and the moon were clearly visible. Charmed by the very appealing scene, He chanted the penultimate verse of Bhagavatpāda's *Dakṣiṇāmūrti-stotra*. The meaning of that verse is: "*Obeisance to that resplendent Dakṣiṇāmūrti (Śiva), who is incarnate in the form of the Guru, whose eight-fold form is all this moving and unmoving universe, appearing as earth, water, fire, air, space, the sun, the moon and the soul; and beyond whom, the Supreme and all-pervading one, nothing else exists for the discerning.*"

Having adopted the *siddhāsana*, He mentally offered His *namaskāras* to His *Guru* and Śiva before commencing His meditation. He directed His gaze to the space between His

eyebrows. Keeping His eyes fixed, He mentally chanted the *mantra*, “*om̐ namaḥ śivāya.*” As usual, He felt a strong tingling sensation between His eyebrows. He soon began to behold an attractive and soothing moon-like disc of light within Him in that region. Such a disc had made its appearance only on a few earlier occasions. What manifested often was a blue hue; much less frequently, a green hue used to manifest. With His mind having become greatly tranquil and attentive, He imagined His heart-lotus in full bloom. As described in the *dhyāna-ślokā* of the *mantra*, He visualised Śiva therein as associated with the Divine Mother and as possessed of five heads and ten arms. The meaning of the said *dhyāna-śloka* is: “*I salute Pārvatī’s Lord, who is tranquil, is seated in padmāsana, has the moon in His crest, has five faces (four in the four directions and one upward-turned), has three eyes (per face), bears a trident, thunderbolt, sword, axe and the symbol of granting freedom from fear (open upraised palm) in the (five hands on the) right side and bears a snake, noose, bell, the fire of cosmic dissolution and a goad in the (five hands on the) left side, is variously adorned and resembles (in complexion) a crystal gem.*”



As He focused on the form, His awareness of the surroundings and the body vanished. Soon, His mental chanting of the *mantra* came to a stop and His mind thoroughly locked on to the divine form in the heart. Suddenly, the form became extraordinarily vivid. No effort to concentrate was needed any more. He could then literally experience the immediate presence of Śiva. He was overwhelmed with joy, particularly enthralled by the affection and smile He apprehended in the Lord’s *iśāna-mukha* (upward-turned face). After about one and a half hours, as He discerned later but what then seemed to Him to be just a moment, He became lightly aware of the body. He opened His eyes. He could see the sun close to the horizon and feel a gentle breeze. He could, at the same time, distinctly behold the Lord, as associated with the Divine Mother, in His heart-lotus. The Lord appeared to be emerging from within and expanding. A deep long sound of ‘*om*’ was audible. He then unmistakably beheld Śiva in front of and facing Him.



Tears of joy flowed from His eyes and His hairs stood on end. The Lord's lips moved and He heard the Lord pleasingly say, "*vatsa, śvaḥprabhṛty-atra nirākāre pare tattve manaḥ samādhatva. acireṇa brahmasaṁstho bhaviṣyasi (O child, from tomorrow, fix your mind here on the formless, Supreme Reality. You shall soon become established in Brahman.)*" Then Śiva blessed Him by placing His hand on His Holiness's head. Having done so, the Lord disappeared.

No sooner had Śiva vanished than there was a drizzle. Moments later, the sun set; simultaneously, the light rain stopped. The sky was quite clear when He had sat for meditation and even when the sun set, clouds were not apparent. The sun having been visible when it rained and as it has been said that exposure to such rain is akin to bathing in the Gaṅgā, He felt that the Lord had blessed Him with a light bath in the Gaṅgā. In a state of ecstasy, He paid obeisance to the Lord and extolled Śiva through ten verses that spontaneously occurred to Him. His impromptu composition in Sanskrit was in the *bhujanga-prayāta* metre, which comprises four quarters of 12 syllables each, with the syllables of every quarter occurring in the repeating sequence "short syllable, long syllable, long syllable." His voice kept choking as He metrically glorified the Lord.

He then felt an urge to meditate again. Since the Lord had directly instructed Him as a *Guru*, He thought of meditating on Him as *Dakṣiṇāmūrti*, the divine conferrer

His Holiness distinctly beheld the Lord, as associated with the Divine Mother, in His heart-lotus. The Lord appeared to be emerging from within and expanding. A deep long sound of 'om' was audible. He then unmistakably beheld Śiva in front of and facing Him. The Lord's lips moved. He heard the Lord pleasingly say, "*O child, from tomorrow, fix your mind here on the formless, Supreme Reality. You shall soon become established in Brahman.*" Then Śiva blessed Him by placing His hand on His Holiness's head.



of knowledge. Mentally chanting the *Medhā-Dakṣiṇāmūrti-mantra*, He straightaway visualised the Lord in His heart-lotus as described in the *mantra's dhyāna-śloka*. The meaning of that *dhyāna-śloka* is: *“I adore Dakṣiṇāmūrti who is of crystal and silver complexion, holds in His lotus-like hands a rosary of pearls, a vessel of nectar, a book and the symbol of knowledge (characterised by the tips of the thumb and index finger touching one another and the other three fingers held straight), has a serpent for His girdle, has the moon in His crest, is three-eyed and has donned various ornaments.”* Awareness of the surroundings and the body ceased. Subsequently, the mental chanting of the *mantra* automatically came to a stop and His focus was just on the form. There were no distracting thoughts of any kind. The meditation was deep, with the form quite clear. When He regained consciousness of the body and opened His eyes, He found no trace of sunlight. The place was, however, illuminated by the light of the moon. Stars were visible.

It was only a few moments later that He realised that there was something on His neck. A big cobra had loosely coiled itself around it. Its upraised hood was near His right shoulder, facing away from Him. He had meditated on *Bhujāṅga-bhūṣaṇa* (an epithet of Śiva meaning, “He who has a snake for an ornament”) and now a snake was on His body as an ornament. Taking this as a sign of the Lord’s grace, He felt very happy. He stroked the cobra gently. It seemed to like this and rested its head against His right cheek. After about five minutes, the snake slowly uncoiled itself and went away. He got up and walked down the hill, seeing His way in the light of the moon.

At the base of the hill, He found His attendant waiting with a lamp. This was unprecedented,



His Holiness realised that there was something on His neck. A big cobra had loosely coiled itself around it. Its upraised hood was near His right shoulder, facing away from Him. He had meditated on *Bhujāṅga-bhūṣaṇa* (an epithet of Śiva meaning, “He who has a snake for an ornament”) and now a snake was on His body as an ornament.



“Today, you have received the very special grace and instruction of Parameśvara. Finally, for a while, you were a *bhujāṅga-bhūṣaṇa* (one adorned with a serpent). Is it not?” His Holiness reverentially answered, “Yes” and added that all this was the consequence of His *Guru’s* blessing bestowed on Him before He had left for the hill.

for, on earlier occasions, He was followed up the hill without any lamp by the attendant on duty. On His way back, in response to His question, the attendant said that after calling him, the senior *Jagadguru* had instructed him to wait for His Holiness, with a lamp in hand, at the base of the hill, after two and a half hours. He had been waiting only for some minutes when His Holiness came there. It was obvious to His Holiness that His *Guru* had accurately foreseen the time that He would be spending on the hill. He also discerned that His second session of meditation, which was totally unplanned, must have lasted for almost an hour.

While He was ready to report the events to His *Guru*, since, as per the normal practice, He was scheduled to have His *Guru’s darśana* only the next morning during the latter’s *āhnikā*, He returned to His room. However, in a few moments, He received a message that He had been sent for by His *Guru*. As the senior *Jagadguru* was engaged in His evening *āhnikā*, He went to His presence and stood silently after performing *namaskāra*. On completing a *japa*, the senior *Jagadguru* looked at Him with a smile and said, “Today, you have received the very special grace and instruction of Parameśvara. Finally, for a while, you were a *bhujāṅga-bhūṣaṇa* (one adorned with a serpent). Is it not?” His Holiness reverentially answered, “Yes” and added that all this was the consequence of His *Guru’s* blessing bestowed on Him before He had left for the hill. As His *Guru* had just unmistakably revealed that He was quite aware of what had transpired at the hill, He felt that it was unwarranted for Him to report the details. The senior *Jagadguru* said, “It is getting late for your evening bath. You can go for it now and proceed with your *āhnikā*.” His Holiness prostrated and went straight for His bath.

That night, He had a dream in which He beheld Śiva dancing magnificently in the form of Naṭarāja, the king of dancers, with the Divine Mother looking on. After some time, this scene was replaced by one in which Śiva appeared in conjunction with Divine Mother, as Ardhanārīśwara (The Lord having a half-male and half-female form). In the dream itself, He venerated Śiva-Śakti by chanting Bhagavatpāda's *Ardhanārīśwara-stotra*. Thereafter, the scene changed to one in which He lay prostrate before the Lord as Dakṣiṇāmūrti seated at the base of a big fig tree. He found Himself merging into the Lord. With His becoming one with the Lord, the dream ended and He woke up. The time was 4:30 in the morning.





## CHAPTER 10

# Blossoming of Enlightenment

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of December, 1935, corresponding to *mārgaśira-śukla-ekādaśī*, His Holiness reached His meditation spot on the hill around five o'clock in the evening. He sat down there in the *siddhāsana*, facing the Malahānikareśvara Temple in the west. In keeping with the Lord's instruction received by Him the previous evening, He intended to focus on the Supreme *Brahman*, with the scripture as the authoritative basis and corroborative reasoning as an aid. He started by calling to mind three profound statements of the *Taittirīya-upaniṣad*, which He knew by rote. The first of these conveys, "He who knows Brahman attains the highest." The import of the second is, "On realising the bliss of Brahman, the enlightened man is not afraid of anything." The meaning of the third is, "For, when this (ignorant) man perceives even the slightest variety in Brahman, then (because of that perception of difference) fear arises in him." He then reflected on them as under.

"From these scriptural declarations, it follows that on realising *Brahman*, I will attain unity with *Brahman*, the highest. On the other hand, as long as I do not realise *Brahman* and I perceive duality, bondage will not cease. Knowledge does not actually make or modify an object. It only removes the ignorance relating to the object. So, even now, I am indeed *Brahman* and the world has no existence apart from It. It is only because of ignorance that I seem to be otherwise and perceive duality. Else, there is no question of my realisation of *Brahman* leading to my becoming *Brahman* and to the cessation of diversity as declared by the scripture.

"This body, made up of skin, blood, flesh, bones and the like, is dependent on food and is inert. It is perceivable like an external object,

"Knowledge does not actually make or modify an object. It only removes the ignorance relating to the object. So, even now, I am indeed *Brahman* and the world has no existence apart from It."

such as a stone. What is inert and perceivable is different from that which is conscious and perceives it. I am conscious and perceive the body; as for my consciousness, that is self-evident. So, I am not the body. Likewise, I am not the *prāṇas*. The organs are, in themselves, inert and are merely the instruments of perception and activity. As such, the possibility of me being the organs does not arise.

“The mind is changeful and comprises thoughts and emotions that arise and disappear. I am aware of the thoughts and emotions. How can I be the mind, for it is but an object of consciousness, as is a stone? It cannot be that a second thought, and not consciousness other than the mind, is necessary or sufficient to reveal a thought. This is because another thought would be needed to reveal the thought that reveals the first one; yet another thought would be needed to reveal that thought and so on. There would be the fallacy of infinite regress.

“*Sāttvika* food conduces to mental purity and calmness, while *rājasika* and *tāmasika* foods affect the mind adversely. It is well known that the thinking of a person heavily under the influence of liquor is impaired. Affected by what is ingested, the mind is a material entity, notwithstanding its subtlety. Though it appears to be conscious, the mind, which is material, is inert. I who am patently not inert cannot be the inert mind.

“The agent denoted by ‘I’ in notions such as, ‘I see this,’ ‘I feel dull’ and ‘I do this’ manifests in the states of waking and dream but disappears with the onset of deep sleep. One would not be in deep sleep at all if one were to have any notion at that time like, ‘I am fast asleep.’ I, however, do exist not only in the states of waking and dream but also in deep sleep. This is confirmed by the ready recognition on awakening, ‘During deep sleep, I slept happily. I did not know anything at that time.’ As the agent disappears during deep sleep but I persist therein, I cannot be this agent marked by the I-thought.

“Agency involves change and pertains to the intellect. Though reflecting the light of the sun and appearing bright, a mirror is intrinsically not a source of light. Likewise, though appearing to be intrinsically conscious, the intellect, being a material entity like the organs, is inert. I am the witness of even the intellect and, so, distinct from it.”

At this point, He thought of a pair of verses of the *Bhagavadgītā*, the meaning of which is, “*The great elements (space, air, fire, water and earth), egoism, intellect, the Unmanifest itself; the ten organs and the mind; the five objects of the senses (sound, touch, form, taste and smell); desire, aversion, happiness, sorrow, the aggregate (of the body and organs), sentience and fortitude – this is a brief account of the field, together with its modifications.*” He proceeded with His analysis as follows.

“From these words of the Lord, it is clear that the body, senses, mind and intellect are all inert objects of knowledge. Characterised by consciousness and being the one who illumines them, I am surely distinct from them.

“The states of waking, dream and deep sleep are neither natural to me nor absolutely real. This is because while I persist unchanged in all these three states, the state of waking is absent during the states of dream and deep sleep; the dream state is absent during the states of waking and deep sleep; and deep sleep is absent during waking and dream. What appears and disappears like a mirage cannot be absolutely real. Being subject to annulment, the states of waking, dream and deep sleep are false. I am unstained by them like the desert by mirages.

“Various objects are illumined by the sun, which is distinct from them and is one. Likewise, the objects encountered in the waking state are diverse and undergo changes but the consciousness that illumines them is distinct from them and is one. As in the waking state, the changeful, diverse objects seen in the dream state are revealed by consciousness that is constant and one. In deep sleep, consciousness reveals ignorance. There is no ground to presume either that there is any difference in the consciousness that shines in the three states or that it is subject to any change. Certainly, the objects revealed cannot establish any change in what reveals them. Further, consciousness cannot witness any change in itself. This unchanging consciousness cannot be other than myself. On the authority of the *Śruti*, I am the Supreme *Brahman*.”

Moving on to the nature of *Brahman* as made known in the scripture, He recalled the words of the *Taittirīya-upaniṣad*, “*satyaṃ jñānam-anantaṃ brahma*”; this conveys, “*Brahman is truth (satya), knowledge (jñāna) and infinite (ananta)*.” Taking up each of the three characteristics of the Supreme spoken of, He pondered as follows.

“The body, senses, mind and intellect are all inert objects of knowledge. Characterised by consciousness and being the one who illumines them, I am surely distinct from them.”



“The states of waking, dream and deep sleep are neither natural to me nor absolutely real. Being subject to annulment, these states are false. I am unstained by them like the desert by mirages.”



“Only that which never gets annulled at any time - past, present or future - is *satya*. What is subject to change cannot be defined as being *satya*. *Brahman*, thus, ever was, is and will be changeless. It is absolute existence. *Brahman* is said here to be *jñāna*, knowledge, rather than to be *jñātṛ*, a perceiver. It is thus of the very nature of consciousness. What is delimited by time, space or objects is not unconditionally *ananta*, infinite. As the *Śruti* declares that *Brahman* is *ananta*, It cannot be conditioned by time, space or objects. Thus, there is no time when It is absent, there is no place at all where *Brahman* is not present and there is no object whatsoever that exists apart from *Brahman*.”

He then brought to mind two passages of the said *Upaniṣad*. The first of these conveys, “From that *Brahman* indeed, which is this *Ātman*, was produced space. From space emerged air. From air was born fire. From fire was created water. From water sprang up earth.” The import of the second one is, “Seek to know well that from which all these beings take birth, that by which they live after being born and to which they go and into which they merge. That is *Brahman*.” He proceeded to think as follows.

“That everything is rooted in *Brahman* is clear from these words. As *Brahman* is changeless, there is no question of It actually becoming transformed into the element space or of It actually producing space like a potter making a pot. Space and the other elements ought, therefore, to be appearances in *Brahman*, like a mirage in the desert. They have no existence apart from *Brahman*.”

Having thus ascertained the true nature of the individual self and that of the Supreme, He recalled a passage of the said *Upaniṣad* that points to their identity as also two allied verses of the *Bhagavadgītā*. The import of that passage is, “He that is here in the human person and He that is there in the sun are one.” The two verses of the *Bhagavadgītā* convey, “He whose mind is absorbed in yoga and who has the vision of sameness everywhere sees the *Ātman* as abiding in all beings and all beings as abiding in the *Ātman*. He who sees Me in everything and sees all things in Me – I do not go out of his vision and he also is not lost to My vision.” He then concluded as follows.

“Only that which never gets annulled at any time, past, present or future, is *satya*. What is subject to change cannot be defined as being *satya*. *Brahman*, thus, ever was, is and will be changeless. It is absolute Existence.”



“*Brahman* is said to be *jñāna*, knowledge, rather than to be *jñātṛ*, a perceiver. It is thus of the very nature of consciousness. As the *Śruti* declares that *Brahman* is *ananta*, infinite, It cannot be conditioned by time, space or objects.”

*“Brahman, which is absolute existence, pure consciousness and infinite, shines as the self of every being. Though appearing as the world, It is non-dual and unaffected in any way. As taught by the scripture, I am indeed the Supreme Brahman, the Ātman of all. I never was, am or will be otherwise.”*

His aforesaid enquiry into the Truth lasted for about 45 minutes and resulted in great clarity of understanding, freedom from doubts and conviction, something that He thereafter attributed to the grace of His *Guru* and God. Though He did not choose to keep His eyes closed during His deep reflection, He hardly noticed anything external. He felt ready to deeply focus on the Supreme. It was about 15 minutes before sunset, which was at 6:00 p.m.

He initiated His meditation as usual by gazing at the space between the brows and mentally chanting *“om”*. He apprehended a blue hue, just as He often did. At this point, instead of conceiving any divine form, He mentally uttered the words, *“aham-eva param brahma vāsudevākhyam-avyayam,”* as they captured the essence of His scripture-based reflection; these words constitute the first half of the opening verse of Bhagavatpāda’s *Brahmānucintana* and convey, *“I am indeed the Supreme Brahman, the One free from decay and known as Vāsudeva (He who resides in and shines in all).”* Without repeating the words, He strongly held on to the idea conveyed. Immediately, He felt himself expanding and becoming pervasive like space. By countering the notion of being limited by the body and the like, this experience intensified the impact of His earlier contemplation. A great wave of joy arose and submerged Him. While feeling omnipresent like space, He did not have any apprehension of either darkness or light. Such was the intensity of the focus that ensued that He remained, as it were, as just objectless consciousness and bliss. However, as the need for effort to hold on to the idea of being *Brahman* did not vanish, this was deep meditation, but not *samādhi*. After what seemed a trice, He gained mild awareness of the body; actually, about 30 to 45 minutes had passed.

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*“I am indeed the Supreme Brahman, the One free from decay and known as Vāsudeva (He who resides in and shines in all).”*

He mentally repeated the enquiry of that day twice in the course of the next day, the 7<sup>th</sup> of December, corresponding to *mārgaśira-śukla-dvādaśī*. After sitting down at His meditation spot on the summit of the hill around 4:30 p.m., He pondered as follows.

“Thoughts of objects and the ‘I’ thought arise in the mind and highlight objects and the agent respectively. Happiness, sorrow and the like too are only mental modifications as are the transformations of the mind in the form of external objects. The agent and the ‘I’ thought are relatively fundamental and not characterised by the great diversity of the thoughts of objects. Nonetheless, even agency and the sense of ‘I’ pertain to the mind and not to the *Ātman*. The *Ātman* is pure consciousness and is ever changeless. Being of this kind, the *Ātman* can neither be the mind nor be affected in any way by the mind. Yet, having falsely identified the *Ātman* with the mind, one deems oneself to be an agent and treats as valid notions such as, ‘I see this,’ ‘This is mine,’ ‘I am happy’ and ‘I am unhappy.’ Decidedly, only right knowledge can annul ignorance and misunderstanding.”

He recalled that on the preceding evening He had voluntarily thought of His true nature as discerned by Him in the light of the scripture and corroborative reasoning and retained that notion; and that, fortunately, no other thought had cropped up and impaired His meditation. At this juncture, it struck Him that like using a thorn to remove a thorn that has pierced one’s sole, He could as well use even unwanted mental activity as a means to direct His attention to the *Ātman*. As regards this, He reasoned as follows.

“Per se, the *Ātman* is objectless, absolute consciousness and is none other than *Brahman*. With respect to the ‘I’ thought as also other thoughts, It is their witness. Hence, instead of giving importance to any thought that arises or actively quelling it, I could contemplate on the *Ātman* as being the witness of that thought. The thought would then serve as a pointer to the *Ātman* rather than as a distracter. If I stand back from a thought as a disinterested witness, the thought would be deprived of stimulation and should soon die out. Hence, my using a thought to turn to the *Ātman* ought not to have the undesirable consequence of making the thought persist. It is not as though the meditation would grind to a halt when the mind becomes completely still. This is because my aim is not to watch thoughts but to abide as the *Ātman*, which shines on Its own without any dependence on the mind.”

He thought in this fashion for two or three minutes. To try out what He had planned, He needed some thought in the mind in the early phase of His meditation. However, His mind was simply not given to wandering during meditation. So, He decided that instead of voluntarily generating some thought, He would employ His eagerness to meditate without delay as the requisite prop. He reasoned that just as when one eats, one’s desire to

have a meal becomes quieted, the desire to meditate would automatically disappear with His engaging in meditation and, so, He would just not be faced with the problem of the thought persisting.

He affirmed to Himself that He was pure consciousness unlimited by space, time and objects and started His meditation. He skipped the step of directing His gaze to the space between the brows and allowing a hue to be apprehended there, for He wanted to make immediate use of the desire to meditate that He had willingly entertained at that time. He experienced no difficulty in initiating contemplation on the *Ātman* as the witness of this desire. Almost immediately thereafter, the mental activity serving as the object vanished. An essentially isolated 'I' thought remained. He maintained the attitude of being a witness characterised by pure, unlimited consciousness. Very soon, even the sense of 'I' almost completely faded away. The mind was then quite still and no effort was needed to keep it so.

Consciousness shone clearly without any object and without limitations. He was overwhelmed by bliss, which was far greater than on the previous evening. The awareness of any distinction between the bliss and Himself was almost absent. About an hour passed thus but He was totally oblivious of the passage of time. As He emerged from His first experience of *savikalpa-samādhi* on the formless Reality, He gradually became aware of the body.

When He opened His eyes, He noticed that it was about half an hour before sunset. After remaining mentally quiet for a few minutes, He thought, "I am now in a position to take advantage of the presence of some thought or feeling at the start of meditation to focus on the *Ātman* and attain *samādhi*. There is, however, no necessity for me to rely upon what is basically a source of distraction. Instead, I could commence my meditation by directly generating and intensifying the notion that I am not the body and the like but am *Brahman*,

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That afternoon, He reflected on the Truth by deeply considering the passages of Bhagavatpāda's *Pañcīkaraṇa*. Perhaps because of that, when He started to meditate that evening on the hilltop, after the manifestation of a hue, a sentence of that text occurred to Him, without any premeditation. He had barely recalled the sentence when, effortlessly and without any delay, He was in *savikalpa-samādhi*.

which is of the nature of absolute existence, consciousness and bliss. This is what I did yesterday. Further, the pertinent notion is indeed in keeping with the teaching of the scripture and my conviction." He decided to implement this procedure right then. So, He repeated what He had done on the previous evening, inclusive of employing the words to the effect, "*I am indeed the Supreme Brahman, the One free from decay and known as Vāsudeva (He who resides in and shines in all).*" This time, He promptly attained *savikalpa-samādhi*. The experience was essentially the same as that of the preceding *savikalpa-samādhi* and also lasted about an hour. After getting up, He returned to His abode.

The next morning, that is, on 8<sup>th</sup> December, corresponding to *mārgaśira-śukla-trayodaśī*, subsequent to His turning His gaze to between His eyebrows, He apprehended a green hue. At this point, He directed His attention to the *Ātman* as being the witness of this hue. The hue soon faded away. Next, the sense of 'I' well-nigh vanished and *savikalpa-samādhi* ensued. At the end of the session, He recognised that He could comfortably use the hue rather than a voluntarily stimulated thought or feeling to initiate contemplation on the *Ātman* as a witness and attain *samādhi*.

That afternoon, He reflected on the Truth by deeply considering the passages of Bhagavatpāda's *Pañcīkaraṇa*. Perhaps because of that, when He started to meditate that evening on the hilltop, after the manifestation of a hue, a sentence of that text occurred to Him, without any premeditation. The import of that sentence is, "*I am none other than Brahman, which is eternally pure, ever enlightened, eternally free, absolute existence, absolute bliss, non-dual and the innermost consciousness.*" He had barely recalled the sentence when, effortlessly and without any delay, He was in *savikalpa-samādhi*. He remained in that state for about 45 minutes.

A few minutes after emerging from *samādhi*, He thought as follows.

"I have earlier focused on the Supreme with the aid of a mental *vṛtti* (modification of the mind) in the form of a desire to meditate or a

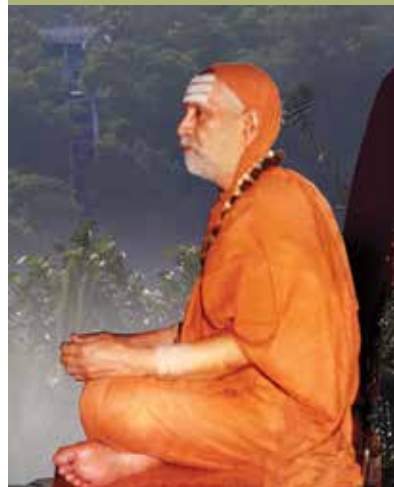
hue. I should be able to become absorbed in the Supreme even by considering any external object. After all, the Supreme is not merely the witness of mental states but is also the real substratum of everything.”

At this point, He recalled the portion of the *Mahānārāyaṇa-upaniṣad* wherein it is made known, “*Whatsoever there is in the entire world that is seen or heard of, all that is pervaded by Nārāyaṇa, within and without (like a bracelet and other golden ornaments by gold, their material cause).*” He proceeded to reflect as follows.

“An earthen pot has a rotund form, has the name, ‘pot’, and is made of mud. It is apprehended as something that exists, as ‘is’; it is the object of the notion of existence (*sadbuddhiḥ*). What is responsible for the pot’s being or existence? Decidedly, its name and form do not lend any being to it. Other than as clay, its material cause, the pot has no existence; it has existence only as clay.”

Here, He called to mind the passage of the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* that conveys, “*A modification (of clay, such as a pot or jar) has speech as its origin and exists only in name; as clay alone, it is real.*” He went on to reflect as follows.

“Can clay, per se, account for the being of the pot? No, for clay has no existence apart from the particles of which it is made; the name and form of clay do not make it existent. Nothing that is an effect has existence apart from its material cause; only as the cause, does an effect exist. Thus, no intermediary member of the causal chain headed by the pot, clay and particles can account for the pot’s being. Only the ultimate cause, if it be intrinsically existent, can adequately do so. The scripture teaches that *Brahman* is the ultimate cause, the substratum of all, and that It is of the very nature of absolute existence. Thus, in the final analysis, a pot has existence only as *Brahman*; apart from *Brahman*, it is simply non-existent. The name and form of the pot are but its false or illusory aspects. Similarly, every object has existence only as *Brahman*; the name and form of



“In the final analysis, a pot has existence only as *Brahman*; apart from *Brahman*, it is simply non-existent. The name and form of the pot are but its false or illusory aspects. Similarly, every object has existence only as *Brahman*; the name and form of the object are its illusory aspects.”

the object are its illusory aspects. Were such not to be the case, the scripture would not have emphatically taught that on knowing *Brahman*, everything becomes known, just as on knowing clay, all products of clay become known.

“In the past, whenever I have wanted to, I have been able to readily ignore the name and form of an object, such as an earthen pot or a golden vessel, and to apprehend the object as being just the substance of which it is made, such as clay or gold. Now, I should go much further. I should thoroughly discriminate the name and form of any selected object from its being, disregard them, and understand that the object is actually just its ultimate basis, absolute existence.”

Having reflected in this manner, He started His meditation, taking the sun as the object of relevance. He gazed at the sun, which was to set in about half an hour and was pleasant to behold. With effort, He increasingly ignored everything about the sun, such as its shape, size and brightness, and focused on just its being. Soon, nothing mattered except the bare existence of the sun; indifference to the illusory aspects became well-established and effortless. He was unaware thereafter whether His eyes were fully open, partially closed or fully closed. Abruptly, He almost totally forgot Himself. Just unqualified being, unrelated to space, time and objects, remained and that too not as an inert entity but as objectless consciousness. When His mind descended from this *savikalpa-samādhi*, He found that the sun had already set and that the place was illumined by the moon. He estimated that His *samādhi* would have lasted for nearly an hour.

The next morning, that is, on 9<sup>th</sup> December, corresponding to *mārgaśira-śukla-caturdaśī*, the external object that He considered to facilitate His meditation on the Supreme was the wall in front of His seat in the room where He performed His *āhnikā*. With hardly any effort, He was able to disregard all its illusory aspects of name and form and focus on just its bare being. He attained *savikalpa-samādhi* in moments; the experience was the same as what He had had on the previous occasion.

In the evening, He went to His usual place of meditation on the hill and, on sitting down, reflected, “*Brahman* is of the nature of absolute existence and is the substratum on which this illusory world of names and forms is superimposed. Even as I perceive what is external, I could, instead of considering a specific external object, use words to this effect to direct my attention fixedly to the Truth. This would be equivalent to my earlier using, when inward-turned, words of the *Brahmānucintana* and the *Pañcīkaraṇa* to become absorbed in the Supreme.” Then, without shutting His eyes, He mentally said to Himself, “*sarvādhiṣṭhānabhūta-sanmātra-brahmāsmi*”; this means, “*I am Brahman of the nature*

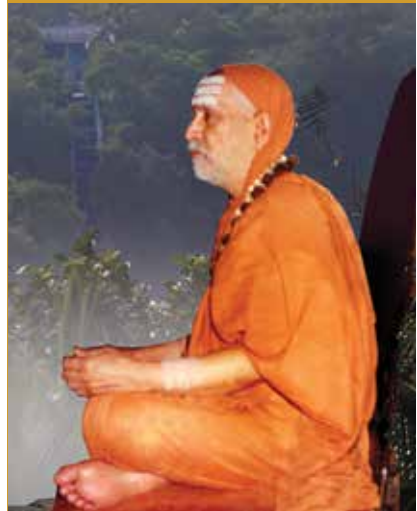
of absolute existence, the substratum of everything.” He intensified the resulting notion by disregarding names and forms in general. As He proceeded to do so, the diversity, rooted in names and forms, of the world seemed more and more to be superficial and irrelevant. Everything appeared to become stripped to bare being, without attributes. His sense of individuality faded. An upsurge in the intensity of concentration resulted in *savikalpa-samādhi* that was akin to the preceding ones. About one and a half hours passed before His mind descended from *samādhi*.

The next morning, that is, on 10<sup>th</sup> December, corresponding to *margaśira-paurṇamī*, after the apprehension of a hue, He did not explicitly recall any passage about the Truth. He did not select the hue or any feeling to initiate His meditation either. Since the previous evening, attention to the Truth had been persisting effortlessly. Even during dreams, this had been uninterrupted. He just intensified it. Promptly, He became absorbed in the Supreme and was in *savikalpa-samādhi*.

When He regained awareness of the body and opened His eyes, He could see His *āhnikā* room. However, apart from bare being, nothing else seemed to be of any consequence. He ignored names and forms further. Straightaway, He was once more in *savikalpa-samādhi*.

That afternoon His Holiness read and pondered on the verses of Śrī Sadaśiva-brahmendra’s *Ātma-vidyā-vilāsa*. Calling to mind the portion that conveys, “*The Supreme Ātman shines pure, enlightened and devoid of all variety*” and, specifically, the part “*vigalita-sarvavikalpaḥ, devoid of all variety*” therein, He reflected as follows.

“Even in *samādhi*, I have not realised the *Ātman* as shining totally free from diversity. After all, the sense



“I do understand from the words of the scripture, supportive reasoning and my *savikalpa-samādhis* that I am pure consciousness.

The ripening of my present understanding and conviction into firm realisation would be greatly facilitated by the disappearance of even the vestige of duality during *samādhi*, leaving just the *Ātman* as residue.”



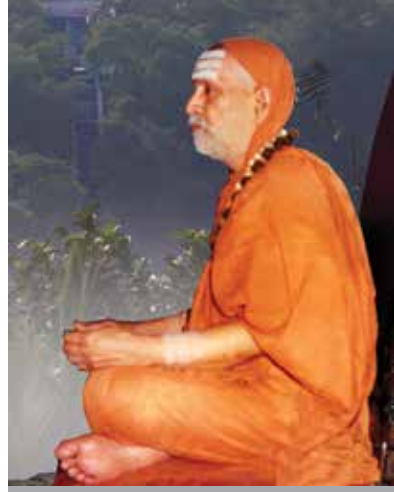
of 'I' and the awareness of the distinction of the concentrator, concentration and the object of concentration also shine, no matter how feebly. I do understand from the words of the scripture, supportive reasoning and my *savikalpa-samādhis* that I am pure consciousness. The ripening of my present understanding and conviction into firm realisation would be greatly facilitated by the disappearance of even the vestige of duality during *samādhi*, leaving just the *Ātman* as residue.

"A weary traveller may hear from a trustworthy person familiar with the region that the water he is seeing in the desert is a mirage. He may then reason that such should be the case. Yet, his wanting to assuage his thirst may impede his firmly realising that only desert-sand stretches in front of him. Were he to move on to a new position and the sun were to be temporarily blocked by a thick layer of clouds, he might see just sand where he once saw the mirage. He might begin to perceive the mirage again a little later. Nonetheless, the temporary disappearance of the mirage would highly facilitate his firmly realising the truth of what he had been told and reflected upon. The thorough vanishing of duality during *samādhi* would, for me, be helpful, like the temporary disappearance of the mirage for this hypothetical traveller.

"Further, while I almost become identified with bliss in *samādhi*, nonetheless, I do, to a minute degree, stand apart from it as the one who enjoys it. Infinite bliss is, on the authority of the scripture, my very nature. What is my very nature cannot, undoubtedly, be known objectively by me. It is *avidyā* (ignorance) that conjures diversity in the Truth, which is non-dual. Thus, no matter how great it may be, bliss that is experienced by me as an object lies in the realm of *avidyā*. It must not be savoured but transcended.

"I should, during my meditation this evening, prevent myself from being overwhelmed by the bliss of *savikalpa-samādhi*. Then, by impressing upon myself that I am bliss itself and not one who enjoys it, I should focus my mind more thoroughly on the *Ātman*. Once my mind were to become fully established on the *Ātman* and devoid of every transformation of a form other than that of the *Ātman*, how can any distinction between bliss and the one experiencing bliss or, for that matter, any other subject-object distinction and the sense of individuality show up at all?"

He discerned that by establishing His mind on the *Ātman* and remaining without any thought, He would be acting in accordance with the Lord's instruction in the *Bhagavadgītā*, "*One should gradually withdraw by means of the intellect endued with firmness; making the mind established in the Ātman, one should not think of anything.*"



He then opened Bhagavatpāda's *Vivekacūdāmaṇi* at random. His eyes fell on a verse in which *nirvikalpa-samādhi* is spoken of. He read it and also the succeeding three verses; they too deal with *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. The import of these four verses is, "When thus purified (of misunderstanding and the like about the Truth) by continuous practice, the mind merges in Brahman (by remaining without any thought, in the form of Brahman), then there is *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, which brings about the effortless experience of non-dual bliss. By this *samādhi*, there occurs the destruction of the knot of impressions (rooted in ignorance), the annihilation of all one's actions (leading to rebirth) and the manifestation, without effort, of one's true nature, within and without, everywhere and forever. Reflection (on the Truth) is a hundred times superior to hearing (the Truth). Meditation (on the Truth) is a hundred thousand times greater than reflection. *Nirvikalpa-samādhi* is infinitely superior to that. Brahman, the Reality, is realised clearly, with steady certitude, by means of *nirvikalpa-samādhi* but not otherwise, for, then, because of the inconstancy of mental activity, the realisation would be mixed up with other notions." His reading enhanced his keenness on going beyond the stage of *savikalpa-samādhi*.

*Nirvikalpa-samādhi* on the *Ātman-Brahman* has been defined as follows in the *Sarva-vedānta-siddhānta-sāra-sangrahaḥ*, which is attributed to Bhagavatpāda: "That is *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, which is termed yoga, wherein the mind, bereft of the modes of the knower, knowing and the object of knowledge, remains firmly established as the object (Brahman). Salt put in water remains as one with the water and does not manifest separately. Only water manifests. In like manner, the mental *vṛtti* (of the form of Brahman) remains as one with Brahman and does not manifest separately. The non-dual Brahman alone manifests. Due to the absence of the conception of the knower, known and object of knowledge, this *samādhi* is called *nirvikalpa*."

He reached His place of meditation on the hill around 4:30 p.m., one and a half hours before sunset. Sitting in the *siddhāsana*, He performed two cycles of *prāṇāyāma* together with the *jālandhara*,

"Reflection on the Truth is a hundred times superior to hearing the Truth. Meditation on the Truth is a hundred thousand times greater than reflection. *Nirvikalpa-samādhi* is infinitely superior to that. Brahman, the Reality, is realised clearly, with steady certitude, by means of *nirvikalpa-samādhi* but not otherwise, for, then, because of the inconstancy of mental activity, the realisation would be mixed up with other notions."

- *Vivekacūdāmaṇi*



During His meditation that evening, the sense of 'I' nearly vanished and His mind entered *savikalpa-samādhi*. However, with effort, He restrained Himself from being overwhelmed by it and thought, "I am not the one experiencing bliss but am bliss itself." In a trice, a sharp change occurred. No more was there any sense of individuality or of space, time and objects. Only *Brahman*, of the nature of absolute existence, pure consciousness and ultimate bliss, shone bereft of the superimposition of even a trace of duality. Though the bliss of *savikalpa-samādhi* was great, it was nothing compared to the absolute, non-dual bliss of *nirvikalpa-samādhi*.

*uḍḍiyāna* and *mūla bandhas* to promote mental tranquillity. Then, as usual, He directed His gaze towards the centre of His brows and chanted 'om'. That day, He beheld an unbounded expanse of blue, resembling the sky. The notion, "I am the non-dual *Brahman* apart from which nothing whatsoever exists" that was prominent and naturally persistent since the previous evening had been intensified by His *savikalpa-samādhis* of the morning and by His reading and reflection of the afternoon. So, He did not have to cultivate it. He had barely seen the soothing expanse of blue when it vanished. He felt Himself expanding and becoming like space. The sense of 'I' nearly vanished and His mind entered *savikalpa-samādhi*.

The bliss was very great. However, with effort, He restrained Himself from being overwhelmed by it and thought, "I am not the one experiencing bliss but am bliss itself." In a trice, a sharp change occurred. Awareness of the distinction of the concentrator, concentration and the object of concentration completely disappeared. No more was there any sense of individuality or of space, time and objects. Only *Brahman*, of the nature of absolute existence, pure consciousness and ultimate bliss, shone bereft of the superimposition of even a trace of duality.

After about two hours, His mind descended to the level of *savikalpa-samādhi* and mild awareness of the distinction of the concentrator, concentration and the object of concentration reappeared. Though the bliss of *savikalpa-samādhi* was by far greater than the joy of any worldly enjoyment, it was nothing compared to the absolute, non-dual bliss of *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. Gradually, He became lightly aware of the body and of the build-up of breathing that had almost totally stopped earlier.

When He opened His eyes, He could see the scene in front of Him and yet did not see it, for He was quite indifferent to the apparent diversity rooted in names and forms. So clear was the realisation that He was of the very nature of absolute existence that He apprehended nothing whatsoever as existing apart from Him. Everything was like bubbles on the ocean that was Himself.

When He rose after some time, His body felt light like cotton wool and as He walked down the hill, it seemed as if He were on a moving canoe.

After about an hour, the apprehension, “I am the Supreme *Brahman* other than which there is nothing” started to slowly weaken from being on par with perceiving a fruit in one’s open palm. However, even when its attenuation stopped, it was much stronger than it had been when He had sat down to meditate.

That night, when it was time for Him to go to sleep, He readied Himself to meditate. Even before a hue manifested, the notion, “I am *Brahman*” became greatly intensified. Without any effort, He shot past the stages of deep meditation and *savikalpa-samādhi* and entered *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. He remained in it for over three hours. Then, though He felt fresh, He lay down and slept for a while. He got up at His usual time of awakening.

After having dreamt, on the night of 28<sup>th</sup> May, 1931, of Śiva demonstrating the performance *nāda-anusandhāna* to Him, He had begun practising it once a week. That morning, that is, on 11<sup>th</sup> December, corresponding to *mārgaśīra-kṛṣṇa-pratīpat*, He felt impelled to do so. So, as usual, He closed His ears, nose and mouth with His fingers to commence His contemplation on the sound heard in the right ear. The ocean-like sound that He heard abruptly grew in intensity. Then, in quick succession, He heard a variety of sounds. These included those of a drum, a flute and a *vīṇā*. Each sound lasted for only a few moments before being replaced by the next. He had heard the same sounds, in the same sequence, when the Lord had demonstrated *nāda-anusandhāna* in the dream. When the last of the sounds ended, there was just silence. His mind became extremely tranquil and suffused with bliss. The sense of “I” rapidly faded away completely and *nirvikalpa-samādhi* ensued. Only non-dual, objectless consciousness remained. About an hour passed before the mind descended from *samādhi*.

After practising *nāda-anusandhāna* the first few times in 1931, He found that once He started to hear the internal sound upon closing His ears and focused on it, He continued to hear it clearly even if He took His fingers off His ears. Thereafter, He had been lowering His hands involuntarily after closing His eyes, nose and eyes for just a brief while. Thus, when He emerged from *samādhi* that day His hands were not in contact with His face; they were resting on his lap.

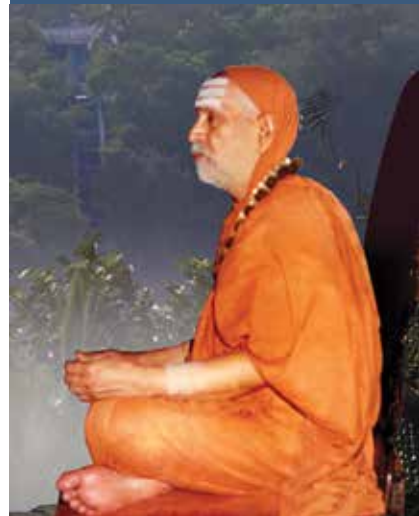
That afternoon itself, He once again attained *nirvikalpa-samādhi* on the Supreme, this time through *kuṇḍalinī*-centred *laya-yoga*. He had just apprehended a hue between His brows when, involuntarily, He adopted the *jālandhara*, *uḍḍiyāna* and *mūla bandhas* and

His attention turned to the *anāhata-cakra*. He apprehended the *kuṇḍalinī* there. It seemed that the elements earth, water and fire had become absorbed in the *kuṇḍalinī*. As the divine *Śaktī* headed rapidly to the *sahasrāra*, leaping, as it were, from one *cakra* to the next higher one, air, space and the organs too duly merged into her. When the *kuṇḍalinī* reached the *sahasrāra*, all duality, inclusive of the sense of “I” and awareness of the distinction of the agent of meditation, meditation and the object of meditation, thoroughly vanished. Just objectless consciousness of the very nature of bliss shone. This *nirvikalpa-samādhi* lasted for about an hour. As His mind lightly came out of *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, He discerned the descent of the *kuṇḍalinī* from the *sahasrāra*, through the *ājñā-cakra*, to the *viśuddha-cakra*. He regained mild awareness of the body without sensing any further descent of the *Śaktī* and then opened His eyes.

He felt that having revealed *nāda-anusandhāna* and *kuṇḍalinī-yoga* to Him earlier, God had graciously chosen to vouchsafe to Him their culmination and hence impelled Him to engage in them that day without any premeditation on His part and attain *nirvikalpa-samādhi* through them. In the *nirvikalpa-samādhis* attained by Him the previous evening, at night, that morning through *nāda-anusandhāna* and that afternoon through *kuṇḍalinī-yoga*, just the non-dual Truth had shone, without any appearance of duality. It was now quite clear to Him that consciousness does shine in all its glory without any object whatsoever and that the *Ātman* is of the nature of consciousness.

Shortly after His *nirvikalpa-samādhi* of that afternoon, He reflected as follows.

“Suppose the *Ātman* were knowable like an object. The question would then arise as to who can know the *Ātman*. The answer cannot be that the *Ātman* is known objectively by Itself, for it is impossible for any entity to be both the subject and the object of a cognition. The *Ātman* cannot be known by the intellect, mind, organs, body and objects, for they are all inert. Moreover, the *Ātman* is the unchanging witness of the presence



In the *nirvikalpa-samādhis* attained by Him the previous evening, at night, that morning through *nāda-anusandhāna* and that afternoon through *kuṇḍalinī-yoga*, just the non-dual Truth had shone, without any appearance of duality. It was now quite clear to Him that consciousness does shine in all its glory without any object whatsoever and that the *Ātman* is of the nature of consciousness.

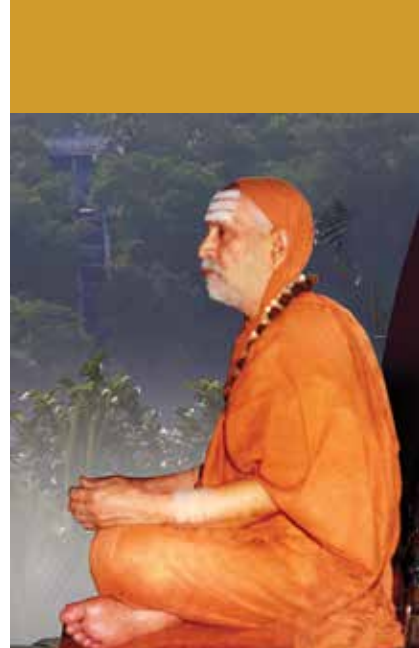
and the absence of thoughts. When the intellect and mind are themselves just objects witnessed by the *Ātman*, how could they be the perceivers of the *Ātman*? The scripture declares that the *Ātman* is *Brahman* and there is no knower other than the *Ātman-Brahman*. Thus, the *Ātman* is just not knowable like some external object.

“Though not knowable like an inert object by any means of knowledge, the *Ātman*, which is none other than *Brahman*, is not unknown either. What is other than oneself and inert may be unknown. The *Ātman*, however, is one’s very self and is of the nature of consciousness. Consciousness is what reveals objects and never needs to be revealed by anything else. It is presupposed in every act of knowing and is ever self-established.

“The agent of even the act of knowing, which has a beginning and an end, cannot but be subject to change. Further, only an entity subject to change can experience pleasure and pain. As the *Ātman* is changeless, It is neither the agent of any act, inclusive of that of knowing, nor is It subject to pleasure and pain. Agency, suffering, enjoyment of pleasure and the like belong to the changeful intellect. However, owing to *avidyā*, one mistakenly superimposes these that belong to the intellect on the *Ātman*. Also, though the intellect is inert, the consciousness of the *Ātman* is wrongly ascribed to it and the intellect-centred ‘I’ passes off as a conscious agent and experiencer.

“The scripture advocates realisation of *Brahman* not in the sense of knowing what is unknown but in the sense of getting rid of the *avidyā*-based superimposition on It. Whether focused on the *Ātman* or distracted, the mind is but an inert entity illumined by the *Ātman*. However, the mental *vṛtti* of the form of *Brahman* destroys, as declared by the scripture, *avidyā* that rests in and veils *Brahman* and presents It wrongly.

“Suppose a person, who is adept at *yoga*, feels he is established in the *Ātman* when he is in *samādhi* but that he deviates to some extent from the Reality when he emerges from *samādhi* and



The scripture advocates realisation of *Brahman* not in the sense of knowing what is unknown but in the sense of getting rid of the *avidyā*-based superimposition on It. Whether focused on the *Ātman* or distracted, the mind is but an inert entity illumined by the *Ātman*. However, the mental *vṛtti* of the form of *Brahman* destroys, as declared by the scripture, *avidyā* that rests in and veils *Brahman* and presents It wrongly.

engages in activity. Such a person is not free from *avidyā*. *Samādhi* and distraction are conditions of the mind and not of the *Ātman*. The *Ātman* is ever changeless and of the nature of consciousness. *Samādhi* and distraction do not affect it in any way. It is because this *yogin* is not free from identification with the mind that he sees himself as influenced by changes in the state of the mind. He who has fully realised that he is the changeless Reality remains established in the Reality and unaffected regardless of whether his mind is in a focused, agitated or dull condition. He should not become attached to *nirvikalpa-samādhi* under the delusion that for its duration he becomes one with *Brahman*.

“Perception of the world could affect the vision of the Truth of one who ascribes reality to duality but not of one to whom names and forms are illusory. He who firmly knows that what lies in front of him is dry sand is not affected by the appearance or disappearance of a mirage there. Likewise, he who knows that there is nothing whatsoever apart from *Brahman* cannot be affected either by the appearance of the mirage-like world of names and forms or its disappearance during *samādhi* or deep sleep.”

Having reasoned thus, His Holiness reflected, in support of His conviction about the illusory nature of the world and that there exists nothing apart from the non-dual Reality, on the similarity between the states of waking and dream. He also thought of how the states of waking, dream and deep sleep rule each other out and of the persistence in all of them of consciousness, their witness.

In the evening, He reached His place of meditation on the hill around 4:30 p.m. He effortlessly and swiftly attained *nirvikalpa-samādhi* exactly as on the previous night. After about an hour, He opened His eyes. The falsity of names and forms was crystal clear and there was certainty that there was nothing that was other than consciousness. Shortly thereafter, even without His shutting His eyes or making any effort, He plunged once again into *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. This time too, the *samādhi* lasted for about an hour.

Except for an hour, during which He slept, He spent the rest of the night in *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. It was not as though He was particular about doing so, for, by then, there was essentially no difference for Him between *samādhi* and the perception of the world as regards His abidance in *Brahman*. As He was feeling very fresh, instead of lying down, He casually sat cross-legged. Suddenly, His mind plunged into *nirvikalpa-samādhi*.

The next day, that is, on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1935, corresponding to *mārgaśira-kṛṇa-dvitiya*, He went into *nirvikalpa-samādhi* in the morning and in the afternoon for an hour each. The conviction about the falsity of duality and of His being of the nature of changeless

consciousness was so strong and steady that almost no *avidyā*-based notions of the non-*Ātman* cropped up. Those few that did were neutralised swiftly. The knowledge that *Brahman* alone is all had almost fully fructified. This was His state when He went in the evening to the summit of the hill one and a half hours before sunset, which was to occur at 6:03 p.m.

He directed His gaze to between the brows. Then, without any premeditation, He mentally chanted not just 'om' but "*om namaḥ śivāya*", as He had done a week earlier on the day He beheld the Lord and received the advice to focus on the formless Supreme Reality. Soon, He beheld a moon-like disc of light between His brows, as had happened a week earlier. His mind became increasingly quiet. The sense of 'I' faded away and, effortlessly, *nirvikalpa-samādhi* ensued. When He opened His eyes, the sun was about to set. Two birds were seated on His shoulders.

That *Brahman* is all was as clear to Him as a fruit in one's palm. A few minutes later, even as His eyes were open, His mind automatically went into *nirvikalpa-samādhi* once again. He remained in that state for nearly an hour. As He regained awareness of the body and the surroundings, a big monkey bounded up to Him and positioned itself on Him lap. After being cuddled for a while by Him, it left. He walked down the hill and found His attendant, who had not accompanied Him up the hill that day, waiting there with a lamp, as had happened a week earlier.

He had now attained direct realization of *Brahman* and *jīvanmukti* (liberation even while living), characterized by firm establishment in *Brahman*. The Lord's earlier words to Him, "*acireṇa brahmasaṁstho bhaviṣyasi* (You shall soon become established in *Brahman*)" had found complete fulfilment.



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## CHAPTER 11

# Ever in the Supreme

When His Holiness was returning from the hill on the evening of *mārgaśira-kṛṣṇa-dvitiyā*, corresponding to 12<sup>th</sup> December, after attaining enlightenment and *jīvanmukti* (liberation even while living), He saw His *Guru* standing outside Sacchidananda Vilas and looking in His direction. The senior *Jagadguru* beckoned to Him and went inside. When He went to the room of His *Guru*, the latter, who was standing there, rushed to Him and embraced Him even before His Holiness could prostrate before His *Guru* or say anything. Holding Him by His shoulders, the senior *Jagadguru* said, “I am so very happy.” He then voiced a *mantra* of the *Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad*, a passage of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* and a verse of the *Bhagavadgītā*, all of which are about an enlightened person, a *jīvanmukta* (one liberated even while alive).

The import of that *mantra* is, “*When the supreme Ātman, which is both high and low, is realised, the knot of the heart (comprising the host of tendencies and impressions of ignorance in the form of desires) is destroyed, all doubts come to an end and one’s actions become dissipated.*” The cited passage of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* conveys, “*He who was subject to death then becomes deathless and attains identity with Brahman while living in this very body.*” The import of cited words of the Lord is, “*But that man who rejoices only in the Ātman, is satisfied with just the Ātman and who is contented in just the Ātman - for him, there is no duty to perform.*”



Holding His Holiness by His shoulders, the senior *Jagadguru* said, “I am so very happy.”

He then voiced a *mantra* of the *Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad*, a passage of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* and a verse of the *Bhagavadgītā*, all of which are about an enlightened person, a *jīvanmukta*.



“Such was my *Guru’s* greatness that He highly appreciated anything positive in another. His instructions, blessings and grace were responsible for my *sāadhanā* and whatever I achieved. Yet, He was so thoroughly free from egoism that He did not take any credit. Where can one find anyone like Him?”

- His Holiness

The senior *Jagadguru* then said, “Such declarations of the *śruti* and *smṛti* are applicable to you who abide as the Supreme *Brahman*.” Then altering a verse of Gauḍapādācārya a little, He metrically asserted, “*The Reality has been seen (by you) in the context of the individual and in the external world. You have become identified with the Reality. You rejoice in the Reality. You are undeviating from the Reality.*” The original verse of Gauḍapādācārya contains the teaching, “*Having examined the Reality in the context of the individual and in the external world, one should become identified with the Reality, should have one’s delight in the Reality and should not deviate from the Reality.*”

On the senior *Jagadguru* letting go of His shoulders, His Holiness prostrated before His *Guru* for long, placing His hands and head on His *Guru’s* feet. Recapitulating all this in August 1989, His Holiness told me, “Such was my *Guru’s* greatness that He highly appreciated anything positive in another. His instructions, blessings and grace were responsible for my *sāadhanā* and whatever I achieved. Yet, He was so thoroughly free from egoism that He did not take any credit. Where can one find anyone like Him?”

As His Holiness had become fully enlightened and attained *jīvanmukti* that evening, *samādhi* ceased to have any role in

His case as an aid to realise *Brahman*. However, as He had been repeatedly abiding in *nirvikalpa-samādhi* since the evening of 10<sup>th</sup> December, ‘*nirodha-saṁskāras* (impressions stemming from the interception of the mind)’ had become intense. Because of this and utter indifference to names and forms, His mind subsided readily and went on its own into *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. Such abidance in *samādhi* made His mind even further disposed

to reposing in *nirvikalpa-samādhi* and disinclined towards everything else. That night, no sooner did He lie down than He went into *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. By the time He emerged from it, the night had passed.

The next morning, that is, on 13<sup>th</sup> December, corresponding to *mārgaśira-kṛṣṇa-tṛtīyā*, when He completed performing *āsanas* and readied Himself to start *prāṇāyāma*, His mind again plunged into *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. He remained in that state for about half an hour. Another session of *nirvikalpa-samādhi* occurred spontaneously during His *āhnika*. Later, He went on His usual Friday-visit to the temples in the Math complex. Notwithstanding His great indifference to names and forms in general on account of great introversion effected by repeated and prolonged abidance in *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, when He stood silently near the sanctum sanctorum of Goddess Śāradā, tears of joy flowed from His eyes. It is said in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, “*Even sages who revel in only the Ātman and are without any bond (or, have given up even the study of texts) are devoted, without any expectation whatsoever, to the Lord. Such is the excellence of God.*”

That afternoon, He attempted to revise a text of the *Tarka-śāstra* but failed because His mind soon went into *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. By the evening, He was in a position to perform only what He was habituated to doing and which did not involve fresh application of the mind. Also, emerging from *samādhi* became difficult. The *nirvikalpa-samādhi* of the night stretched on to cover even the period when He would have normally performed His *āsanas* and *prāṇāyāma* the next morning, that is on 14<sup>th</sup> December, corresponding to *mārgaśira-kṛṣṇa-caturthī*. Had His *samādhi* lasted any longer, His morning bath would have become delayed. When He engaged in His *āhnika* after having a bath, He omitted nothing but because of introversion, His performance of *āhnika* was like that of a sleepy person doing *pūjā*.



As His Holiness had become fully enlightened and attained *jīvanmukti* that evening, *samādhi* ceased to have any role in His case as an aid to realise *Brahman*. However, as He had been repeatedly abiding in *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, His mind even further disposed to reposing in *samādhi* and disinclined towards everything else. He was in a position to perform only what He was habituated to doing and which did not involve fresh application of the mind. Also, emerging from *samādhi* became difficult.



By the afternoon, the impact of the *nirvikalpa-samādhis* had become so much that He succeeded in doing His second *āhnikā* only poorly and was hardly aware of partaking *bhikṣā* thereafter. Post *bhikṣā*, He remained in His room in *nirvikalpa-samādhi* till His evening bath, to complete which He needed some assistance. His mind was so intoxicated with bliss that the evening *āhnikā* fared far worse than the one in the afternoon. He did not partake of anything before retiring to His room that night as He felt too disinclined to do so. There, He sat down and straightaway went into *nirvikalpa-samādhi*.

He descended from *samādhi* on becoming vaguely aware of the intonation of ‘om’ in the senior *Jagadguru’s* voice. When He opened His eyes, He beheld His *Guru*. The senior *Jagadguru* was seated next to Him and was gently stroking His disciple’s head with His hand. “Taking care to avoid any further *samādhi*, finish your bath and *āhnikā* and come to me,” He said and immediately left. So intense was His Holiness’s reverence for and devotion and obedience to His *Guru* that even the powerful tendency to repose in *samādhi* that had built up could not stand in the way of His strictly carrying out His *Guru’s* wishes.

When He went to His *Guru* and offered *namaskāras*, the senior *Jagadguru* directed Him to sit down and then said, “I knew that your mind was becoming more and more absorbed in *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. Though you have transcended any need for *samādhi*, I did not

interfere. Last night, however, the Lord made it clear to me that your *samādhi* had become so intense that you would not emerge from it on your own. Unless aroused from *samādhi*, you would remain in it till physical death. As impelled by Him, I came to your room before the night ended. Telling your attendant to remain outside, I entered alone. The Math staff have been under the impression that you have been unwell since yesterday. So the attendant assumed that I had come to check on your condition. I found you seated motionless, deep in *samādhi*. With great difficulty, I succeeded in awakening you. Regulate your *samādhi* and the introversion of the mind. Else, today itself, your *nirvikalpa-samādhi* will become such that you cannot be aroused from it at all by anybody. Do not leave me by entering irreversible *samādhi* and discarding your human form. There is so much to be done by you for me, for others and for the Math.”

His Holiness eschewed *samādhi* in its entirety that day and slept during the night. The next day, that is, 15<sup>th</sup> December, corresponding to *mārgaśira-kṛṣṇa-pañcamī*, He was once more in a position to determine the duration of His *samādhi* and, as intended, remained in it in the morning for an hour. When, after completing His morning *āhnikā*, He had the senior *Jagadguru's darśana*, His *Guru* advised Him as follows:

“I knew that your mind was becoming more and more absorbed in *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. Though you have transcended any need for *samādhi*, I did not interfere. Last night, however, the Lord made it clear to me that your *samādhi* had become so intense that you would not emerge from it on your own. Unless aroused from *samādhi*, you would remain in it till physical death. As impelled by Him, I came to your room before the night ended.



With great difficulty, I succeeded in awakening you. Regulate your *samādhi* and the introversion of the mind. Else, today itself, your *nirvikalpa-samādhi* will become such that you cannot be aroused from it at all by anybody. Do not leave me by entering irreversible *samādhi* and discarding your human form. There is so much to be done by you for me, for others and for the Math.”

- The senior *Jagadguru*

“It was in obedience to the directive of my *Paramaguru* (Jagadguru Śrī Nṛsimha Bhārātī, the 32<sup>nd</sup> pontiff) that my *Guru* (Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhārātī, the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff) checked the overpowering urge to be absorbed in *yoga*. I am happy that, in deference to my wish, you have regulated your *samādhi* and can emerge from it by yourself after a predetermined duration.



*The 32<sup>nd</sup> Pontiff*

“While you can now manage to perform your routine activities, your mind is still too introverted to engage in the serious study of the *Tarka* and other *śāstras*. Only tranquillity and happiness can be seen in your face. Even if I, to whom you are deeply devoted, were to cast off my body right now, your facial expression would not change. No matter how much you may be provoked, not a trace of anger would be visible. Nothing of the world interests you at all. Such readily noticeable, rock-like imperturbability and disinterestedness in everything would be unexceptionable if you were an independent *saṁnyāsīn*. On you, however, rests the future of this great *pīṭha*.



*The 33<sup>rd</sup> Pontiff*

“My *Guru* was ever established in *Brahman*. He had nothing whatsoever to gain or lose by anything. Yet, enacting his role to perfection, He wept when His *Guru* shed the body, rejoiced when the *Candramaulīśvara-liṅga* was recovered, evinced deep interest in promoting the study of the *Vedas* and *śāstras*, appreciated the good efforts of people and expressed disapproval of their straying to the path of *adharmā*. He captivated the hearts not merely of spiritual aspirants and *mahātmas* but of all. He was an unmatched master of the *śāstras* whom even the most erudite looked upon with awe. He brought immeasurable glory to the *pīṭha*. It is like Him that you must be.

“Accordingly, though unswervingly established in *Brahman*, you should study diligently and master the *śāstras*. Further, you should learn to show, whenever appropriate, interest, appreciation, concern, anger, curiosity and the like in your dealings with devotees, the *Maṭha*’s staff and others.”

The senior *Jagadguru* then cited, from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, verses that contain the advice given by Sage Vasiṣṭha to Rāma when the latter had become withdrawn. The import these verses is, *“Sport in the world, O Rāghava, internally bereft of all longing relating to the future, without attachment to anything current and devoid of tendencies born of the past, but externally conforming to all the observances. Sport in the world, O Rāghava, with assumed attachment, anger, etc., on the outside but without any turbulence in the heart, as a doer externally but internally a non-doer.”* He then told His Holiness, *“Be as prescribed in them. You must be an ideal for others. Appreciate the condition of others, conduct yourself suitably and do good to them.”*

To implement His *Guru’s* directives, His Holiness ignored the prevailing disinterest and revised His *Tarka* lessons. Over the next week, He gradually regenerated the interest in *śāstraic* studies that had vanished. The senior *Jagadguru* graciously expedited this process by asking questions relating to the text studied. Displaying emotional responses proved tougher for His Holiness to achieve because His mind felt just peace and bliss and the emotions of the past seemed no more than a vague, distant dream.



It was clear to Him that His *Guru* did not intend that He learn to pretend to be pleased, concerned and the like, without such feelings arising in the mind at all. He recognised that if, while being thoroughly disinterested, He were to make someone think that He wished that that person come again soon or that He was interested in what that person was showing Him or that He was displeased as that person had not done something important, He would be a deceiver and there was no question of His *Guru* advocating that He ever resort to such hypocrisy and deceit.

He discerned that to facilitate interpersonal dealings without any hypocrisy or subterfuge, His mind should accommodate fleeting emotions. Appearance of thoughts and feelings merely when necessitated by and as appropriate to situations would enable effective and totally unpretentious functioning while leaving the mind basically silent. Further, such mental activity would be powerless to cause any bondage as





“Even during excruciating pain, there has been the clear awareness that it pertains only to the illusory mind and that I am the changeless witness of the nature of pure consciousness. All this is solely due to the grace of my *Guru* and God. Else, where was the question of even one so ordinary as I becoming unswervingly established in *Brahman* and functioning in the world as I was directed to do by my *Guru*?”

- His Holiness

misidentification of the *Ātman* with the mind had already ceased once and for all and there was no forgetfulness of the falsity of the mind either. He comprehended thus the thrust and mode of implementation of His *Guru*'s directive.

When His Holiness told me this is in August 1989, a month prior to His shedding His body, I asked Him, “Over the years, has intense anger, worry or grief appeared in Your Holiness's mind, unaccompanied, even for a while, by the awareness of its falsity.” His Holiness responded, “No, never. Even during excruciating pain, there has been the clear

awareness that it pertains only to the illusory mind and that I am the changeless witness of the nature of pure consciousness. All this is solely due to the grace of my *Guru* and God. Else, where was the question of even one so ordinary as I becoming unswervingly established in *Brahman* and functioning in the world as I was directed to do by my *Guru*?”

Several are the instances that leave no room for doubt about His Holiness's firm establishment in the Truth. On 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 1983, His Holiness suffered an attack of angina, with severe pain in the chest and dull pain in His left arm. Around 6:30 p.m., He was administered an intramuscular injection of morphine. Soon, He was in a state of semi-torpor. Giridhara Sastry, the then

Administrator of the Sringeri *Math*, and I were seated on the floor by the side of His Holiness as He rested on a simple wooden platform. Though hardly conscious of what He was saying, His Holiness muttered a verse, ending with the words, “*mati-kṛta-guṇa-doṣā mām vibhuṃ na sprśanti – The meritorious and faulty doings of the intellect do not touch me, who am all-pervading (that is, as per Vedānta, pervading everything by virtue of being present everywhere, being present at all times and, being the very basis of existence of everything, just as gold is of a golden ornament).*” Who else but a *jīvanmukta* could have affirmed thus even while experiencing intense pain and being just semi-conscious?





## CHAPTER 12

# A Unique Bond

In a benedictory address delivered at Madurai in 1958, His Holiness spelt out the qualities of a model disciple. He based His talk on a verse, the import of which is: “The ideal disciple has a pure mind, resorts to the holy, has good conduct, is desirous of knowing the Truth, is intent upon serving (his *Guru*), is free from vanity, greatly values offering prostrations (to his *Guru*), waits for an opportune moment to pose his doubts (to his *Guru*), is of controlled mind, is of regulated senses, is free from envy, has surrendered (to the *Guru*), is possessed of faith in the *śāstras*, is successful in tests and is grateful (to His *Guru*). Such a disciple is fit to be unconditionally taught what is desired.” These attributes found fulfilment in His Holiness even when He was initiated into *saṁnyāsa* in 1931.

He was ever prepared to serve His *Guru* in every possible way. It was customary in those days to have an extended camp at the Durgāmbā Temple (near Sringeri) for the *rathotsava* (Chariot Festival) there. During one such camp, the senior *Jagadguru*, who was somewhat unwell, had retired for the night. Two attendants were sleeping just outside the door of His room. One of them, Rama Sastry, awakened and told his companion, “The cold is chilling my bones. I shall proceed to the boiler room to warm myself.” Saying so, he rolled up his bed and retired to the boiler room, where the flames licking the water vessel diffused warmth throughout the room. He lay down there and fell asleep. However, a short catnap was all that he had, for the thought of the senior *Jagadguru’s* illness nagged him. He rose to check from his companion whether the senior *Jagadguru* had been asleep or had asked for anything. Making his way in the darkness, he barely touched the one lying there, when the response, “What is it?” that he heard caused him to freeze in astonishment. The voice was that of

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To His Holiness, who had the status of a *Jagadguru*, functioning as an attendant to the senior *Jagadguru* was not undignified; it was a sacred privilege.

Even His Guru's shadow was sacrosanct for Him. Not once in the over two decades that They were together did He, even inadvertently, overstep His Guru.

His Holiness. Rama Sastry hastened to apologise but was set at ease by His Holiness, who had taken the other attendant's place to Himself attend to the senior *Jagadguru's* needs, if any. To Him, who had the status of a *Jagadguru*, functioning as an attendant to His *Guru* was not undignified; it was a sacred privilege.

Once, standing in for His *Guru's* attendant, when His Holiness held a large ceremonial umbrella over the senior *Jagadguru* in the place of an attendant, He stood with one leg off the ground. When later asked about this, He clarified that He stood that way for, otherwise, His foot would have touched His *Guru's* shadow that day. Even His *Guru's* shadow was sacrosanct for Him. His walk was swift, almost a sprint, and His attendants had a hard time keeping up with Him; the senior *Jagadguru's* was

sedate. Yet, when accompanying the senior *Jagadguru*, not once in the over two decades that They were together did He, even inadvertently, overstep His *Guru*. He once told me, "It is not that I took care not to move ahead of Him; it was impossible and inconceivable for me to do so." Even before He learnt of them, He spontaneously followed to the letter

the injunctions, "The disciple must not cross over his *Guru's* shadow," and, "When the *Guru* is walking, the disciple should follow him (not move ahead of him)."

The following account of Sri D. S. Subbaramaiya, an intimate disciple of the senior *Jagadguru* and His Holiness and one led to spiritual consummation by Them, illustrates how very respectfully His Holiness conducted Himself towards His *Guru*; it also brings out how the senior *Guru* looked upon His Holiness.

"In 1946, His Holiness once went to behold the senior *Jagadguru*, taking me with Him. As He approached the door of the senior *Jagadguru's* room from one side, He noticed that His *Guru* was reading a book. Not only did His Holiness not enter, He did not even





want to stand next to the door on the side where He could be seen. Hence, He walked round Sacchidananda Vilas and tiptoed to the other side of the door. He then moved slightly forward, leaned, peeped in and, finding that the senior *Jagadguru* was still reading, immediately stepped back. Thereafter, He stood motionless and silent. After a few minutes, He again looked inside as before and withdrew. About 15 minutes passed thus before the senior

*Jagadguru* chanced to notice Him on unexpectedly looking up prior to turning a page.

“Immediately, He called His Holiness in. He entered and respectfully submitted that I had come for *darśana*. The senior *Jagadguru* rose, walked out of the room and began talking with me. To enable us to converse in private, His Holiness moved out of earshot and waited; the senior *Jagadguru* was scheduled to take a *Vedānta* class for His Holiness that day. As He approached after some time to have a necessary word with His *Guru* about the class, the senior *Jagadguru* told me, ‘The *Guru* is coming. Do *namaskāra*.’ As instructed, I prostrated before His Holiness. The senior *Jagadguru* and His Holiness then conversed for a few minutes. Thereafter, His Holiness walked backwards till He was out of His *Guru*’s range of sight; He was unwilling to turn His back towards His *Guru*. Such was His reverence for His *Guru*. The senior *Jagadguru*, on the other hand, declared to me as His Holiness was walking backwards, ‘He is not just a respectable *saṁnyāsin*. He is God incarnate.’”

His Holiness desired to follow the teaching that the *śiṣya* should not eat prior to his *Guru*. Though the senior *Jagadguru* partook of His *bhikṣā* late in the afternoon, His Holiness consistently



waited for Him to do so. He did this even though a separate kitchen had been arranged for Him, so that the time of His *bhikṣā* could be independent of that of His *Guru*. Later, out of concern for His Holiness's health, the senior *Jagadguru* cancelled the extra kitchen and Himself started going for *bhikṣā* earlier than before. Subsequently, the senior *Jagadguru* noticed one day that His Holiness was mixing up all the food served to Him and then eating the mixture; He was doing so to avoid giving any room for being influenced by taste. The senior *Jagadguru* told Him that what He was doing was unnecessary and that He should eat His food in the normal fashion. His Holiness obeyed.

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- Sri Subbaramaiya



He decided upon taking *saṁnyāsa* that His body should be under His control and not vice versa and that He should be same-sighted towards the pairs of opposites such as heat and cold.

His Holiness greatly valued *saṁnyāsa* and particularly so since He had been blessed with it by the senior *Jagadguru*, whom He looked up to as the ideal *saṁnyāsin*. He told me in May 1975, "Two days before taking *saṁnyāsa*, I had thought, 'Dreams are not under my control. Mistakes committed in them do not result in sin. Nevertheless, my renunciation should be so sincere and firm that after being initiated into *saṁnyāsa*, I should not see myself in any dream as clad in white as I am now. I love chanting the *Gāyatrī-mantra*. Yet, as *Gāyatrī-japa* is disallowed for *paramahansa-saṁnyāsins*, I should not engage in it even in my dreams from the day after tomorrow.' By God's grace, till today, this has come to pass." Upon taking *saṁnyāsa*, He decided that His body should be under His control and not vice versa and that He should be same-sighted towards the pairs of opposites such as heat and cold. Putting Himself to test, when winter was at its peak in 1931 (the year of His *saṁnyāsa*), for a few nights, He spread a wet towel on the floor and slept on it wearing just His loincloth. He somehow managed to keep this a secret from even His personal attendant. Thereafter, He repeated this every year for the next four years at Sringeri, one year in Bengaluru, and few years in the 1940s.

His Holiness was accommodated for some time in an independent place in Narasimhavana. One day, numerous ants, which made that their home, bit Him, giving rise to red welts on His legs. He patiently tolerated the bites. This was repeated on the next few days. He did not mention any of this to anybody and took no remedial measures either. So long as the swellings were on His lower limbs and covered by His lower garment, the senior *Jagadguru* did not notice them. One day, the ants bit His back. The senior *Jagadguru* noticed the swellings when His Holiness did *namaskāra* to Him during His morning *āhnikā*; this was because His Holiness had removed His upper garment, put it on the floor and placed His *daṇḍa* on it, as He had been taught to do. The senior *Jagadguru* ascertained what had happened, directed His Holiness to take proper care of His body and arranged for Him to move back to Sacchidananda Vilas.

Over the years, the senior *Jagadguru* almost completely handed over to His Holiness the presiding over of the traditional religious functions in the *Maṭha*. Yet, as His Holiness had the conviction that His *Guru's* presence at any rite would render it extraordinarily hallowed, whenever one was to take place in the *Maṭha*, He approached His *Guru* and sought to know whether He would grace it. If the senior *Jagadguru* agreed to come, His Holiness got ready far in advance and awaited His *Guru*; He also made all the arrangements for the latter. More often than not, the senior *Jagadguru* was disinclined to come. His Holiness then submitted, "If I can be of any assistance to Your Holiness, I am ready." The senior *Jagadguru* would ask Him to conduct the function and His Holiness would do the needful. Even if His Holiness saw His *Guru* at a distance and moving in a direction away from Himself, He promptly stood up and waited till the senior *Jagadguru* passed out of His sight.

His Holiness regarded the life of His *Guru* as truly inspiring and any thought of Him as purifying. To enable others too to think of His *Guru* and derive inspiration from His life, His Holiness spoke about Him in several of His public discourses. The following is culled from a few of His Holiness's talks in Kannada and in Tamil about His *Guru*.



It is said that a *saṁnyāsin* should not touch any valuable with desire. As for my *Guru*, He not only did not keep with Himself anything presented to Him, He did not so much as touch it, even without desire. He said, "Were I to touch anything of worldly value made available to me, somebody may wonder whether this *saṁnyāsin* felt any wish for it. Why should I unnecessarily cause such a disturbance in anyone's mind?" Not once did He visit





the *Maṭha's* vault and see the precious objects there. He did not even peruse the book listing the items stored there. He never enquired about the celebrations in the *Maṭha*. When the officials informed Him, He listened in silence. Only if He was told that His presence was needed for a function, He took part in it. His detachment was so intense that though He was the pontiff of a big *Maṭha*, He did not even have the idea that He lived there.

Though absolutely dispassionate towards all worldly and heavenly enjoyments, He had limitless motherly love towards every one of His disciples. Whenever He went to a temple, He unfailingly prayed to the Lord for the well-being of all and for their acquiring enlightenment and liberation. When it came to religious practices and activities relating to the welfare of the

devotees, He acted in accordance with the following words of the *Bhagavadgītā*: “O Pārtha, there is nothing in the three worlds that I must do; nor is there anything to be attained that has not been attained. Yet, I engage in actions. O Pārtha, if I do not, without laziness, ever engage in action, men would, in all matters, follow My path.” Keeping others in mind, He opined, “You all have labelled me a great pontiff. Regardless of whether or not I should perform worship and obtain the fruit thereof, what would you say if I were to abstain from worship? ‘Even he does not perform any worship. Why should we engage in what he himself is not interested in carrying out?’ Therefore, I must perform worship. You people will then act likewise, thinking, ‘The great one engages in worship. It may or may not be necessary for him but we need it. So

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- The senior *Jagadguru*

we must carry it out.” That my *Guru* was a *Mahātman* (great soul) has been known by experience to those who were His contemporaries and beheld Him.

When the accumulated good tendencies of numerous previous lives bear fruit in a person in a particular life, that person becomes a *mahāpuruṣa*. Such was the case of my *Guru*. His introversion did not stem subsequent to His taking *saṁnyāsa*, studying the *śāstras* and practising spiritual disciplines. It manifested right from His childhood. The following two incidents testify to this.

As a boy He used to go to the market to make purchases for His parents. Neither was He interested in seeing things in the shops and the street nor did He have the money to purchase more than what was essential. While setting out, He used to mentally chant the *Mūkapañcaśatī* (five hundred verses on Goddess Kāmākṣī by Mūka-kavi). It even happened that He became so absorbed in the verses and their import that He forgot His surroundings and the purpose of His setting out. By the time He realised where He was, He was outside the limits of Sringeri.

On every *pradoṣa*, He used to sit in the evening at the base of a pillar in the Vidyāśaṅkara Temple in the *Maṭha* and perform mental worship of Lord Śiva as described in the *Śivamānasapūjā-stotra* and the *Mrtyuñjayamānasapūjā-stotra*. With an unwavering mind, He used to mentally contemplate on the Lord, invoke Him, offer Him a seat, worship His feet and, duly, go on to feeding the Lord, performing *ārati* to Him and doing *namaskāra*.

Since His youth, My *Guru* had the practice of performing the *pārāyaṇa* (recital) of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. A verse to be chanted prior to the reading conveys: “Salute Hanumān, the destroyer of ogres, who remains with His palms joined above His head and with His eyes brimming with tears of joy wherever there is the glorification of Rāma.” All of us have read this verse about Hanumān and know its meaning. Still, we hardly believe that Hanumān comes at the start of our recital and leaves on its completion. On the other hand, the position of my *Guru* was unique. He reflected, “It is improper that Hanumān should sit on the ground





and listen while we sit on a wooden plank and read. He should be offered respect and a seat to occupy.” Having thought thus, my *Guru* decided, “As I myself sit on a wooden plank, I should place one for Him.” Accordingly, my *Guru* used to place a wooden plank for Hanumān to occupy and then did the *Rāmāyaṇa-pārāyaṇa*, with the feeling that Hanumān was actually seated there. What faith He had!

He was intensely devoted to Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsiṃha Bhārātī Mahāsvāmin, His *Guru*. As a boy, His longing was, “How wonderful it would be if I could somehow have the *Guru’s pādukās* in my house and worship them!” If we have faith and devotion and God is merciful to us, what we

wish automatically becomes fulfilled. Likewise, by virtue of His faith, my *Guru* obtained the *pādukās* without any effort on His part.

As a *brahmacārin*, my *Guru* had the opportunity to learn Sanskrit as a student of the *Maṭha’s pāṭhaśālā*. If anything was taught to Him once, it was sufficient; He grasped it. If He heard anything once, He could recall it accurately. In those days, books were hard to come by in Sringeri. My *Guru* copied down, in excellent handwriting, the contents of several books. He studied with deep sincerity. With His performance, He secured a double promotion every year. After reaching the fourth class of the *Maṭha’s pāṭhaśālā*, apart from studying, He began to teach students of the lower classes. His teacher used to tell Him, “You must take classes. You teach well.”

When my *Paramaguru* felt that His body had served its purpose, He sent word for my *Guru*, who was at Bengaluru (having been sent there to study *Mīmāṃsā*). He made the resolve, “I shall give *saṁnyāsa* to Him.” My *Guru* asked no questions. “My *Guru* has commanded me to come to Sringeri. Hence, I must go” – this was all that He felt. “What about my parents? What will be my future?” – no such thoughts arose in His mind. On the way to Sringeri, He learnt that His *Guru* had shed the body. Someone else in the place of my *Guru* might have felt, “He Himself in response to whose

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- His Holiness

command I am being taken is not there. What is the necessity now to proceed to Sringeri for *saṁnyāsa*?" However, my *Guru* had no such thoughts about carrying out the directive of His *Guru*. His mind was as undisturbed as that of a *yogin* in *samādhi*.

My *Guru* did not have the opportunity to be initiated into *saṁnyāsa* through the actual touch of His *Guru's* hand. However, there is *mānasa-dīkṣā*, or initiation of a disciple by the *Guru* through just the mind. Bhagavatpāda imparted the fourteen *vidyās* to His disciple, Giri, just by the thought, "May He get this knowledge." If the *Guru* does have the power to so bless and does so, *śakti* descends on the disciple from the *Guru* and the disciple obtains knowledge. My *Paramaguru* had indeed made the resolve to impart *saṁnyāsa* to My *Guru* and make Him His successor in the *Pīṭha*.

After becoming a *saṁnyāsin*, my *Guru* arranged for the foremost of *Nyāya* scholars, Virupaksha Sastry, to take lessons for Him. He learnt *Advaita-vedānta* in the mornings and the *Nyāya-śāstra* in the afternoons. He completed His studies of both the *śāstras* in just three years. In the line of pontiffs of the Sringeri Maṭh, there flowed a torrent of knowledge and austerity and He added to it.

My *Guru* had the conviction that every single word of Bhagavatpāda is immaculate and significant. He took into consideration every word of Bhagavatpāda and, having analysed it, spelt out its actual purport. He expounded the scripture strictly in accordance with the commentary of Bhagavatpāda. He effortlessly integrated into His teaching of *Vedānta*, the pertinent points from *Nyāya*, *Mīmāṃsā*, and *Yoga*. One approach to teaching the *Vedānta-śāstra* is to explain a text line-by-line; another is to expound the lines along with one's experience. The latter characterised His teaching; it gave great joy.

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- His Holiness

Whenever He delineated scriptural intricacies in a *vidvat-sadas* (assembly of scholars), such as when He expounded the *Ānandamayādhikaraṇa* of the *Brahmasūtras* at Mysuru, all the scholars were struck with awe. Even though my *Guru* was a consummate scholar, He did not have the slightest egoism. During the annual *vidvat-sadas*, if anyone presented something new, He would be immensely pleased. Even if He saw an iota of knowledge in another, He experienced great happiness.

When my *Guru* arrived in Tamil Nadu during His tour, He was not familiar with Tamil. Nonetheless, purely out of gracious consideration for the wishes of the devotees, He agreed to address them in Tamil. To the amazement of all, including the *Maṭha's* officials who were apprehensive, He straightaway spoke flawlessly and eloquently in chaste Tamil. Thereafter, throughout His tour of Tamil Nadu, He conversed and discoursed freely in Tamil like a native speaker. Moreover, even scholars opined that many of His words and expressions conveyed that He was quite conversant with classical Tamil literature and with the nuances of modern Tamil.

“His knowledge, qualities such as mind control, establishment in the *Ātman* and compassion to beings serve as ideals. He led His life in such a way that there accrued the welfare of the world.”

- His Holiness

Many approached my *Guru* to have their sufferings quelled. At times, some failed to voice their wishes and left with the thought, “I was unable to put across my problem.” Yet, by the time they left for home, they found that their suffering had ceased. Such was the direct experience of relief of even those who did not state their problems to Him. Often, my *Guru* gave fitting replies to disciples even before they posed any query or request to Him. One day, after He had given clarifications thus and permitted the devotees to leave, I, who was then a young boy, asked Him, “How is it, O *Mahāsvāmin*, that when people come to You to seek clarifications, You provide the answers even before they present their requests?” He replied, “There is nothing to it. God is the one who impels me and I respond in accordance with His wishes. Such being the case, whatever is in His mind automatically comes to my mouth. I need to make no effort.” He was a *mahātman* who had attained such perfection. He never took credit for the benefits

experienced by devotees. He invariably maintained that the grace of God was what was responsible.

If anyone approached Him seeking knowledge, My *Guru* imparted knowledge to that person. He even had the capacity to straightaway confer the direct realisation of the Supreme on a duly competent disciple. Enlightened *mahātmans* too came to pay their respects to Him. He looked upon them as non-different from Himself. His knowledge, qualities such as mind control, establishment in the *Ātman* and compassion to beings serve as ideals. He led His life in such a way that there accrued the welfare of the world.





His Holiness told me, "My *Guru* used to apply some dry *vibhūti* on His forehead even before He went for His morning bath. Never have I known Him to remove or adjust His upper garment even if it was very hot and He was seated in private. He never moved out of His normal position to near the window to get some breeze on a sultry day. 'I shall remain where I am. If the wind blows here let it. Else let it not,' He remarked."



In response to a query as to how Bhagavatpāda arrived at and selected Sringeri for His *Maṭha*, the senior *Jagadguru* said, “Does not the Lord know the locations of the places He has created?” Years later, when the same question was posed by someone else to His Holiness, He replied, “Bhagavatpāda must have been travelling freely. There would have been some forest path leading to Sringeri and so He could have come here. Having come, He felt impressed with the place and chose it to establish a *Maṭha*.” This did not mean that He did not give great weightage to His *Guru*’s views. It was, in fact, the senior *Jagadguru* who encouraged His Holiness to take a free and independent line of thinking in keeping with the need to cater to a changing and less orthodox society. To His Holiness, every single word of His *Guru* was significant. He even felt that it may be years before He could fully appreciate some statements of the senior *Jagadguru*.

His Holiness devotedly and impeccably served His Guru not only in normal circumstances but also in extremely trying ones, where patience, dexterity and tact were a *sine qua non*.

His Holiness devotedly and impeccably served His *Guru* not only in normal circumstances but also in extremely trying ones, where patience, dexterity and tact were a *sine qua non*. After 1928, the senior *Jagadguru* entered now and then, for varying durations, a state that has been referred to in some books on Him as ‘*antarmukha-avasthā* (inward-turned condition).’ During these periods, His behaviour was unpredictable. Punctilious as He used to be in all His actions and habits, this change to an uncommon state was

quite beyond the comprehension of many. There was no regularity in His bath or meals. Time did not count with Him and the ordinary rules of conduct, worldly or spiritual, were no more for Him. It would happen that for days together He remained without bath, food or sleep but the lack of these did not seem to affect Him, for He was ever beaming with spiritual lustre; His body, however, showed signs of emaciation. Though otherwise very polite, He could be brutally outspoken at these times; His innate compassion and preternatural insight did manifest when called for. The following extract from R. Krishnaswami Iyer's *Saint of Sringeri* is germane:



As His plane of experience was beyond the grasp of the common men, various rumours became afloat about him. A high personage at Mysore (Mysuru), hearing them, desired to know the exact truth and deputed a doctor to go to Sringeri for this purpose. The doctor accordingly went to Sringeri, was observing His Holiness (the senior *Jagadguru*) every morning and evening and was writing to Mysore daily. It so happened that I also went to Sringeri at that time and stayed in the same building as the doctor and we became slightly acquainted with each other. One afternoon, he said, "I think of making His Holiness speak today."

K: Did His Holiness then not speak to you all these days?

Doctor: No.

K: You are posting letters to Mysore daily.

Doctor: Yes. I have been asked to do so.

K: If His Holiness had not even spoken to you, what can you possibly write about?

Doctor: I have been writing, "His Holiness continues in the same state."

K: If you say "same state," you must have described it at least in your first letter.

Doctor: No doubt so. But what I stated in my first letter was only this, "I am not able to understand His Holiness's state." In my subsequent letters I am simply referring to the "same state."



K: You intend to make His Holiness talk today and find out the exact nature of His state?

Doctor: I hope to.

K: Is there any objection to my accompanying you?

Doctor: Nothing. You may come. I have asked the local doctor also to come.

Accordingly, all the three of us went to the other side of the river. The building was open. We entered and found His Holiness sitting in his usual posture. His eyes were certainly open but he did not seem to be seeing anything. Just when we entered he signed to us to sit down and then relapsed into his mood. The doctor had no mind to disturb him. We sat on like this for a fairly long time and finally realising that the sun was about to set, we stood up. His Holiness looked up. Availing himself of this opportunity, the doctor began to speak.

Doctor: I think of returning home tomorrow.

H.H.: Is your business here finished?

It was a very simple question. But if the doctor had given an answer, "Yes," it would not have been true, for he did not succeed at all in the mission that took him to Sringeri; if he had said, "No," he must necessarily assign some other justification for his leaving Sringeri. Thus this question placed him in a dilemma.

Doctor: It is long since I left my home. I desire to return.

H.H.: Yes. You may do so.

Then we all prostrated and just when we were coming out, His Holiness asked the doctor, "Is your mother in good health?" The doctor said, "Yes." Then His Holiness nodded His head and we all came out. It is no doubt true that the doctor did make His Holiness talk but I was unable to gauge what exactly the doctor learned from that talk about the nature of His Holiness's state. We were on our way back to our lodgings.

Doctor: Did you notice how mischievous His Holiness was?

I did not only not understand his question but thought it highly improper. But as our acquaintance was only slight, I kept down my resentment and coolly replied to him.

K: I did not notice any mischief.

Doctor: Have I no wife, no children, no brothers and sisters? He did not enquire till now about the welfare of any of them and today he asks only about my mother. Is it not mischievous?

K: I do not see anything mischievous in it. Evidently he asked about the oldest member of your family.

Doctor: Four or five years back my mother was suffering from some abdominal trouble. I myself treated her and had her treated by eminent doctors but without any effect. I had to go to Sringeri just about that time and my mother said, "Now that you are going to Sringeri, can you not mention my ailment to His Holiness and get from him relief for me?" When I came here I told this to His Holiness and He was pleased to give me a small packet of Vibhuti and asked me to mix it with tepid water and smear it on her stomach. As soon as I returned home, I had it done and since then she is free from that trouble.

K: It is just because of this past incident His Holiness asked you about your mother. What is wrong with it?

Doctor: I do not say that there is anything wrong in the remark by itself. From the very question whether my business has been finished, it is quite apparent that His Holiness is aware of the nature of the business which has brought me here. This can be inferred also from the fact that He has not till now asked me why I have come here. The real import of his question is this, "Your mother had abdominal trouble. Though you were a doctor, you could not cure her. You took from me Vibhuti for her. Now you have come here to treat me. Is it not so?"



The following is extracted from S. A. Karthik's English translation of S. K. Ramachandra Rao's Kannada book '*Śaradā-pīṭhada-māṇikya* (The Ruby of the Sharada Peetham)' on Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahasvāmin.



Among those extremely concerned about the apparent deterioration in the health of the Jagadguru was then Maharaja of Mysore, Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar. After a lot of thought and deliberation, He instructed the then Diwan, Mirza Ismail, to investigate the matter and take necessary steps, if any, required. The Diwan wrote to the Chief Medical Officer of the Government Mental Hospital (which later came to be known as National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences - NIMHANS)

ordering that a competent doctor should immediately proceed to Sringeri, check on the health of the senior *Jagadguru* and submit a report. Renowned Psychologist Dr. M. V. Govindaswamy, who was the Chief Administrative Officer of the Hospital, along with Dr. C. K. Vasudeva Rao, then Head of the Dept. of Psychology, went to Sringeri to examine the health of the senior *Jagadguru* and advise suitable remedy. The two doctors made several trips to Sringeri and submitted reports to the Government. They faced difficulty in directly contacting the senior *Jagadguru* or examining Him from close quarters, since the *Jagadguru* was in '*antarmukha*'. They had to observe Him from a distance, talk to Math officials, His attendants and close acquaintances to gather as much information as they could to identify the 'disease' and any remedy that was there. Another difficulty they had was in giving some 'curative' medicines since the *Jagadguru* was not accessible by anybody. Even mixing the medicines in His food did not work since if any medicine were to be mixed with the food, the *Jagadguru* would not take any food for several days. Hence, the doctors had several challenges in assessing the nature of the 'disease' and provide any medication.

In one of the trips, Dr. Govindaswamy had stayed for a week in Sringeri. Since the *Jagadguru* was in '*antarmukha*' for the last several days, he could not get direct access to the *Jagadguru*. On the eve of his return to Bangalore, quite unexpectedly, the

*Jagadguru* came out of his seclusion and became 'normal'. Dr. Govindaswamy attempted to have the *darśana* posing as any other devotee. Being an atheist and not wanting to give away his real intent and identity, the doctor perfunctorily stood there with folded palms. The doctor submitted, "I shall be leaving for Bangalore tomorrow with Your permission." Looking at him, the senior *Jagadguru* queried, "Why? Have you finished your work here?" The tone of His enquiry suggested that the *Jagadguru* knew the purpose of his visit. The doctor was in a quandary. Answering 'Yes' would imply that he knew the nature of the 'disease'. By 'No' it would mean that he was leaving without finishing his work. Undecided about the answer, the doctor remained silent. The *Jagadguru* Himself broke the silence and, with a smile, said, "So are you done with examining me? Is this an illness which falls within your medical specialization?" As if answering

The *Jagadguru* himself broke the silence and with a smile, said, "So are you done with examining me? Is this an illness which falls within your medical specialization?" As if answering Himself, He continued, "This is my fate and I have to experience this. After all what can one do? You may please leave; may God bless you" and gave *phala-mantrākṣta*.

Himself, He continued, “This is my fate and I have to experience this. After all, what can one do? You may please leave. May God bless you” and gave *phala-mantrākṣata*. On hearing this, both the doctor and the *Maṭha* staff there were flabbergasted. Only a few people knew of the presence of the doctor and the purpose of his visit and none of them had informed this to the *Jagadguru*.

Subsequently, over the next few days, the doctor stayed at Sringeri and had several opportunities to have the *darśana* of the senior *Jagadguru*. The doctor did not notice anything strange in the behaviour or any incoherence in the speech of the senior *Jagadguru*. He could not find any evidence to support the claim of some that the *Jagadguru* was mentally afflicted.

In connection with that particular interaction with the *Jagadguru*, there was another aspect that Dr. Govindaswamy alluded to. To remain inconspicuous, the doctor had applied ‘*vibhūti*’ on his forehead, since most of the devotees were wearing them and he thought that wearing *vibhūti* would please the *Jagadguru*. While giving ‘*phala-mantrākṣata*’, the *Jagadguru* asked, “Why have you applied *vibhūti*? Are you not a *mādhva* (belonging to a Vaiṣṇava sect)?” For this too, Dr. Govindaswamy remained silent. The *Jagadguru* said, “You should not give up your practices to please others. I am pleased only when you remain true to your practices.”

Returning from Sringeri, the doctor submitted a detailed report on his findings and concluded that the senior *Jagadguru* had no symptoms of mental affliction and that the science of psychology had not yet developed to the extent of assessing the state of mind of such an exalted being. The doctor who till then had no religious and spiritual inclinations, impressed by the divine presence of the *Jagadguru*, turned a new leaf. Having no knowledge of Sanskrit so far, directed by the *Svāmin*, he started studying Sanskrit and gained sufficient proficiency to be able read the *Gītā* and *Upaniṣads* in Sanskrit texts and comprehend their import. He added the missing spiritual dimension to his life, solely due to the blessings and guidance of the *Jagadguru*.

{When Ramachandra Rao, the author of ‘*Śāradā-pīṭhāda-māṇikyā*, was the Head of the Department of Clinical Psychology at what is currently known as NIMHANS, Bengaluru, he got access to the medical reports that were submitted by Dr. Govindaswamy. He also obtained several details that were not in the reports directly from Dr. Govindaswamy. From the above account, it is clear that apart from Dr. Govindaswamy, Dr. C. K. Vasudeva Rao, then Head of the Dept. of Psychology, was deputed to examine the senior *Jagadguru* and report to Mysuru. Vasudeva Rao must have been the unnamed doctor referred to in R. Krishnaswami Iyer’s *Saint of Sringeri*.}

The senior *Jagadguru's* love for His Holiness was so intense that even during His moods of seclusion He spoke to His Holiness if His Holiness sought any essential clarification from Him. His Holiness told me, "He did not take exception to my meeting Him occasionally during His periods of seclusion and even spoke to me. However, His words were few and He did not permit any prolonged conversation."

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feared to approach Him since His reactions were unpredictable. Sometimes, He used to go away to the river bank and people feared that He might accidentally drown Himself or move away into the forest. None dared to approach Him, for He would drive them away. It was only His Holiness who was able to bring His *Guru* back to the safe interior of Sacchidananda Vilas. His Holiness told me how He did so once when His *Guru* was walking away into the forest.

The senior *Jagadguru* (observing His Holiness approaching Him): Why have you come?

His Holiness: To request Your Holiness to come back to Sacchidananda Vilas.

The senior *Jagadguru*: Why should I come back?

His Holiness: I feel lonely without Your Holiness.

The senior *Jagadguru*: Why? Others are there.

His Holiness: I feel thoroughly comfortable only with Your Holiness.

The senior *Jagadguru*: Very well.

Saying so, He accompanied His Holiness back to Sacchidananda Vilas. His Holiness concluded His account by telling me, 'Since He responded to my requests to return,

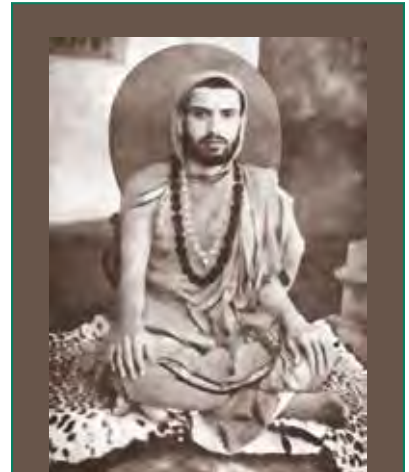


some humorously remarked that I was like a she-elephant that could calm down a tusker in rut.”

There were even times when the senior *Jagadguru's* transition from the normal to the other state took place rather abruptly. One hot day, when He was crossing the temporary wooden bridge across the Tuṅgā to proceed to Goddess Śārādā's temple,

He started casting off His clothes, and walked on, naked and nonchalant. As soon as His Holiness learnt of this, He picked up spare clothes for His *Guru* and also the senior *Jagadguru's pādukās* (wooden sandals) and ran behind Him. By the time He caught up with His *Guru*, the latter had rapidly traversed much of the main street of Sringeri. On seeing Him, the senior *Jagadguru's* first words were, “Why are you not wearing *pādukās*?” He was unaware that He was naked but could not brook His Holiness's bare feet treading the hot path! His Holiness told Him, “How could I wear them when Your Holiness is walking barefoot?” The senior *Jagadguru* then acceded to His Holiness's request and donned the clothes that His Holiness gave Him and wore His *pādukās*. By this time, an attendant came running with His Holiness's *pādukās*. Insisting that His Holiness wear them pronto, the senior *Jagadguru* returned to Sacchidananda Vilas with His dear disciple. There, He again became indifferent to His body and surroundings and remained so for days, but in the confines of a room. I learnt all this from His Holiness. He firmly opined that as the senior *Jagadguru* was a *jīvanmukta* par excellence, neither His normal behaviour nor His abnormal state affected His steady abidance in the Supreme Brahman in any way.

The senior *Jagadguru* disapproved of devotees preferring to have His *darśana* to that of His Holiness. Hence, when they came to have His *darśana*, He would ask, “Have you had the *Guru's darśana*?” If they replied in the negative or equivocally, He promptly directed



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them to His Holiness. Quite often, He instructed them to take *mantrākṣata* also from His Holiness. Some *Maṭha* staff and disciples have reliably reported that the senior *Jagadguru* said that His Holiness was divine and that He often found some reason or the other to stand up when His Holiness came or even to open a door to let His Holiness pass.

In 1936 it was decided, at Srikanta Sastry's instance, that His Holiness proceed to Bengaluru and stay there for some time, concentrating on His study of *Tarka* under Ramachandra Sastry. His Holiness travelled to Bengaluru by car, with a day's halt en route. At Bengaluru, as recalled by Ramappaiah who was His Holiness's cook at that time, His Holiness used to be up around 4:30 in the morning and, after performing *āsanas* and *prāṇāyāma* and taking a bath, performed *āhnikā* and meditation till 9:00 a.m. Thereafter, He used to engage Himself assiduously in His studies till His afternoon bath, *anuṣṭhāna* and *bhikṣā* at 1:00 p.m. Then He used to again refer to His books till evening when He used to go for a stroll in the grounds of the Shankara Math. He used to take a bath after that and perform His evening *āhnikā*. He did *pūjā* in private twice to a *Śiva-liṅga* made of crystal. Ramachandra Sastry took classes for Him every day.

Within a few months of His Holiness's return (in 1937), the senior *Jagadguru* had to proceed, in 1938, to Bengaluru for performing the *kumbhābhiṣeka* of the temple for Goddess Śāradā in the Shankara Math there. His Holiness travelled to Bengaluru, attended the consecration and returned to Sringeri shortly thereafter. The senior *Jagadguru* proceeded to Kalady and observed the *cāturmāsya* of 1939 there and returned to Sringeri in 1940. He did not undertake any tour thereafter. In the periods when His Holiness was at Bengaluru and the senior *Jagadguru* at Sringeri and when His Holiness was at Sringeri and His *Guru* was on tour, They exchanged letters frequently; in all, His Holiness penned 27 missives and the senior *Jagadguru*, 22. Here are the scanned versions and the English translations of some of them. All the letters were penned in the Sanskrit language; the senior *Jagadguru* used the Telugu script, while His Holiness used the *devanāgarī* script or the Kannada script.

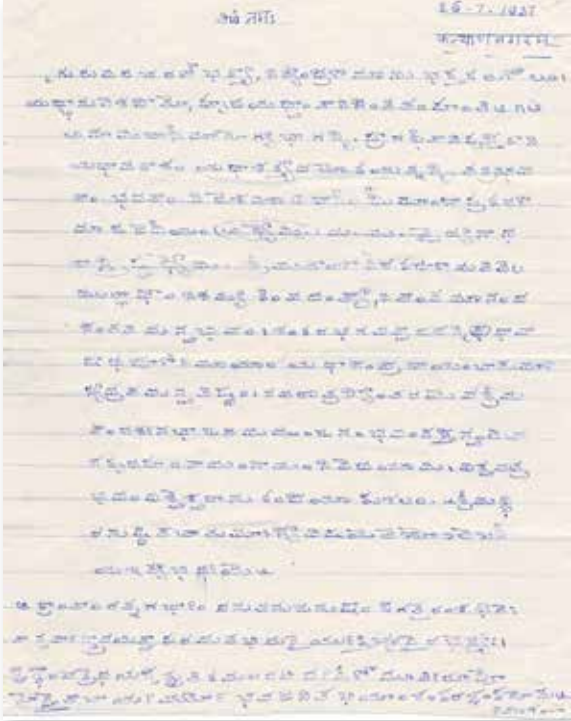




1. The following letter was penned by His Holiness on 25<sup>th</sup> July 1937 at Bengaluru; the senior *Jagadguru* was at Sringeri.

*Om namaḥ*

25.7.1937: *Kalyāṇa-nagara (Bengaluru)*



(Verse:) *I daily prostrate with devotion before the pre-eminent Guru's feet, which are merciful to devotees and an infinitesimal exposure to the lustre of which always destroys the entire darkness (of ignorance) of the mind.*

I am keeping good health. To the extent that time permits and to the best of my ability, I am revising the texts studied earlier. In deference to the directive of Your Holiness, I am learning the *Mīmāṃsā* work *Āpadevī* (*Nyāya-prakāśa* of *Āpadeva*), from *Mahāmahopādhyāya* *Vaidyanatha Sastry*. I experienced extreme delight on hearing about the greatly improved physical condition of Your glorious Holiness. On the full moon day of

*āṣāḍha* (24<sup>th</sup> July, 1937), I took, in keeping with tradition, the *cāturmāsya-saṅkalpa* (the resolve to stay in a place for the duration of the *cāturmāsya*) at the temple of *Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda*. Offering my salutations many times, I humbly and repeatedly submit that I may be enabled to have the *darśana* of Your exalted Holiness even before *Navarātri*. All is well here by the grace of the Lord of the universe. I request Your venerable Holiness to kindly pen an epistle about Your Holiness's *cāturmāsya*.

(Verse:) *By means of numerous unassailable arguments destructive of opposing schools of thought, He drove away all the Buddhists, who had internal divisions and had taken possession of the earth, coveted by the asuras, and restored it to its pristine state. May He, our pre-eminent preceptor of Advaita, Śaṅkara, who is the sun to the lotuses of the Vedas and is of the image of Dakṣiṇāmūrti, confer happiness on those who are in dread of saṃsāra.*

Everything is propitious.





శ్రీ గురుభ్యోనమః  
 శ్రీ మద్దాలంకార విషయే  
 ప్రశస్తృష్టవై వే నునంధానభూవణం  
 నారాయణావ్రీరణాని నలులనంకు  
 త్రాం.  
 ఇవదీయవత్రివంశం ఇవదంశసోష్టం  
 పుష్కనశం శతకోటివంష్టాథానభూ  
 శిష్టవలభీనతివత్తేదాత్రానరాశాం  
 యవిత్రావ్రవలవిత్రావదయోగీనం  
 వయోన్తీనానానావత్తేత్రానంశా  
 విద్యావత్రాంబద్ధంకేత్రాంకేత్రాంకే  
 దులవదయేడి విద్యాంకేత్రాంకే  
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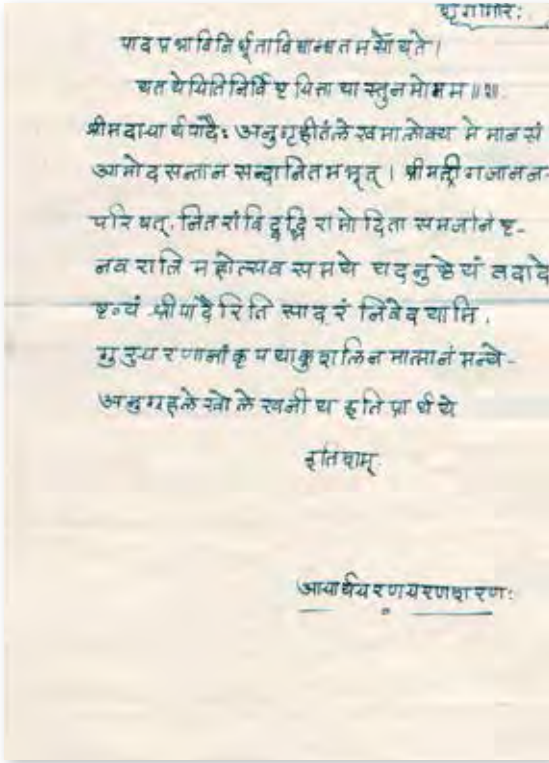
2. The following letter was written by the senior Jagadguru from Sringeri to His Holiness who was at Bengaluru.



Salutations to the glorious *Guru*.

May the recollections made of the glorious Nārāyaṇa, preceded by cogitation of the unity between the inner Self and Brahman manifest well with regard to the glorious young king of ascetics. My heart rejoiced on knowing from your letter about your good physical health, your exposition of the import of the text ‘*Satakoṭi*’ in the *Vidvat-sadas* and your having got your disciple to talk on ‘*avacchedakatā*’. There is no doubt that this year’s *sabhā* shall progress well. The gathering of scholars does serve to engender interest in the study of the *sāstras*. Usually, many congregate. I bless that by the grace of Śrī-Śāradā-Candramaulīśvara, you have the proficiency to make all the assembled scholars experience incomparable delight (by your exposition). By the grace of the *Guru* (the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff), I am well here. Thus is one’s own good.

☆☆☆



Om

*Bhādrapada-kṛṣṇa-ekādaśī (Sringeri)*

(Verse:) *My salutation to the ascetic whose mind is absorbed in consciousness and the lustre of whose feet destroys the blinding darkness of avidyā.*

Having seen the epistle graced by the worshipful *Ācārya* (Preceptor, the senior Jagadguru), my mind decidedly became profusely joyful. The *Gaṇapati-(Vākyārtha-Vidvat-)-Sadas* was greatly enjoyed by the scholars. I eagerly beseech directives from Your Worshipful Holiness about the observances to be followed by me during the *Navarātri* festivities. I deem myself to be well by the grace of the foremost *Ācārya*. I await an epistle with Your Holiness's instructions.

Everything is propitious.

One having the feet of the pre-eminent *Ācārya* as refuge.

☆☆☆

3. The following letter was penned by His Holiness on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 1938 at Sringeri; the senior *Jagadguru* was then in Bengaluru.





శ్రీ గురుభ్యోనమః

శ్రీ మహాలయతొద్రవ్యంకం  
 ప్రవృత్తవృత్తానమందానభవనకం  
 శ్రీ మహాలయంకం నీకంకంకం  
 కంకంకంకం

సంచలః

శ్రీ మతంకంకంకంకంకం  
 మహాలయకంకంకంకంకం  
 నానంకంకంకంకంకంకం  
 మహాలయకంకంకంకం  
 దంకంకంకంకంకంకం  
 కంకంకంకంకంకంకం  
 గంకంకంకంకంకంకం  
 దంకంకంకంకంకంకం  
 కంకంకంకంకంకంకం

Page 1

శ్రీమహాలయకంకంకంకం  
 ప్రవృత్తవృత్తానమందానభవనకం  
 శ్రీ మహాలయంకం నీకంకంకం  
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 దంకంకంకంకంకంకం  
 కంకంకంకంకంకంకం

Page 2

శ్రీమహాలయకంకంకంకం  
 ప్రవృత్తవృత్తానమందానభవనకం  
 శ్రీ మహాలయంకం నీకంకంకం  
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 కంకంకంకంకంకంకం

Page 3

సంచలః

శ్రీ మతంకంకంకంకంకం  
 మహాలయకంకంకంకంకం  
 నానంకంకంకంకంకం  
 మహాలయకంకంకం  
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 గంకంకంకంకంకంకం  
 దంకంకంకంకంకంకం  
 కంకంకంకంకంకంకం

4. The following letter was penned by the senior *Jagadguru* in Bengaluru and was His reply to the above-mentioned letter of His Holiness.

Salutations to the glorious *Guru*.

May the recollections made of the glorious Nārāyaṇa preceded by cogitation of the unity between the inner Self and *Brahman* manifest well with regard to the glorious young king of ascetics. Presently, having known from your letter and that of the scholar Ramachandra Sastry regarding your exposition of the import of the *śāstra* in the *sabhā*, I am extremely pleased.

In the *Navarātri* festival which is at hand, conduct yourself in such a way that there is not even an iota of strain on your body, by taking recourse, without laxity, to food, sleep, etc., at the appropriate times. As done last year, having completed the *Śiva-pūjā*, etc., by 8:30 in the morning, entering the temple of the holy Goddess and worshipping there till 10 o'clock, proceeding to the river and worshipping the same followed by *darśana* of the *Gurus* at the *samādhis* and completing the afternoon *anuṣṭhāna*, you must complete *bhikṣā* by 1 o'clock. This year, let there not be excessive *japa* and the like. As before, proceeding to the temple at 8:30 in the night and completing *dīpārādhana* by 10 o'clock, you should quickly resort to comfortable sleep. At this age (of yours), this much is sufficient.

People who have assembled there attain undiminishing good by being devoted to the mother, father and the *Guru* and acting in accordance with injunctions, such as, "Revere the mother as a god." What need is there to write more in this regard to you who, by the performance of appropriate *anuṣṭhāna*, are devoutly resolved in conferring higher good upon all?

At the time of having *darśana* at the *samādhis*, chant the *Guruparamparā-stuti*, the ten peace invocations and also the *Dakṣiṇāmūrti-stotra*.

All is auspicious.

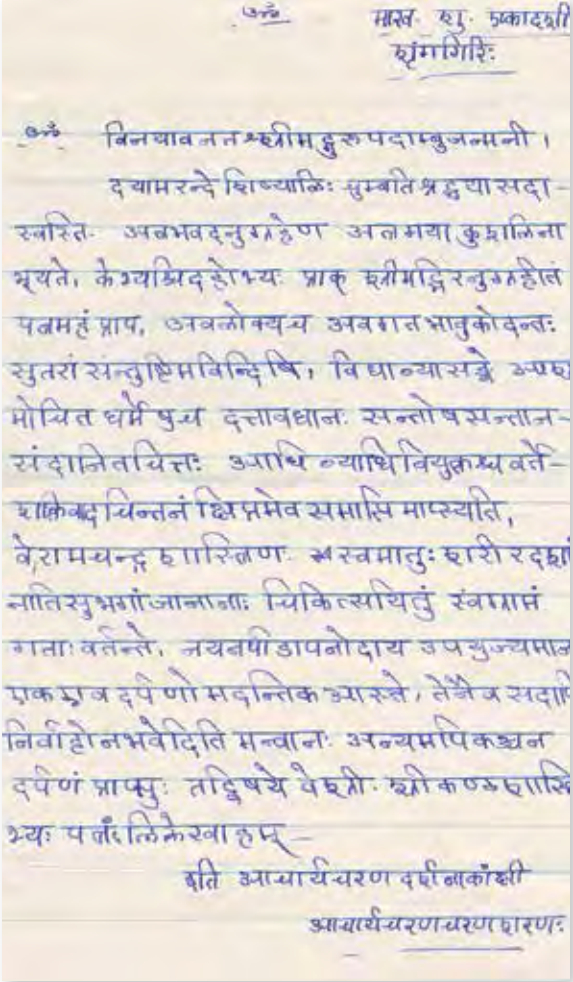
(Verse:) *O Goddess! O Ocean of mercy! Give firm belief in the performance of the appropriate sva-dharma and the necessary physical strength for achieving that end. Further, confer long life, fame, total disinterest in the path of sin, the company of the holy and the hearing of holy stories. Having given these, O beloved of Brahmā, quickly give knowledge and a pure mind.*

Salutations to the glorious Mother, Śāradā.





5. The following letter was penned by His Holiness on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 1939 at Sringeri; the senior *Jagadguru* was then in Bengaluru:



Om

*Māgha-śuddha-ekādaśī (Sringeri)*

Om.

(Verse:) *Bowing low with humility, the disciple-bee gently touches, with constant faith, the celebrated Guru's feet that are lotuses with the nectar of mercy.*

All is well. By Your Holiness's grace, I am well here. I received, a few days back, the epistle graced by Your glorious Holiness. Having read it, and coming to know of the tidings, I felt very happy. Having accorded focus to the study of the *śāstra* and to the duties ordained for a *saṁnyāsīn*, I am decidedly profusely happy and free from mental and physical discomforts. The study of (the *Nyāya* work) *Śakti-vāda* will be concluding soon. Learning of the indisposition of his mother, *Veda-brahma-Śrī* Ramachandra Sastry has gone to his native village to attend to her medical

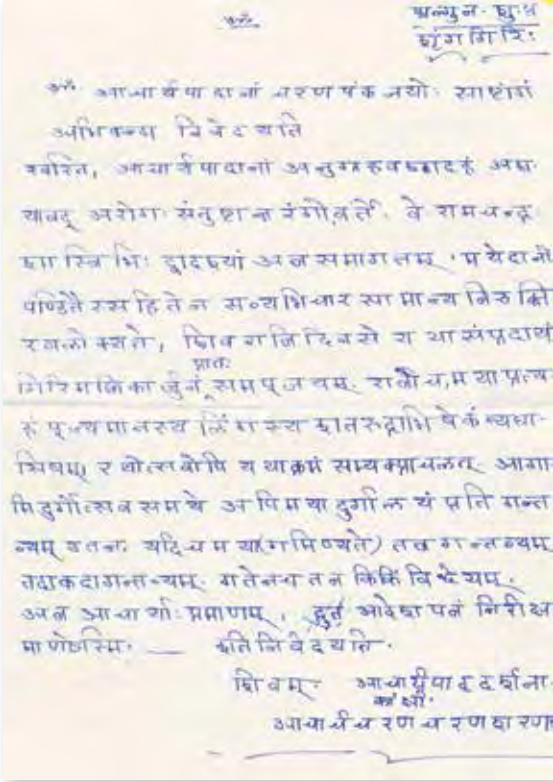
treatment. Currently, I have with me one pair of spectacles, prescribed to ward off the discomfort in my eyes. Noting that managing with just this pair of (dark) power glasses all the time is difficult, I have written to *Veda-brahma-śrī* Srikanta Sastry about my requiring another pair of glasses too.

One desirous of beholding the worshipful *Ācārya* and having the feet of the pre-eminent *Ācārya* as refuge.

☆☆☆



6. The following letter was penned by His Holiness on 21<sup>st</sup> February, 1939 at Sringeri; the senior *Jagadguru* was then in Bengaluru.



Om

*Phālguṇa-sūddha-pratīpat (Sringeri)*

Om. Having performed *sāṣṭāṅga-namaskāra* (full prostration) at the lotus feet of the pre-eminent *Ācārya*, I humbly submit as follows:

All is well. By the grace of the pre-eminent *Ācārya*, as of today, I am in good health and of contented mind. *Veda-brahma-śrī* Ramachandra Sastry arrived here on *dvādaśī* (16<sup>th</sup> February). I am looking into the '*Savyabhichāra*' and '*Sāmānya-nirukti*' texts (of the *Nyāya-śāstra*) with the scholars. On *śivarātri* (that was on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1939), I worshipped Lord Mallikārjuna on the hill (that is, the *liṅga* at the Malahānikareśvara Temple) dedicatedly in the morning as per the tradition and, at night, I performed

*śata-rudra-abhiṣeka* (*abhiṣeka* with the chanting of the *Vedic Śrī-Rudra* a hundred times) to the *liṅga* that I worship daily. The chariot-festival (of Malahānikareśvara, conducted that year on 19<sup>th</sup> February) also went on well, as per procedure.

During the forthcoming Durgāmbā-festival (the chariot-festival at the Durgā Temple near Sringeri, due that year on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 1939), should I go to the Durgā Temple or not? If I should go, when should I go and, having gone there, what all should I do? In this matter, the revered *Ācārya* is the authority. I am looking forward to an epistle (of Your Holiness) with directives. The above-mentioned is my humble submission. Everything is propitious.

One desirous of beholding the worshipful *Ācārya* and having the feet of the pre-eminent *Ācārya* as refuge.





7. The following letter written by the senior Jagadguru on 7.7.1939 at Kalady; His Holiness was at Sringeri.

శ్రీ గురుభ్యోనమః  
 గుడాశీ వశమూరంభం శంకరా  
 షాన్త్యచక్రమం గ్రేన్దాశాన్త్య  
 చక్రతాం పంజీగురువరంబరం.  
 శంకరం శంకరాశాన్త్య  
 షాన్త్యం గూడ రాంబుగోం  
 నూతనాన్త్యచక్రతాం పంజీ  
 షాన్త్యం తోప్రసః ప్రసః.  
 శ్రీ చక్రాలయతేంద్ర విసయో  
 తక్రస్మద్యేత్తే హనుసంధానప్రశస్  
 రాః శ్రీచున్నారాయణాన్వీకయ  
 స్మముల్లసంతులారం సంతా.  
 శ్రీ గురునాథ దయయా పంక  
 లదాననీ పూర్వశ్రీ చక్ర షాన్త్య  
 త్తాన్త్యచక్రమం గ్రేన్దాశాన్త్య  
 లాన్త్యచక్రమం గ్రేన్దాశాన్త్య  
 నీకాయంబుత్రం నిష్కేకయా దం నరశక్తి  
 లాన్త్యచక్రమం గ్రేన్దాశాన్త్య  
 గ్రేన్దాశాన్త్యచక్రమం గ్రేన్దాశాన్త్య

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శ్రీ గురుభ్యోనమః  
 గుడాశీ వశమూరంభం శంకరా  
 షాన్త్యచక్రమం గ్రేన్దాశాన్త్య  
 చక్రతాం పంజీగురువరంబరం.  
 శంకరం శంకరాశాన్త్య  
 షాన్త్యం గూడ రాంబుగోం  
 నూతనాన్త్యచక్రతాం పంజీ  
 షాన్త్యం తోప్రసః ప్రసః.  
 శ్రీ చక్రాలయతేంద్ర విసయో  
 తక్రస్మద్యేత్తే హనుసంధానప్రశస్  
 రాః శ్రీచున్నారాయణాన్వీకయ  
 స్మముల్లసంతులారం సంతా.  
 శ్రీ గురునాథ దయయా పంక  
 లదాననీ పూర్వశ్రీ చక్ర షాన్త్య  
 త్తాన్త్యచక్రమం గ్రేన్దాశాన్త్య  
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 నీకాయంబుత్రం నిష్కేకయా దం నరశక్తి  
 లాన్త్యచక్రమం గ్రేన్దాశాన్త్య  
 గ్రేన్దాశాన్త్యచక్రమం గ్రేన్దాశాన్త్య

- నవగుణివం -  
 7.7.1939.  
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Salutations to the glorious Guru.  
 (Verse:) I salute the lineage of Gurus commencing with Sadāśiva, having Śaṅkarācārya in the middle and ending with my Guru.  
 (Verse:) I repeatedly bow to the divinities Keśava and Śaṅkara who appeared as Bādarāyaṇa and Śaṅkarācārya and authored the Brahma-sūtras and the commentary thereon.  
 May the recollections made of the glorious Nārāyaṇa, preceded by cogitation of the unity between the inner Self and Brahman manifest well with regard to the glorious young king of ascetics.

Presently, by the compassion of the glorious *Guru* (the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff), I am well. Unimpeded joy is being experienced by me having known from the previous two epistles written by you and by the letter of *Brahmaśrī* (Ramachandra) Sastry that your body is healthy and that studies are going on without obstacles. I presume that the text '*Satpratipakṣa*' is completed. Since the *vyāvahārika* portion is somewhat difficult, it must be repeatedly cogitated upon.

This year, due to the additional month of *śrāvaṇa*, the *cāturmāsya* vow must be observed for three months. You should pray daily in Śāradāmbā's presence that all people should resort to proper practices and perform virtuous deeds and, by this means, attain knowledge of the Truth and become happy. For your happiness, I am sending herewith *mantrākṣatas* (rice grains mixed with turmeric powder), the holy *prasāda* of Vyāsa.

All is auspicious.

7.7.1939

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His Holiness's studies in *Tarka* were as yet incomplete when a *Tarka* scholar from North India came to Sringeri to seek some clarifications from the senior *Jagadguru*. The senior *Jagadguru* directed the *paṇḍita* to His Holiness but the scholar was



hesitant and sought help from the senior *Jagadguru* Himself. "Let him give the necessary explanation. If your doubts are still not dispelled, I shall clarify," said the senior *Jagadguru*. Unconvinced, but not in a position to say anything, the scholar settled down to hear what he presupposed would be the inept mumblings of a novice. He was taken aback when he heard a torrential flow of intricate points from His Holiness; all his doubts were resolved. He realised his folly in underestimating His Holiness's expertise and, after due apology, returned home satiated and wiser in more ways than one.

On another occasion, a scholar came to the senior *Jagadguru* for philosophical discussions. He too was directed to His Holiness who provided all the necessary clarifications. On

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beholding the senior *Jagadguru* seated with His teenaged disciple, a scholar well-versed in the *Sāma-veda* thought, "How difficult it must be for Him to train such a young disciple. Indeed, it must be a burden on Him." Abruptly, the senior *Jagadguru* asked the preoccupied *Vedic* scholar to chant the *Sāma-veda*. The man stood up but found words failing him. He had mastered the *Sāma-veda* in its entirety but in spite of his best efforts nothing was forthcoming. Addressing him, the senior *Jagadguru* said, "Śāradāmbā is there to take care of things and everything goes on as per Her wish. She is His (His Holiness's) guardian." The *Veda-paṇḍita* realised his folly in presuming that His Holiness was an ordinary teenager, training whom would be a nuisance.

It was only after the senior *Jagadguru's* return from Kalady and His Holiness had become an authority on the *Nyāya-sāstra* that, in the 1940s, His Holiness was formally taught *Vedānta* by His *Guru*. His Holiness told me that His *Guru* personally taught Him, with sub-commentaries, the *Bhagavadgītā-bhāṣya*, *Taittīriya-upaniṣad-bhāṣya* and the *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, and then the *Īśāvāsya-upaniṣad-bhāṣya*, *Kena-upaniṣad-bhāṣya* and *Kaṭha-upaniṣad-bhāṣya*. I did not ask Him whether the senior *Jagadguru* taught Him texts other than the *bhāṣyas*. His Holiness told me on different occasions how wonderful His *Guru's* teaching was. Even decades later, He clearly recalled what His *Guru* had taught Him and even exactly reproduced His words with ease.

His Holiness told me on different occasions how wonderful His *Guru's* teaching was. Even decades later, He clearly recalled what His *Guru* had taught Him and even reproduced His exact words comfortably.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff was an expert swimmer. Any stretch of water, dangerous though it be, was an irresistible invitation to Him. He had the ability to hold His breath for a protracted period of time and, on occasions, used to frighten His attendants by diving under water and remaining there for a long time. The senior *Jagadguru*, on the contrary, was thoroughly unfamiliar with swimming and was never given to frolic. His Holiness, for His part, was like His *Paramaguru (Guru's Guru)*. When He first came to Sringeri in 1930, He did not know swimming but gradually mastered it to the extent that He was as much at home in water as on land. He swam with the grace of a fish and the more torrential the current, the greater was His affinity to the flow. Years later, when He went on tours as the pontiff, He did not let slip the opportunity to swim in various mighty rivers, such as the Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Godāvarī, Narmadā, and Kāverī, and the ocean, in many places. Trying His hand at rowing a wooden boat used to ferry

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people across the river in Sringeri, He soon became a fine oarsman. Perhaps because of His ignorance of swimming and His intense love for His Holiness, the senior *Jagadguru* used to become jittery whenever His Holiness plunged into the river. He did not expressly forbid His pupil from having the Tuṅgā for His companion but was heard remarking when His Holiness swam in the swollen Tuṅgā, “Oh! What is he up to? How dangerous all this is. I really hope nothing untoward happens.”

Full of life, His Holiness walked far into the forests and along the banks of the river Tuṅgā. Nageswara Sastry recalled that on an occasion, His Holiness asked him to accompany Him and kept walking for so long that it became dark, making return difficult. Sri Subbaramaiya recalled that His Holiness once asked him whether he would be able to accompany Him to a waterfall a few miles away. He readily agreed. It was late before they were able to return. As they neared Sacchidananda Vilas, His Holiness remarked, “I will slip in through the back door.” Sri Subbaramaiya went to the front of the building. The senior *Jagadguru* was there and gently enquired about the trip.

The senior *Jagadguru* had such intense love for His Holiness that when His disciple set out for a walk in the evening, He kept gazing at the receding form of His Holiness till He was out of sight. Now and then, He used to accompany His Holiness to a *maṇḍapa*, which was once situated about 100 metres to the east of Sacchidananda Vilas. He then sat there till His Holiness went out of sight. If it became late for His Holiness to return, the senior *Jagadguru* would become visibly restless and start pacing. Shortly thereafter, He would begin making enquiries and then send a person with a lamp to fetch Him. He never reprimanded His Holiness for coming late, though He advised Him not to stay out well after dark.

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His Holiness told me, “Barring three things, I do not remember having done, even in a dream, on even one occasion, anything that did not meet with my *Guru*’s approval. The three things were swimming, climbing trees and going for long walks in the forests.” He also remarked that He had on two occasions requested His *Guru* in person to kindly forgive Him for these three irresistible transgressions and had sought forgiveness once in writing, referring to these three acts of His implicitly. I asked Him, “How did the senior *Jagadguru* respond?” His Holiness said, “The first time I sought His forgiveness was in the early

part of 1936, before I went to Bengaluru. He just smiled and patted me on the cheek. I did so the second time in a letter from Bengaluru. He did not write back anything about this point. The second time I apologised in person was a year after His return from Kalady (that is, in 1941). In response to this, He told me, 'I cannot even imagine them to be transgressions, for these are exactly the three things my *Guru* Himself could not resist. Hence, what is there to forgive? Just as fire cannot give up its heat, you cannot give up these, at least for the present. Therefore, it is I who must learn not to worry about what cannot be changed.' I did not apologise to Him about these thereafter."

At that time, I did not ask His Holiness further about His apology in writing. After having been blessed with the opportunity to peruse His Holiness's letters to His *Guru*, I understood that the written apology was in the form of a verse in the letter penned by Him on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 1937. That letter begins with a verse and ends with two verses, all composed by His Holiness; the apology is in the second verse. The meanings of the three verses are: "(First verse:) *I seek refuge in the lustrous preceptor, whose lotus feet are embellished by (glorified by) the Upaniṣads and who eradicates the sorrows of those who pay obeisance to Him. (Second verse:) Because of childishness or fickleness, I have, knowingly or unknowingly, committed transgressions. May the revered Guru deign to forgive them. (Third verse:) I yearn to behold the Guru who is the divine antidote for the malady of transmigration and on beholding whom, one attains peace.*"

The senior *Jagadguru* gave His Holiness a crystal *liṅga* for His private worship. He gradually handed over the performance of the *Candramaulīśvara-pūjā* to His Holiness on most days and contented Himself with the praises He heard of His Holiness's concentration and devout performance of the *pūjā*.

The senior *Jagadguru* had conveyed to the Government that His Holiness's views may be taken as His own. Though this empowered His Holiness to freely take decisions within the framework of government control, His Holiness was particular that nothing should be done that would not meet with the approval of His *Guru*. Whenever His Holiness strongly felt that His *Guru's* explicit directive was urgently needed, the senior *Jagadguru* did give it even when He was in a secluded state. An instance of this was narrated to me by S. G. Narasimhaiyya. The government submitted a panel of names from which the pontiff of Sringeri was requested to select one as the head of the Sivaganga Math, a branch of the Sringeri Math. Narasimhaiyya took the matter to His Holiness for a decision. His Holiness could have chosen a person Himself but He keenly felt that His *Guru's* view on this was imperative. He asked Narasimhaiyya to proceed to the senior *Jagadguru* and ascertain His choice. Much to Narasimhaiyya's surprise, the senior *Jagadguru* did choose a person

from the list, even though before and after doing so He was in a world of His own and non-communicative.

Whenever His Holiness took a decision, He did it so well that not only was the senior *Jagadguru* saved from problems but was also fully satisfied. For instance, in the 1950s, a labour problem brewed, with the ryots of the *Maṭha's Jahagirs* forming a committee and demanding parity with those in the lands belonging to the Mysore State (now Karnataka). The senior *Jagadguru* was inaccessible at that time. His Holiness took the initiative to meet the committee members and gave them a patient hearing. This pleased them. He then sent them a written message through the Private Secretary, S. G. Narasimhaiyya. A rendering of that Kannada message into English is as follows:

“Your letter dated Thursday, the 11<sup>th</sup> was submitted to Śrī Sannidhānam (as His Holiness was referred to, with the senior *Jagadguru* being referred to as Śrī Mahāsannidhānam) and as per His command, following is the reply that is to be given to you:

“We are happy to learn that you, the God-fearing devotees of the *Guru*, have come forward to form a committee in the interests of the general public. We are happy that you will be serving the public and for this we pray to *Śrī-Sāradā-Candramaulīśvara*.

“We are aware that the ryots of the *Maṭha* should be helped in their efforts for betterment in all spheres. But as you know, the villages which were under the *Maṭha* have been, for the past 18 years, taken over by the government. Hence, the matter raised in your representation should be decided by the government, which has to go into the matter.

“We also feel that the ryots of the *Maṭha* should enjoy the same facilities as those enjoyed by the other villages that come under the Mysore Government and that the *Maṭha* ryots should not have anything to complain about.

“We are happy that devoted people like you are coming forward to take up the charitable work in the tradition of the *Maṭha*. I pray to Parameśvara to grant all of you good health and long life.

“May all beings be happy.”

As can be seen, the reply reveals His Holiness’s concern for the welfare of the ryots as also His tact in the face of a situation where the possibility of abolition of the *Jahagirs* was looming large and the key to granting or not granting the parity the ryots desired lay in the hands of the State Government. Importantly, the committee members and the ryots were satisfied with His Holiness’s response.

His Holiness never hesitated to issue any instruction as per the senior *Jagadguru's* bidding as also to modify or reverse it one or more times subsequently if that is what His *Guru* merely felt or obliquely hinted should be done. In all circumstances, He saw to it that credit alone went to His *Guru* and He shouldered any discredit. The following dialogue that I had with His Holiness in 1982 throws light on His high regard for the senior *Jagadguru* and His unquestioning obedience to His *Guru*.

I: Has Your Holiness ever felt hurt that the senior *Jagadguru* dismissed any view or feeling of Your Holiness?

His Holiness: Never.

As He spoke, He grew visibly excited and, with a face flushed with emotion, continued, "I cannot even imagine feeling dissatisfied that my *Guru* dismissed any view or sentiment of mine. Who indeed was I to even imagine so? He was everything to me and whatever He said or did was perfectly right as far as I was concerned. Had it occurred to me even once that my *Guru* had insulted me or had not been fair to me, then I would have been the vilest of human beings, fit to be ostracized." At this juncture, His Holiness's voice choked with emotion.

When the senior *Jagadguru* was entering the 60th year of His earthly life, some ardent disciples conceived the idea of celebrating it in a fitting manner, but He did not accord permission for this. However, when He found that they did not intend to make the celebration a secular affair and that they wanted to arrange for a *Sahasra-caṇḍī-mahāyāga* for the welfare of all, He consented. The functions were scheduled to be performed in the middle of 1953, months after His *Ṣaṣṭyabdapūrti*. However, the well-known trait of the senior *Jagadguru* retiring into Himself and avoiding publicity of any sort came to the fore and He abstained from taking part in the religious functions, though He kept Himself acquainted with the same. It was His Holiness who made arrangements not only for the conduct of *Sahasra-caṇḍī* but also for the feeding and stay of the large number of people who visited Sringeri on the occasion. He presided over the rites and actively sustained the enthusiasm of the people

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- His Holiness





that would have otherwise waned because of the senior *Jagadguru's* absence. In the course of a speech in 1977 at Chennai, His Holiness recounted, "I requested my *Guru* to grace the *pūrṇāhuti*. He said, 'If the Lord is pleased, He will make it rain.' When the *pūrṇāhuti* commenced, the sky was completely clear, without any cloud of even the size of a one-rupee coin visible. However, as the *pūrṇāhuti* progressed, dark clouds gathered and there was a downpour."

In August 1954, the first President of India, Rajendra Prasad, visited Sringeri. Seeing the silver palanquin being readied to receive the head of State, the senior *Jagadguru* directed his Private Secretary, S. G. Narasimhaiyya, to send the golden palanquin instead. On seeing it, Rajendra Prasad asked who used that. On learning that the senior *Jagadguru* had occupied it in the past, He refused outright to sit in it and, saying that it was worthy of salutations, paid respects to it. He hesitated to stay in Chandramouleshwara Thotti because it was the building occupied at times by the senior *Jagadguru*, but consented to do so only when he was told that that was what the senior *Jagadguru* specifically wanted him to do. The meeting between the senior *Jagadguru* and the President took place in Goddess Śāradāmbā's temple. His Holiness, who was present, translated into Sanskrit for His *Guru* what Rajendra Prasad said in Hindi and translated for him into chaste Hindi what the senior *Jagadguru* spoke in Sanskrit. The President was highly impressed and the senior *Jagadguru* was pleased. Rajendra Prasad was scheduled to leave in the afternoon but wished to stay longer; some more discussions were also pending. Dexterously handling the situation, His Holiness told the President at the close of the meeting, "We can meet again in the afternoon." This settled the issue to the visible delight of the President. His Holiness supervised the arrangements for the President's stay and ensured that he was shown around without delays. He had the President taken to the various shrines in the *Maṭha*; as per His instructions, when the President approached a shrine, *maṅgalārati* was promptly performed and the President was briefly told about that shrine. The students and staff of the *pāṭhaśālā* had been asked to assemble at Bhagavatpāda's temple and chant one verse per class when the President came there.

"I requested my *Guru* to grace the *pūrṇāhuti*. He said, 'If the Lord is pleased, He will make it rain.' When the *pūrṇāhuti* commenced, the sky was completely clear, without any cloud of even the size of a one-rupee coin visible. However, as the *pūrṇāhuti* progressed, dark clouds gathered and there was a downpour."

- His Holiness



Later, Rajendra Prasad called on His Holiness in 1960 at Chennai and on that occasion, His Holiness blessed him with the title '*Rāṣṭra-ratna* (A gem of the nation).'

In those days, discourses delivered at Sringeri by the senior *Jagadguru* were few and far between. Hence, it was only about a year after His *samnyāsa* that His Holiness gave His first public discourse. He told me, "It was on a *Śaṅkara-jayantī* that my *Guru* directed me to

speak. I had not addressed a general audience before and was a little ill at ease to do so. Anyway, I just obeyed. Solely on account of His grace, I experienced no difficulty and the discourse was well received. My *Guru* subsequently told me that He was delighted with it."

His Holiness's intense faith in the senior *Jagadguru* was readily discernible by devotees in various situations. Once, when the senior *Jagadguru* was touring South India, a devotee prayed to Him for relief from some problems that he was facing. The senior *Jagadguru*

blessed him and give him a mango as *prasāda*. “If I consume it, only I shall be purified. Were I to sow it, it will sprout and grow into a big tree yielding many a fruit by which numerous persons will stand to gain,” he thought and planted the seed. Sure enough, a big mango tree grew from that seed but, unfortunately, it yielded no fruits. The devotee was at a loss as to what he should do and so sought His Holiness’s intervention when He was camping at his village and was to visit his house the next day.

His Holiness: Have you been taking care of the tree?

Devotee: I have done all I could and I have also consulted others who know about trees.

His Holiness: Have you invoked the services of a horticulturist?

Devotee: Yes, but even his endeavours were in vain.

His Holiness: I shall look into the matter tomorrow.

The next day, having finished His morning *anuṣṭhāna*, His Holiness had the *tīrtha-prasāda* of Lord Candramaulīśvara taken with Him and proceeded to the devotee’s abode. As scheduled, the devotee performed *pādapūjā*. At the end of it, he stood before His Holiness with joined palms. “Where is the mango tree?” asked His Holiness, “I desire to see it.” The devotee led Him to the tree. Placing His hand on the tree, He closed His eyes for a moment and declared, “The fruit given by my *Guru* cannot be unproductive. By His grace, this tree will bear mangoes in the very next season.” Following this unequivocal assertion, He gently stroked the tree with His hands and poured the *tīrtha* brought by Him at its base. In the very next season, the tree stood adorned with flowers and subsequently with delicious mangoes. When the devotee reported this to His Holiness and submitted some mangoes from that tree, He told him, “Our *Guru*’s grace is on us. Distribute these fruits.”

When any major development or function took place, He credited it to the grace of His *Guru* and God. For instance, a large number of coconuts were reaped from the groves in Narasimhavana and Narasimhapura and, later, a big heap of coconut coir was temporarily housed in a corridor of Sacchidananda Vilas. On seeing it, His Holiness’s first reaction was, “My *Guru* would have been happy to see

When any major development or function took place, He credited it to the grace of His *Guru* and God. On some occasions, His Holiness said, “My *Guru* would have been pleased to see the present state of affairs wherein there are funds and scope for the performance of many *dhārmika* activities.”

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His Holiness personally typed the handwritten text of His *Guru*’s detailed commentary on the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, gave the material to Ramachandra Sastry to edit and had the book published. In His *Śrīmukha* to that book, He has mentioned inter alia, “Our revered *Ācārya*, who is renowned by the name ‘*Śrī Candrasekhara Bhārati*’, which ought to be remembered at the start of each day, had performed austerities, was beyond the confines of all schools of thought, was the foremost adept in the performance of what is prescribed in the *śāstras*, had directly realised the Reality that is the *Ātman* and was a *jīvanmukta*.” In His benedictory preface to *Śrī-jagadguru-caritāmṛta*, a biography of the senior *Jagadguru* by Bhāṣya-svāmin, He wrote, “Our revered Preceptor was ever focused on *Brahman*, held *Brahman* as the ultimate and was a *jīvanmukta*; His life was an ideal for all *āstikas*.”

The English rendering of the verses composed by His Holiness on His *Guru* and included in His letters but not cited so far is as follows:



*To those in the darkness of ignorance, He is the sun that is in the sky as also in the space within (the heart). To the multitude of drooping lilies that are the hearts of scholars, He is the moon. To those trapped in the forest of sense objects and without a friend in the path to the Supreme, He is the flaming torch that lights the way. Victorious is the luminous Guru who confers joy on all.*

*I prostrate before the greatest Guru, who is a kalpavṛkṣa (wish-fulfilling tree) to those who bow, who is worthy of being saluted by pre-eminent knowers of the Truth, who is the fresh sprout of bliss and who is the ocean of the śāstras (or, in other words, is fully conversant with the śāstras).*

*I pay obeisance to the cloud-like Guru, who abides in (the sky that is) the Supreme Brahman, pours forth the nectar of Vedānta and terminates the sufferings of people.*

*I salute the glorious, foremost Guru, who is highly gracious to those who pay obeisance and a wee bit of the kindness of whose feet is itself the saviour in the forest of saṃsāra.*

*I place as a crown on my head Your - my Preceptor's - pair of pādukā-s, the remembrance of which certainly terminates the mental darkness of mankind.*

*I prostrate before the lotus-like feet of the glorious King of preceptors by paying obeisance to whom even a dullard becomes akin to the Guru.*



Before His Holiness left for Bengaluru in 1936, the senior *Jagadguru* referred to His extraordinary vision of Śiva (on 5<sup>th</sup> December, 1935) and enlightenment (on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1935) and told Him, in private, “I know that you are God Himself and ever perfect. Your engaging in *sāadhanā* and apparently attaining enlightenment were only a part of your divine sport. Your vision of Śiva and your receiving His blessings and instruction a few days before your taking your *sāadhanā* to its culmination were on the same footing as the vision, blessings and instruction of Śiva obtained by Kṛṣṇa (described in the *Droṇa-parvan* of the *Mahābhārata*.)”

“I know that you are God Himself and ever perfect. Your engaging in *sāadhanā* and apparently attaining enlightenment were only a part of your divine sport. Your vision of Śiva and your receiving His blessings and instruction a few days before your taking your *sāadhanā* to its culmination were on the same footing as the vision, blessings and instruction of Śiva obtained by Kṛṣṇa.”

- The senior *Jagadguru*

He even composed eight verses about His Holiness. The first of these was written by Him on the back of a letter that was addressed to Him and penned by His Holiness in Bengaluru on

25<sup>th</sup> July, 1937. Its import in English is: “O, Candramaulīśvara, comprehensively protect Abhinava Vidyātīrtha, whose moral principles are ever exquisite and conduct virtuous at all times, by conferring on him good health and a strong physique.” The remaining seven verses were written by the senior Jagadguru on a sheet of paper and given to His Holiness. He noted on that sheet that the month was āśvina and the year was Subhānu; this corresponds to the period 30<sup>th</sup> September, 1943 to 29<sup>th</sup> October, 1943. The meaning of these seven verses is:

1. *O Wise people! Hold in the heart-lotus the Guru, Vidyātīrtha, the young one with a tranquil mind, who is exceedingly compassionate, who destroys the mountain of impediments by His extremely pure glances, who is skilled in protecting everybody, who is known by means of the praṇava (om) and who is the manifestation of the Supreme Brahman.*

2. *Various good works have been done by the revered Guru (the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff) for facilitating scriptural learning. O revered one of controlled mind, the protection of what has been done is dependent on your glorious self.*

3. *Numerous rites and festivals relating to the Gurus and the Divinities have been created to purify the body, the organs and the mind. Your body is their fruit.*

4. *May Goddess Śāradā, the Destroyer of death Lord Candramaulīśvara (Śiva), the great Hari (Viṣṇu) and Goddess Rājarājeśvarī (the consort of Śiva) guard you, the foremost Guru.*

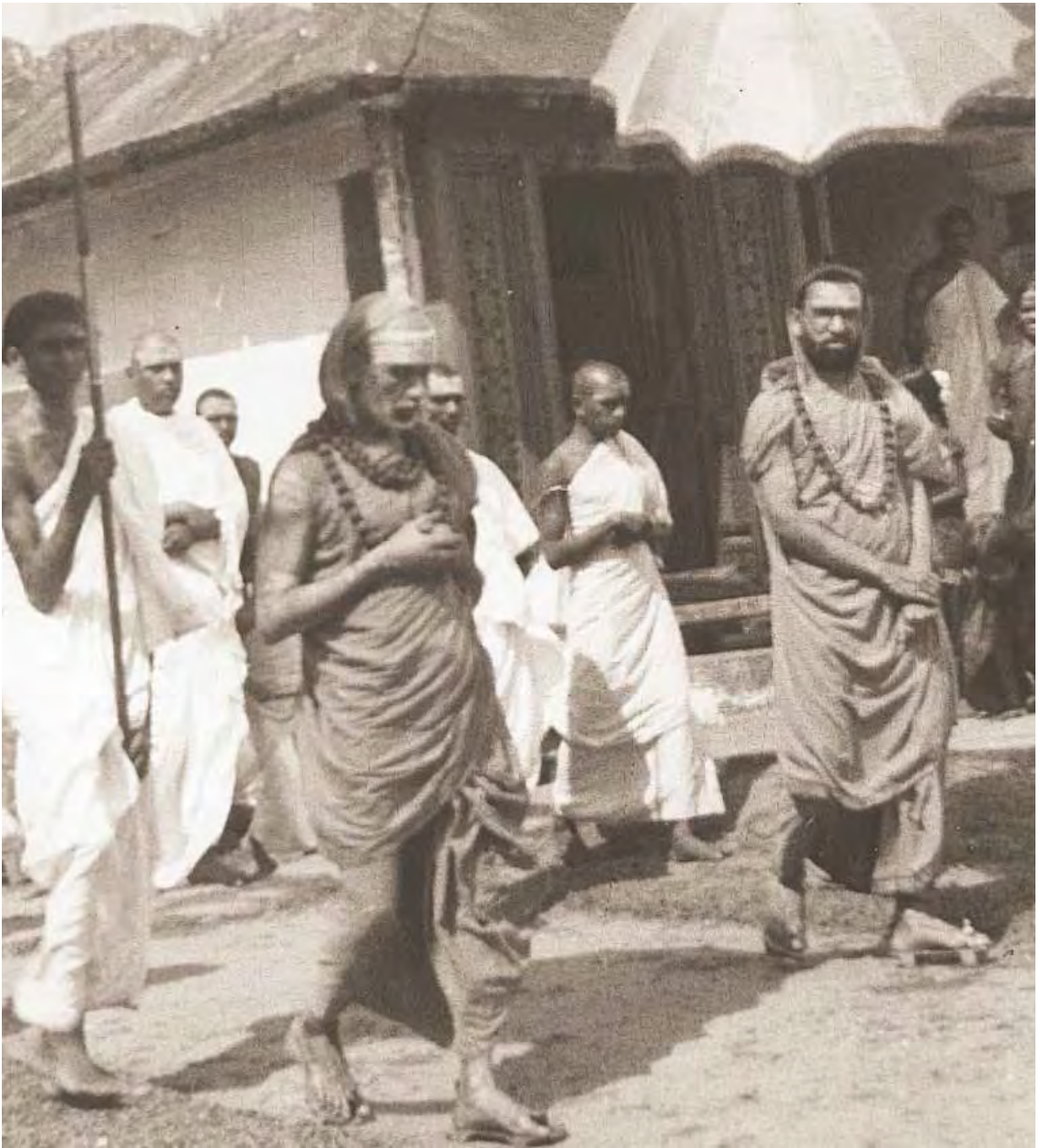
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- The senior Jagadguru

5. *May Brahmā (the Creator), the sages headed by Vasiṣṭha, my exalted Ācārya (the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff) and the chaste ladies such as Lopāmudrā (the spouse of Sage Agastya) guard you, the foremost Guru.*

6. *May Vāṇī, Lakṣmī and Gaurī guard you, the foremost Guru, while you sleep, sit, stand and walk.*

7. *May you ever protect the casket of Candramaulīśvara, who is all-pervasive (The reference is to the casket in which the Candramaulīśvara-liṅga is kept). Being protected thus by you, may Śiva (literally, the father of Gaṇapati) constantly protect you.*



Giving these verses to His Holiness, the senior *Jagadguru* said, “I have written only what I definitely know to be true about you. There is no exaggerated praise here.” What an extraordinary *Guru-Śiṣya* relationship!









## CHAPTER 13

# Becoming the Pontiff

*Jīvanmuktas* have no attachment or aversion to life or death. In 1954, the senior *Jagadguru* began to give hints that He no longer wished to retain His mortal coil since He felt that His work had been completed. However, the indications were rather subtle and not taken seriously. He had even said, “Let this body be of some use after death. If it were to be cast off in a forest, animals could devour it. Likewise, if it were discarded in the waters of the *Tuṅgā*, fishes could feed on it.” Though He occasionally made such statements there was no reason to believe that He had already made up His mind to terminate His human drama.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of August, 1954, when Mantreshwara Sarma took leave of the senior *Jagadguru* less than an hour after the President’s departure, he broke into tears, finding it heart-wrenching to be separated from his *Guru*. The senior *Jagadguru* asked him to sit down and said, “Why do you grieve? If I get released from my body before you pay your next visit here, I shall be with you as soon as you think of me.” He thought that the senior *Jagadguru* was trying to teach him that death is an illusion. It never struck him that He was preparing him for His ‘death’. {This is based on a published article.}

In September 1954, C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, who was then the Vice Chancellor of the Benaras Hindu University, conveyed that he wished to come to Sringeri to have His *darśana*. The senior *Jagadguru* directed His Private Secretary, S. G. Narasimhaiyya to reply that Ramaswamy Iyer could come within a week. However, the latter was unable to do so. A week later, the senior *Jagadguru* attained *Mahāsamādhi*.

“Let this body be of some use after death. If it were to be cast off in a forest, animals could devour it. Likewise, if it were discarded in the waters of the *Tuṅgā*, fishes could feed on it.”

- The senior *Jagadguru*



On the 25<sup>th</sup> of September, 1954, He was not in a withdrawn state and carried out His routine in a normal fashion. Around 11 a.m., He came from Narasimhavana to the northern side of the river to have the *darśana* of Śārādāmbā. As He was heading to exit the temple from the south, He saw two leaders, Bandi Gowda and Veeranna Gowda, awaiting him. He made tender enquiries and then walked up the steps. He was about to cross the threshold when He suddenly turned back,

walked towards them and gave them as *prasāda* some flowers that had adorned the Goddess's idol and which He had with Him. He proceeded to the Vidyāśaṅkara Temple and then returned to Narasimhavana. Soon afterwards, the Transport Minister, Siddha Veerappa, had an audience with Him. In the evening, He returned to the northern side of the Tuṅgā and granted an interview to Justice T. M. Mallappa. After the visitor took leave, He crossed the river by boat. A little later, His Holiness, who was camping on the northern side for the forthcoming *navarātri* celebrations, went to Narasimhavana to have the *darśana* of His *Guru*. He spent some time there before returning. {S. G. Narasimhaiyya gave me, in 1984, these details and those about C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer's proposed visit to Sringeri.}

It was customary in those days for the personal attendant on duty to prostrate before the senior *Jagadguru* before finally closing the doors of His room at night. That day, O. Ramaswamy was on duty. Of His own accord, the senior *Jagadguru* asked him about his father, who was unwell at that time, and even made enquiries about his child. He spoke to him for over half an hour; this was unusual. It was around midnight before Ramaswamy left.

The next morning (that is, on the morning of 26<sup>th</sup> September, 1954), the senior *Jagadguru* woke up early as was His wont. After some time, He was seen pacing up and down a passage in Sacchidananda Vilas. Ramaswamy and Kavi Mahabala Bhatta were on duty that day. The senior *Jagadguru* proceeded to Sandhya-mandapa on the riverside around 5:30 in the morning, accompanied by Mahabala Bhatta. He descended the steps leading to the river. He sat on a lower step in *padmāsana* and started to perform *prāṇāyāma*. Water was flowing over that step; as for the current, it was not strong. Mahabala Bhatta had the shock of his life when, a few minutes later, he found the senior *Jagadguru* missing. He looked around and saw Him floating down the river. Shouting for help, Mahabala Bhatta jumped into the river, swam downstream and managed to reach and hold Him.

Ramaswamy, who had bathed in Sacchidananda Vilas and brought the ‘*maḍi*’ clothing to be worn by the senior *Jagadguru* after His bath, reached the river just then. On seeing Mahabala Bhatta in the river holding the senior *Jagadguru*, whose legs appeared, to him, to be positioned in the *padmāsana*, he was stricken with fear and began screaming for help; he did not know swimming. Mahabala Bhatta began to be dragged by the current. A person on the other bank entered the river to help. He was a good swimmer. With his assistance playing a major role, Mahabala Bhatta managed to reach that bank with the senior *Jagadguru*. The sage was motionless and not breathing. His legs were locked in the *padmāsana*. His face looked quite normal and relaxed. There was no sign of suffocation.

Hearing the cries, Padmanabha Upadhyaya, His Holiness’s Personal Assistant, quickly arrived by boat. In a few moments, His Holiness reached the spot, running all the way from Chandramouliswara Thotti, where He had spent the night. On seeing the senior *Jagadguru*’s lifeless frame, He rushed to it and rubbed it with great affection. The doctor who reached there examined the senior *Jagadguru*. He determined that there was no sign of life. Attempts were made to revive the senior *Jagadguru* but they turned out to be of no avail. Some other doctors too reached the spot. Careful examination revealed that not a drop of water had entered the lungs and the stomach was not bloated in the least. It was clear that the death was not due to drowning. After performing *prāṇāyāma* in the *padmāsana*, the senior *Jagadguru* had, presumably, cast off His body in *yoga*. His body was reverentially carried to Chandramouliswara Thotti and placed, in a seated posture, on a bed of sandalwood logs.

By now it was 9:30 a.m. and about two thousand people had congregated. His Holiness was pacing up and down. Having loudly uttered “*Ambā* (Divine Mother),” He sat for some moments. Immediately thereafter, He collected Himself and was ready to execute the final rites in the traditional manner. It was a scene of sombre grandeur, with spontaneous

chanting of the *Vedas* and *stotras*. Around 10 a.m., the senior *Jagadguru's* body was adorned with *vibhūti* (sacred ash) and garlands of *tulasī* and *rudrākṣa*-beads. It was carried to the northern side of Bhagavatpāda's temple and seated in the courtyard to the north-east of Bhagavatpāda's shrine on a spot purified with *kamaṇḍalu-tīrtha*. His Holiness worshipped His *Guru's* remains; the *pūjā* included *abhiṣeka* (religious bathing) with *pañcāmṛta* (comprising milk, curd, ghee, honey and sugar) and with water, to the accompaniment of the chanting of *mantras*.



The duly adorned body was then placed in a silver palanquin, and taken in a ceremonial procession, accompanied by a retinue of guards, attendants and elephants. Kettle-drums and conches were sounded. The body was carried through all the major streets of Sringeri to provide everyone the opportunity to have a final *darśana*. A young dalit woman who had delivered a baby days earlier came out of her house and held her child up near the palanquin with the conviction that even this final *darśana* of the sage would benefit it. Copious tears flowed from her eyes. Srinarasimha Bhatta had been out of town and was returning to Sringeri; at that time, the procession was yet to start. He was surprised to find a Muslim man running down the street crying, "All is lost!" On Srinarasimha Bhatta enquiring the reason, he replied, full of grief, "All is lost. The *Mahāsvāmin* has passed away." Such was the universal regard for the senior *Jagadguru*.

His Holiness was part of the procession throughout. For some reason, He used a walking stick that day. After the procession through the streets was complete, the senior *Jagadguru's* body was taken across the river to Sandhya-mandapa in Narasimhavana. There, His Holiness performed *abhiṣeka* to it with water and freshly dressed it. The remains were adorned with *vibhūti* (sacred ash) and garlands of *rudrākṣa*-beads and *tulasī*. His Holiness's worship ended by around 5 p.m. He had selected a spot to the north of the *Samādhi* of the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff for interring His *Guru's* remains. A pit had been dug there. The senior *Jagadguru* was carried to that place from Sandhya-mandapa. His body was lowered, in a seated posture, into the pit.

The prescribed procedure for interring a *saṁnyāsīn* includes smashing coconuts on his skull till the crown of his head opens. The opening up of the '*brahma-randhra*' symbolises

the departure of the *jīva*, with the *prāṇas*, through it (as could happen in the case of one ascending to the *Brahma-loka*, the highest realm). This, in turn, symbolises freedom from rebirth in this world of mortals. In the case of a *jīvanmukta*, however, there is no such departure nor travel to even *Brahma-loka*; the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* teaches, “His *prāṇas* do not depart (from the body). Being but *Brahman*, he is merged in *Brahman* (in this very life).” Nonetheless, the prescribed procedure is followed even in the case of a liberated *saṁnyāsin*. The senior *Jagadguru*’s skull opened up even as His Holiness struck it once with a coconut. Thereafter, as prescribed, His Holiness broke His *Guru*’s *daṇḍa* into three pieces and placed them at His *Guru*’s feet. Next, He broke His *Guru*’s *kamaṇḍalu* and placed that also at His feet. The pit was then packed with alternate layers of sand and salt and covered up with mud. A *liṅga* made of mud was installed directly above where the head was. A temporary shed was subsequently set up to house the *samādhi* till the construction of a permanent structure. The *śāstra* says that the death of a *saṁnyāsin* is not to be mourned but celebrated as marking his union with the Supreme. After this, His Holiness bathed, performed His *āhnikā* and returned to the *samādhi* to commence the *ārādhana* of His *Guru* with deep dedication and devotion; as required, sixteen priests were revered and fed. He performed the *ārādhana* on the next day also.

There is an incident connected with the spot selected by His Holiness to place the senior *Jagadguru*’s body. One day, when doing *pradakṣiṇa* (circumambulation) of the *Samādhi* of His *Guru*, the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff, the senior *Jagadguru* observed that a pit had been dug, a few feet away, to the north of the *Samādhi*. He was the last person to concern Himself with such matters. However, on that day, He enquired why the ground had been dug. The *mestri* (supervisor) was summoned. He explained that he proposed to plant a tree there. Giving no reasons, the senior *Jagadguru* said, “Do not plant any tree there. That spot is reserved.” The pit was then covered up. This matter was not reported by anyone to His Holiness and, as He told me three decades later, He was unaware of it at that time. Interestingly, the spot that He chose to inter His *Guru*’s body was exactly where the pit had formerly been dug and which the senior *Jagadguru* had termed reserved. Moreover, His Holiness had decided on this spot overriding the strong views expressed that the interment should be done on the northern side of the *Tuṅgā* and not in *Narasimhavana*.

The senior *Jagadguru* had attained *videhamukti* on *mahālaya-amāvāsyā*, one of the five days in the year on which *abhiṣeka* is performed to Goddess *Śāradāmbā*. The *navarātri* celebrations proper commenced on the next day. His Holiness meticulously fulfilled all His functions related to the *navarātri*. He did not, however, don the royal robes that year



“The great *jīvanmukta* had shed His mortal form. How can I ever describe the grace and affection He had showered on me? He had brought me up as His own child. The sadness was deep but that did not mean that I would sit down for days, lost in grief. That would not have been what He would have wanted me to do. I had His body interred near His *Guru’s samādhi*. I resolved that the structure to be built there should be akin to the one He had erected for His *Guru*. I worshipped at His *Samādhi* and also attended to my duties. I knew that His grace would always be on me.”

- His Holiness

during the nightly durbar conducted in Goddess Śārādāmbā’s temple. He had a photograph of the senior *Jagadguru* placed on the throne and it appeared as if the senior *Jagadguru* was Himself presiding over the durbar.

The first time His Holiness described the senior *Jagadguru’s* demise to me was in 1979, nearly 25 years after the events. Still His voice choked as He did so and His eyes filled with tears. He said, “My *Guru* had been occasionally saying that He had finished doing what He had to do and, thus, did not wish to continue to keep His body. However, none of us thought that He had decided to cast off His mortal coil. On *mahālaya-amāvāsyā*, He went to the river for a bath. I cannot say that the waters were deep or that the current was powerful. He proceeded to perform *prāṇāyāma* in the *padmāsana* and allowed His body to be carried downstream. His attendant Mahabala Bhatta caught the body and was soon helped out. On hearing the news, I went running but it was too late. The great *jīvanmukta* had shed His mortal form. How can I ever describe the grace and affection He had showered on me? He had brought me up as His own child. The sadness was deep but that did not mean that I would sit down for days, lost in grief. That would not have been what He would have wanted me to do. I had His body interred near His *Guru’s Samādhi*. I resolved that the structure to be built there should be akin to the one He had erected for His *Guru*. I worshipped at His *Samādhi* and also attended to my duties. I knew that His grace would always be on me.”

His Holiness’s formal coronation as the 35<sup>th</sup> Jagadguru Shankaracharya of the Sringeri Sri

Sharada Peetham took place on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October, 1954, corresponding to *āśvayuja-kr̥ṣṇa-pañcamī* of the cyclical year *Jaya*, under the star *Rohiṇī*.

{The following description of His Holiness's *paṭṭābhiṣeka* is based on an anonymous eyewitness's written account (penned in 1954) that I was able to access for a few days, in 1983.}

On 14<sup>th</sup> October, the *Vyākhyāna-simhāsana* (The throne of exposition), placed facing north in the southern corridor of the Goddess's temple, was adorned with garlands and on it was placed a water-filled *kalaśa*. *Ṛtviks* (priests) engaged in rituals centred on the throne. *Homas* were performed adjacent to the throne, to the west of it. His Holiness came to the temple to have *darśana*. He also offered His salutations at Bhagavatpāda's temple. On the next day, after His morning *āhnikā*, He Holiness went to the *Samādhis* of the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff and His *Guru*. He then crossed the river and, at the Vidyāśankara Temple, sought Śrī Vidyātīrtha's permission to ascend the *Vyākhyāna-simhāsana*. Thereafter, He adorned robes made of velvet and silk bedecked with precious gems and went to have *darśana* at His predecessors' shrines, including that of Sureśvarācārya, all on the northern side of the river. In Goddess Śāradāmbā's temple, He presided over the *pūrṇāhuti* (final oblation) of the *homas* performed there and received, with devotion, the flowers and *vibhūti* presented to Him as *prasāda*. He sat on a silver seat to the west of the throne. His sandals were bathed in the sanctified waters of the *kalaśa* and several gifts were made in His august presence. Having propitiated Goddess Śāradā, He left for His abode in Narasimhavana.

The auspicious moment of coronation was signalled by the tinkling of bells. The screen was drawn eastward unveiling the throne and *akṣata* (unbroken grains of rice mixed with turmeric powder) was showered on His Holiness by the gathered priests. "Victory unto our Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha" – this and many more such shouts of chorus and eulogies filled the air.

On the auspicious *pīṭhārohaṇa* day, He came to Goddess Śāradā's temple and, wearing royal robes, ascended the sanctified *Vyākhyāna-simhāsana*. The throne was veiled by a screen with 'śrīḥ' embroidered over it. The auspicious moment of coronation was signalled by the tinkling of bells. The screen was drawn eastward unveiling the throne and





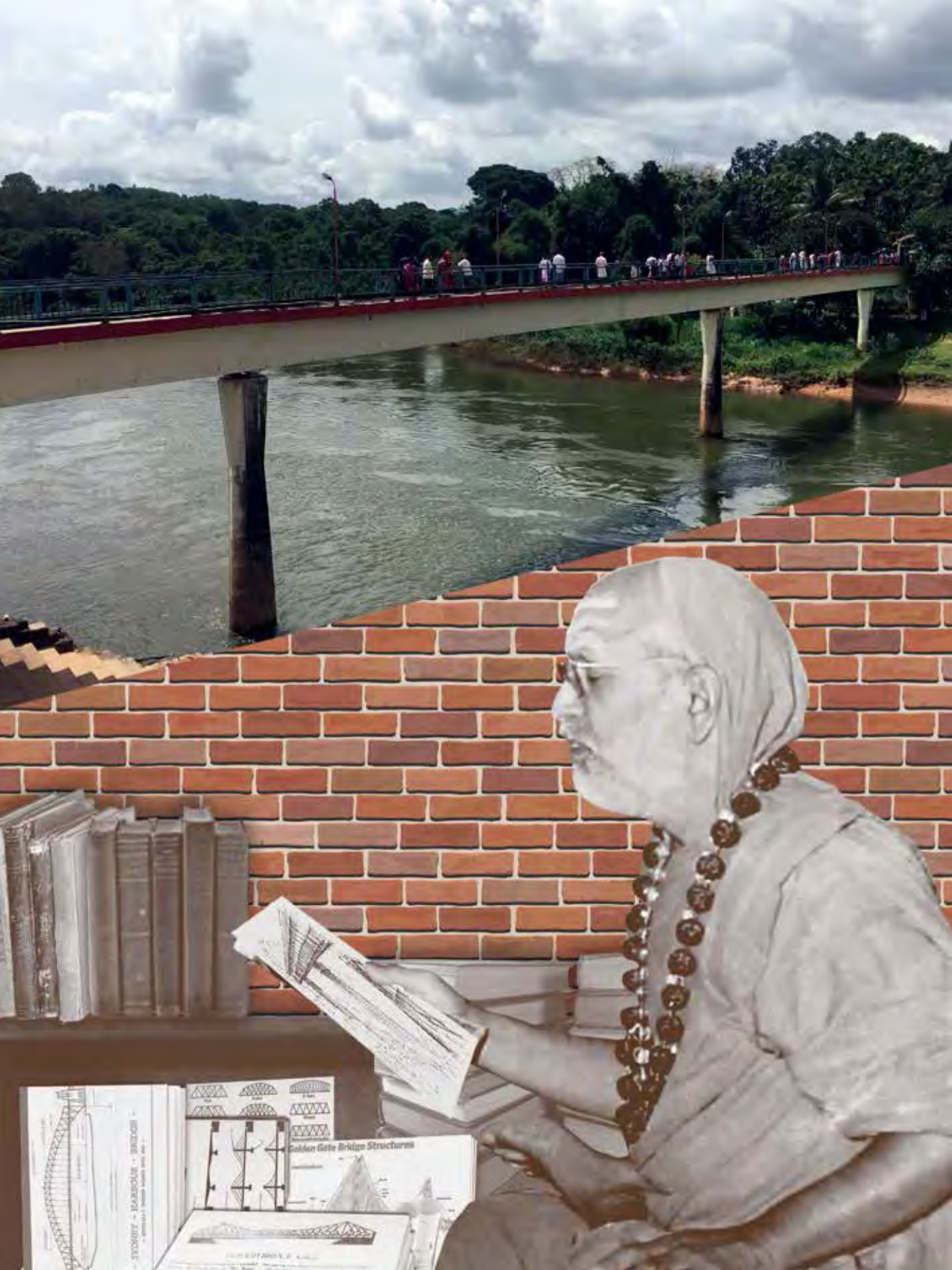
*Coronation of His Holiness*

*akṣata* (unbroken grains of rice mixed with turmeric powder) was showered on His Holiness by the gathered priests. “Victory unto our Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha” – this and more such eulogies in chorus filled the air His Holiness’s golden *pādukās* placed in the vicinity of the throne were bathed with the sanctified water of the *kalaśa* and the remaining water was poured on His Holiness’s head.



The grandeur of the occasion was enhanced by the chanting of *Vedic* hymns in unison. Precious stones were rained on His Holiness. He then removed His royal robes in the room adjacent to Śāradāmbā’s sanctum sanctorum, and adorned new royal garments and a crown. Having witnessed the *ārati* in Śāradāmbā’s shrine, He went in a palanquin to the Vidyāśaṅkara Temple. He entered the temple and after having *darśana*, emerged and again sat in the palanquin. He then went to the various shrines. In a short speech given by His Holiness following His coronation, He said that He was greatly in need of His *Guru’s* grace to carry out His duties as a *pīṭhādhipati* and prayed for His *Guru’s* blessings.





## CHAPTER 14

# Technical Acumen

There was much that needed to be undertaken by His Holiness. After His anointment as pontiff, without delay, He clearly envisioned and spelt out how the permanent structure at the *samādhi* of His *Guru* should be and set the ball rolling for its construction. His *Guru* had toured little and for the final 14 years had not travelled at all. Naturally, devotees all over were eagerly looking forward to His Holiness gracing their places. Earlier, comprehending His Holiness's love of *tapas*, His *Guru* had indicated to devotees that His beloved disciple would undertake a tour only after satiating Himself with His *tapas*. The time was nearing when the persistent and pressing requests of devotees could no longer be set aside. The *Maṭha's* administration, which was then being managed by the Mysore Government as His *Guru* had often been in a state of seclusion, needed betterment and so did the *Maṭha's* poor financial condition. Facilities for the stay of devotees at Sringeri were woefully inadequate and extensive renovations were imperative. These and many other problems awaited His Holiness's attention and He set about solving them in His characteristic and inimitable style.



He was well aware that so long as the reins of control vested with the government, He would not have full freedom to effect improvements at Sringeri. His foresight, however, made it clear to Him that it would only be a matter of time before the management

would be in His hands. Hence, He decided to defer His developmental schemes. To Him, the call of devotees merited a higher priority and so He set out in 1956 on His first tour of South India. City by city, town by town and village by village, He went and graced devotees by the thousands. Conveniences for His stay constituted a highly variable factor but He did not mind. Relentlessly, He drove Himself to the verge of exhaustion to inculcate *dharma* and spirituality in the hearts of those who saw or heard Him. Apart from being an inspiring and impactful teacher, He was a quick and eager learner and keen observer too. He happily took walks in and studied fields, gardens and groves during his camps. He sought to know all that He could about these from His farm-owning disciples, agriculturists and horticulturists; for their part, they enthusiastically shared with Him what they knew. Production units and technical centres drew Him and so deep was what He absorbed about them that were He not a *samnyāsin*, He would, indubitably, have made an exceptional engineer.

Right from His early teens, He was inclined to examine gadgets and ascertain how they worked. About a fortnight after His *samnyāsa*, a devotee brought an ornate golden clock and requested Him to accept it. His Holiness took it, gave it back to him and told him to use it himself. When the devotee repeatedly pleaded with Him to mention something that he could submit in lieu of the clock and which He would use, He said, “Since you are so particular, you could give me a toolkit.” The devotee was nonplussed but said that he would definitely bring one with him on his next visit. Six months later, he did so. That afternoon, His Holiness took a functioning wall clock to His room. Since the clock required to be regularly wound up with a key, He had conjectured that it must have a coiled spring as its source of energy. Putting the submitted toolkit to use, He opened the clock. He located the mainspring and identified what prevented the spring from unwinding abruptly. Having a careful look at the system of meshed gears, He formed an idea of how the slowly unwinding mainspring moved, via the gears, the minute and hour hands. To have a closer look at the parts, He carefully disassembled the clock. He did not try to pull out the mainspring, as He rightly concluded that it could be harmful. Thereafter, recalling how He had dismantled the clock, He reassembled it. He then put the clock back where He had taken it from. I learnt of this from His Holiness in 1976.

At that time, He also told me, “Some years later, I noticed that a timepiece that my *Guru* sometimes looked at to note the time had stopped working and was lying unused. I asked Him whether I could take it for a while to my room. He just nodded. I opened and partially dismantled it. I found that its mainspring was broken and that a gear was damaged. A little later, my *Guru* came to my room and saw the clock in pieces. With a

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*His Holiness at Mighty Scale Co., Kochi*



*At the Enfield Motorcycles Factory, Chennai*



*At Integral Coach Factory, Chennai*



*Inside a Rail Coach at ICF, Chennai*



*At Integral Coach Factory, Chennai*



*Examining a computer print-out*



*Watching IBM card-punch Machine*



*At a Transformer winding factory in Bengaluru*



*Samādhi of Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin*

smile, He remarked, 'Oh, so you are demonstrating that whatever is a combination of parts will disintegrate some day!' and left. Realizing that a new mainspring and a gear would be needed and that these could not be got in Sringeri, I reassembled the clock and put it back." His Holiness opened, examined and understood on His own the working of several mechanical devices.

In 1959, while He was still on His first tour, the government handed over the reins of administration to Him. He straightaway started formulating plans for the betterment of the *Maṭha*. He initiated the construction of a new guesthouse at Sringeri. To make best use of the available land in the temple complex, He gave instructions for the repositioning of the temples of Brahmā and Rāma. A '*vimāna*' over Bhagavatpāda's shrine and a '*gopura*' (ornamental gateway) for the Śāradāmbā Temple were part of His schemes. He directed the renovation of the shrines of Goddess Bhavānī and Stambha-Gaṇapati in the Malahānikareśvara Temple. Though on tour, He kept Himself fully posted of the progress of the works and ensured that what He had envisioned was coming up. The new guest house, with several spacious rooms, each with an attached bathroom, was completed shortly after His return to Sringeri (on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1962). Jayachamaraja Wodeyar, the former Maharaja and the then Governor of Mysore declared it open





*Sri Shankara Krupa*

on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1962; His Holiness named the building 'Shankara Krupa'. He supervised the renovation of the shrines in the temple complex and the construction in granite of His *Guru's samādhi* in Narasimhavana. Such was His Holiness's plan that the sanctum sanctorum of His *Guru* was akin to that

of the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff and, like the latter, had a room in front of it. Between the two *samādhis*, He provided a big room, where all the articles of worship could be comfortably stored and which could be accessed from either side. The overall structure, with a large frontage in the east and wide corridors on the north, west and south, gave the impression of being unitary construction and belied the fact that a significant part of it was built decades earlier than the rest. His Holiness consecrated the renovated shrines in the Malahānikareśvara Temple in February, 1963 and performed the other consecrations, inclusive of that of His *Guru's samādhi*, in March.

A substantial portion of Narasimhavana was then a higgledy-piggledy jungle. The neighbouring Kage Hindlu, as the *Kannada* name implies, was basically a haunt for crows. It was a bamboo forest with thorny bushes and undulating surfaces with pits deep enough to render elephants invisible. His Holiness surveyed the area and decided that it could be converted into cultivable land. Even the thought seemed preposterous to many but then, as the Tamil saint Tiruvalluvar put it in his *Tirukkural*, "The great are those who accomplish the unachievable. The petty are those who cannot." His Holiness gave detailed instructions to the then *mestry* (supervisor) Katte Srikantiah and also arranged, on a contract basis, for fencing and the removal of the bamboo forest. Though His Holiness had, in response to the earnest call of devotees, to set out again on a tour in 1964, He kept Himself fully posted of the works in progress and frequently sent His suggestions and orders. Gradually, His dream became a reality and green fields sprang up.

Narasimhapura, situated to the south of Kage Hindlu, contained acres of land belonging to the *Maṭha* on which expenditure regularly exceeded income. Years earlier, Srikanta Sastry (who died in 1951) had tried to develop the place and had sought to establish a diesel pump there but unfortunately, in spite of his great capacity for planning and

execution, his schemes fell flat. His Holiness cogitated over what could be done there and decided that fencing and clearance of worthless, thorny bushes would have to be done first. He began to make regular visits to the place and Himself supervised the operations, unmindful of heat, cold or rain. Never did He hesitate to enter thorny areas and those believed to be infested with snakes. As had happened when some portions of Narasimhavana were being developed, the supervisor at Narasimhapura and the workers readily followed Him and put forth their best.

Some ill-intentioned ones gave Him misleading advices and this led to some minor setbacks. For instance, repeated rotation of crops was suggested and it was made out that the region was thoroughly unsuitable for developing coconut groves. His Holiness was quick to see through their game. He had picked up too much knowledge of agriculture and horticulture during His tour to be misled any longer. He had already determined that the bane of the region was the haphazard policy of the earlier planners who cultivated a crop and whimsically replaced it with another, hoping that the new crop would fetch enhanced dividends. Examining the soil and keeping the climatic conditions in mind, His Holiness decided what crops it would sustain. He had acquired much knowledge about fertilizers and pesticides, both natural and synthetic, and about how best to attend to various crops and groves. In the face of extreme scepticism, He ordered the planting of coconut saplings. His instructions were carried out to the letter and lo and behold, Sringeri soon got its first coconut grove. Parts of Narasimhavana and Narasimhapura became, in time, beautified by coconut trees, laden with many coconuts. He also directed the development of areca palm groves and gardens in the *Maṭha* and the cultivation of fields. Taking into consideration the inputs from the supervisors, He took a call on what agricultural implements were to be purchased.



He did not keep His deep knowledge of agriculture and horticulture to Himself; He suitably trained the supervisors. The supervisors He appointed were not people who were agriculturists with years of experience. Indeed, the limited resources of the *Maṭha* at that time made the job far from financially lucrative. Hence, His Holiness selected His own staff and trained them for the posts. For instance, Ramappaiah, who did the spadework in Narasimhapura, was earlier His cook, while Shankaranarayana Maiyya and Malnad Venkatesha, who later served, one after the other, as the supervisors there, were

His attendants. Ganeshayya, the supervisor of Narasimhavana in the 1980s, worked in the kitchen earlier. When I interviewed him, he said, "I knew nothing when I came to this job. Whatever I know today is solely because of His Holiness. He is my inspiration. I have sometimes hesitated to tackle a particularly difficult piece of land but on seeing Him go there, I have followed and so have my workers." {Similar sentiments were expressed to me by the other supervisors whom I spoke with, such as Srikantaiah, Ramappaiah, Maiyya and Venkatesha.}

His Holiness was opposed to wasting materials, be it a nail, a sheet of paper or the vestiges of a structural alteration or demolition. One day, He noticed a nail in the inner quadrangle of Sacchidananda Vilas. He had it carefully placed on a window sill. Some days later, He asked the attendant who had been asked to place the nail on the window sill to fetch it. A wooden carton with material was to be sent to the branch *Maṭha* at Kotekar, near Mangaluru. His Holiness used the nail to complete the nailing in of the top of that wooden box.

One morning, when His Holiness had just completed distributing *tīrtha-prasāda* in the front hall of Saccidananda Vilas, a person in his late teens or early twenties approached Him with a folder in his hand. When he reached His Holiness, the folder slipped from his hand and two A4 sheets of paper fell on His Holiness's lap and three settled on the ground. As he stood flustered, His Holiness asked him to relax, gave him the sheets that had landed on Him and waited for him to pick up the remaining ones from the floor. A line or two was written in the Devanagari script on each of the sheets. The young man had a look at the contents of the sheets, selected one sheet and submitted it to His Holiness saying, "I do not know much Sanskrit and this is my first attempt at writing a verse in it. The verse is on Goddess Śāradāmbā." His Holiness read it and nodded. He then asked him, "What is in the other sheets? I noticed a part of this verse in the sheets that I returned to you." He replied, "They contain portions of this verse. I inadvertently left behind in my room the sheet on which I had neatly written the verse to submit to Your Holiness. I tried to write it down from memory after coming here. I made some mistakes before I managed to pen what I had originally composed." His Holiness said, "Why did you not correct what you had written on the first sheet instead of using another sheet?" "How could I submit something with corrections?" he responded. His Holiness said, "I would not have minded that at all. Anyway, if you were averse to showing me something with corrections, you could have written on the back of that sheet. Why did you not do that instead of using another sheet?" The young man replied, "Your Holiness would have come across the unfinished portion if Your Holiness had turned the sheet. I did not want that to happen." Clearly amused, His Holiness said, "You have written just a line on top

of the first sheet. If you did not want anything with corrections or incompleteness to be visible to me, you could have neatly cut off just that portion and written in the remaining empty sheet. Why waste paper?" No counter was forthcoming to this clincher.

Chandramoulishwara Thotti was an old stone construction where dignitaries such as the Maharaja of Mysore were formerly housed and which served as a residence for the 34<sup>th</sup> pontiff when He stayed on the northern bank of the Tuṅgā. The construction was archaic in style and, though massive, effective space utilisation was poor. His Holiness humorously remarked, "This building was singular in a sense; in summer, it let in sunshine and in the monsoon, rain." He decided to remodel the structure

by removing certain irrelevant sub-structures. None of the granite stones, decorative and ordinary, that were removed was wasted. They were partly used in the upper portion of the structure housing the *samādhis* of the 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> pontiffs. The remaining cut and dressed stones were employed to rebuild the Kālabhairava Temple, which had become in dire need of repair. The stone structure housing the idol of Kālabhairava was the outcome of this exercise.



*Chandramoulishwara Thotti*



*Kālabhairava Temple*

The following information relating to the renovation of Chandramoulishwara Thotti was provided in 1990 by T. M. Nagarajan, a close disciple of His Holiness.

While renovating Chandramoulishwara Thotti, His Holiness told the building contractor, a devotee, "My *Guru* had instructed that girders should be used in the roof of Chandramoulishwara Thotti." The contractor tried procuring the girders but was unsuccessful. He suggested that RCC be used for the roof. His Holiness did not accept this proposal.

He asked Nagarajan, who was then working in a branch of the UCO Bank in Bengaluru and had come to Sringeri for *darśana*, “This is an old stone building. Using RCC roofing would not be appropriate. We should use girders only. Can you try to locate steel girders for this building using your contacts?” Nagarajan collected the requisite measurements from His Holiness and returned to Bengaluru. A steel trading firm that was a distributor of Tata Steel held an account in the branch where he worked. In response to his enquiry, the firm’s owner told him, “The girders with the specifications that you mention are not available these days. We could try looking for some unused girders at the Mysore Palace. The other option would be the Bangalore (Bengaluru) Railway Station. The Railways are currently renovating it and if some old girders meeting your specifications are available, I will try to get them for you.” Nagarajan realised that procuring the girders was not going to be an easy task.

The firm had borrowed money from the bank and sometime later Nagarajan went with the owner for stock verification. While they were taking stock of the materials, they saw layers of steel plates stacked in a corner. When the steel plates were lifted, they found twelve girders below. The owner exclaimed, “Oh my God! These must have been procured during my father’s time. I had completely forgotten about their existence.” He voluntarily offered to sell them to the Sringeri Math at a discounted price. Out of the 12 girders, 10 of them completely conformed to the specifications given by His Holiness. Nagarajan had them loaded onto a truck and sent them to Sringeri. When His Holiness saw the girders, He exclaimed in happiness to Nagarajan, “My *Guru’s* words are infallible. There has never been an instance of His utterances not coming true. You have now fulfilled His wish that girders be used when renovating Chandramouliswara Thotti.”

As in the case of materials, His Holiness was against wastage of water and electricity. One day, He came across a leak at the outlet of a water tank in Narasimhavana. Immediately, He tore His handkerchief to get a piece of cloth of the right size to plug the leak and, with it, stopped the wastage of water. It was only after that that He passed on instructions to the supervisor to repair the outlet. The fact that because of the perennial river, Tuṅgā, bounding it, Narasimhavana has no dearth of water did not weigh with Him.

In November 1977, His Holiness’s ‘*śaṣṭyabda-pūrṭi* (completion of 60 years)’ was celebrated on a grand scale at Chennai; the various religious and public functions were primarily organized by Dharmātmā Vaidyasubramanya Iyer. On 10<sup>th</sup> November, the concluding day, it was past 11:00 p.m. before His Holiness’s *pūjā* ended. After that, the huge crowd dispersed. Vaidyasubramanya Iyer’s second son, V. Jayaraman, noticed a little later that lights in the corridors of the building were being switched off one by

one. He was astonished to see that it was His Holiness who was personally going around the corridors of the building switching off all the lights. He approached His Holiness, prostrated before Him and offered to do the job of switching off the lights, so that His Holiness could go in and rest. His Holiness said, "These lights were unnecessarily being kept on. Why waste electricity?" and continued to walk down the corridor, switching off more lights.



His Holiness renovated the *pāṭhaśālā* at Sringeri and provided numerous conveniences for the teachers and students. The old cowshed was unimpressive and difficult to access. He built a big, easily accessible cowshed in Narasimhavana capable of accommodating, with comfort, scores of cows and calves and, in a separate section, bulls. He also built fine sheds for the elephants. To ensure and enhance approachability, His Holiness personally decided where and what type of roads and pathways were to be laid in the *Maṭha* and guided their construction.

A hexagonal wooden structure housed the *samādhi* of Śureśvarācārya. His Holiness replaced it with a stone structure with marble flooring. A *vimāna* over the *samādhi*, a room for keeping articles for worship and a *maṇḍapa* in front of the sanctum sanctorum and the adjacent room were some of the features of the new structure. His Holiness performed the consecration here on 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1970. A seminar was held from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> of May in which traditional scholars as also delegates from Universities participated. The Governor of Karnataka, Dharmaveera, inaugurated the seminar. Delivering His benedictory address, His Holiness observed, "Wisdom is what differentiates humans from animals. Knowledge helps one to sift the good from the bad and to pursue the former and to even free oneself from the cycle of births and deaths. A part of one's *karma* of the past births' is responsible for one's present birth and lot more of it remains to fructify. The *Vedas* alone impart the knowledge of the means by which one can secure happiness not only here but also in the hereafter and also the knowledge that results in liberation. When the *Vedic* teaching was being lost sight of, Bhagavatpāda incarnated to present the true import of the scripture and to lead the people step by step to the right path. The purpose of this seminar is to investigate the methods of Bhagavatpāda."

There was no temple for Lord Subrahmaṇya in Sringeri. His Holiness demolished an old, dilapidated building on the river front and built in its place a beautiful temple in stone for Lord Balasubrahmaṇya. He consecrated it on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1978.



*Kumbhābhiṣeka of the Samādhi of Śrī Śureśvarācārya.*



*Samādhi of Śrī Śureśvarācārya*



*Kumbhābhiṣeka of Śrī Bālasubrahmanya Temple*



*Kumbhābhiṣeka of Śrī Bālasubrahmaṇya Temple (above) and Malahānikareśvara Temple (below)*







*Lord Malahānikareśvara*



*Goddess Bhavanī*

In the 1980s, His Holiness took up the reconstruction of the Malahānikareśvara Temple. He conceived of a new stone structure and had it built through expert *sthapatis* from Tamil Nadu. He personally supervised every stage of the construction. The cost of the construction was met by contributions from the Government of Andhra Pradesh and disciples. His Holiness and His successor-designate and present pontiff (Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī-tīrtha Mahāsvāmin) performed the *kumbhābhiṣeka* of the shrines of Lord Malahānikareśvara and Goddess Bhavanī on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 1985. With His keen sense of topography, His Holiness recognized that it would be a boon to the state of Karnataka if the town of Shivamogga (formerly Shimoga) in the north were to be connected to the coastal city of Mangaluru (formerly Mangalore) in the south by a motorable road on which even buses could ply; the road through the steep Agumbe ghat cannot, to this day, be used by big buses. Knowing that there was already a good road from Shivamogga to Sringeri via Koppa and



*Temple View*

there was a fine road from Mangaluru to Karkala, He opined that what was needed was to connect Sringeri to Karkala via Nemmaru and Kerekatte. He persistently prompted the officials and ministers who came to meet Him over the years to consider and execute this project. Finally, the road began to take shape in the 1980s and even as it did, He started to use it and see the progress. This is now a part of National Highway 169 and a great number of cars and buses ply on it every day.

While it is true that Sringeri has heavy rainfall in the monsoon season, artificial irrigation does have to be resorted to at other times. His Holiness paid special attention to it. In later years, He introduced drip irrigation in Sringeri. A votary of afforestation, He planted many saplings and developed a forest on the hill with the Kālabhairava Temple. Being aware that two to three feet high plants are tempting to cattle and sheep and larger trees to greedy men, He did not mind the expenses of elaborate fencing. Having a vast knowledge about trees, He was particular about what to plant and where. His choice of the trees to be planted near the fences was different from His selection for the interior regions. It was His planning that resulted in the optimal demarcation in the *Maṭha* of regions for coconut groves, areca palm groves, fields and gardens.

A. R. Viswanathan, a disciple of His Holiness, developed and maintained a beautiful garden with various types of flowering plants and trees in the compound of his house in Bengaluru. Whenever His Holiness camped in Bengaluru and paid a visit to his house, He viewed and enjoyed the garden. On several occasions, He discussed gardening with him. Once, when Viswanathan went to Sringeri with his friend to have *darśana*, His Holiness met them in private and conversed for over an hour about gardens, various plants and some of the difficulties in maintaining and nurturing them. Viswanathan's friend was amazed at His Holiness's keen interest in and deep knowledge of horticulture and concluded that His Holiness must be a specialist in botany. His Holiness found it amusing when he told Him so.

One afternoon, in May 1976, when I was walking from Sacchidananda Vilas towards the *samādhis* of the 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> pontiffs, I was surprised to see His Holiness working alone in the garden in front of the *samādhis*. He was wearing gloves and was holding a pair of shears; near Him was a knife, a can of water and some tape. He noticed me and gestured to me to come to Him.



T-bud grafting



*His Holiness planting a sapling and watering the plant*

He told me that He was about to graft roses and that He would be using a method called “T-bud”; having said this, He jokingly commented, “By ‘T’, I did not mean the tea that people drink.” He then proceeded with the grafting; as He did so, He explained the steps. He mentioned that before I had come, He had sterilized the shears and the knife to avoid causing infection. Such was His love for the plants that before cutting, He addressed the rosebushes saying, “Forgive me for causing you pain. I will take good care of you. You will recover soon and be more beautiful than you are now.” I saw tears in His eyes as He said so. He worked quickly but gently and soon the work was complete.

T. M. Nagarajan, who helped in getting the girders for Chandramouliswara Thotti, had many varieties of rose plants in the terrace of his house in Bengaluru. When he left Bengaluru on transfer to another branch of the UCO Bank, he took all his plants to Sringeri and submitted them to His Holiness. When he went to Sringeri later for *darśana*, His Holiness showed him a splendid rosebush with roses of three colours and told him that this was the plant with yellow roses that he had given Him. His Holiness had Himself done the grafting that resulted in the rosebush with yellow roses becoming lovelier with roses of two other colours too.

His Holiness saw and appreciated manure-based biogas plants in the course of His tours and decided to set one up in Sringeri. He located it near the cowshed, which housed over 50 cows and from which manure was available in plenty. This biogas plant, the first of its kind in Sringeri and the neighbouring areas, supplied gas to the *Maṭha’s* kitchens in Narasimhavana and to the private houses situated therein. During His tours, at a place, He saw a simple cement stove, with firewood as fuel, in which the smoke passed in its entirety into an attached chimney. Impressed, His Holiness studied it carefully and

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While planning a building, His Holiness gave importance to user-convenience, good ventilation, non-wastage of space, fulfilment of multiple objectives, provision for expansion and cost minimisation.



*Inauguration of the Girls' School*



*The new building of the School  
(Sri Jagadguru Abhinava Vidyatheertha High School)*

implemented a similar but somewhat modified design in some of the buildings in Narasimhavana for heating water for bathing.

While planning a building, His Holiness gave importance to user-convenience, good ventilation, non-wastage of space, fulfilment of multiple objectives, provision for expansion and cost minimisation. The ‘Sri Shankar Niketan’ and ‘Jai Shankar Niketan’ constructed in the 1970s bear testimony to this. They were designed to function as guesthouses – each with several rooms for the stay of individuals or families and a hall for collectively accommodating tourists arriving in buses for a short stay – and also as *kalyāṇa-maṇḍapas*, with halls, kitchens and rooms meeting the needs of those wanting to conduct functions such as a marriage or an *upanayana*. The ‘Sharada Niketan’, a big building with numerous rooms, was so planned by His Holiness that though initially meant to be a guest house, it subsequently housed, and that too without the need for changes, the *Maṭha’s* girls’ school. His Holiness started this school on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1972 at a time when there was no school for girls in Sringeri. It was located till July 1986 in a building near the Jai Shankar Niketan. When that building needed to be repaired, His Holiness allocated the far bigger Sharada Niketan for the school, which to this day is functioning there; in 2006, the school started

admitting boys too and, in spite of the additional intake, Sharada Niketan has proved adequate. His Holiness took into consideration the severe lashing of rains for days on end due to the Southwest monsoon. He preferred to employ tiled roofs in His constructions as He felt that they better suited the climatic conditions of Sringeri than flat RCC roofs. He has said, “I have no formal engineering education but am ever ready to learn by

“I have no formal engineering education but am ever ready to learn by questioning, observation and practice. Initially, I made some mistakes that I had to undo by making small modifications in the buildings; the consequence was some extra cost. However, I learnt from my mistakes and there are no such problems now.”

- His Holiness



*Bhairava Krupa*

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His Holiness planned and proceeded to construct a building in Narasimhavana at a scenic spot that is halfway up the hill on which the Kālabhairava Temple is situated and from where one can have a breath-taking wide view in the western direction. Water supply to this building, however, posed a problem. Underground water is available in Narasimhavana at the level of the river. None of the pumps available had a total head sufficient to lift water from that level to this high-level building, which His Holiness named ‘Bhairava Krupa’. He came up with a simple and yet elegant solution involving two pumps and a water-tank. He had a pump installed at a low level to supply water to a tank that was positioned near the cowshed, roughly midway between

Sacchidananda Vilas and Bhairava Krupa. A second pump was installed between Bhairava Krupa and the tank. This two-stage arrangement ensured a copious supply of water to Bhairava Krupa. A long tub was built adjacent to the tank. It was readily fillable with water from the tank and cows quenched their thirst here when grazing freely. The water in the tank and tub served several other purposes too.



On an occasion, there was an urgent need to transcribe the contents of an audio tape contained in a seven-inch-diameter spool. The recording had been done at a speed of  $1 \frac{7}{8}$  inches per second. The *Maṭha's* tape recorder that could accommodate a seven-inch spool was capable of playing back only at a speed of  $3 \frac{3}{4}$  inches per second. A second tape recorder was available that could play at the required speed of  $1 \frac{7}{8}$  inches per second but, being small, could accommodate only a five-inch spool. The task of transcribing had been allocated to

me and I was at a loss as to how I should proceed. His Holiness came to my rescue and told me, "Why do you not use to advantage the principle that the receiving spool merely collects the tape that is moved by the spindle? I will show you what I have in mind." He placed the bigger tape recorder behind the smaller one and used some packing material to ensure that the deck-levels of the two recorders lay in the same horizontal plane. He then fitted the sending and receiving spools on the larger of the two recorders. Instead of taking the tape in front of the head assembly of that recorder, He passed it in front of the head assembly of the smaller recorder. The recorders were turned on. The tape speed was decided by the spindle rotation of the smaller recorder and as such was  $1 \frac{7}{8}$  inches per second. The larger machine merely sent and collected the tape. Since the head of the smaller recorder was in contact with the tape, its amplifier and speaker units provided the audio output.

In the 1970s, I had an occasion to design and construct for His Holiness an inverter, working with a 6 volt D.C. secondary storage battery as the source, to supply a power of 20 watts at 230 volts A.C. I was having some problems with the transformer that I was employing in a parallel-inverter circuit. His Holiness asked me how the work was progressing and I explained my difficulty. He said, "I was given some transformers and they are lying upstairs, unused. You can use one if it suits you." I decided to go upstairs to see if any one of the available transformers would match my specifications but His

“The working of the projector interests me and so I am observing it. As for the contents of the film, I have personally been to most of the temples in South India.” - His Holiness

Holiness told me to wait. He called His attendant and told him to go upstairs and fetch a particular transformer. “I have a particular specification in my mind. Hence, may I go and select one?” I queried. His Holiness smiled and said, “Wait and see if the one that is brought suits you. If not, you can select another one.” To my surprise, the transformer that was brought completely

met my requirements. Apparently, His Holiness had intuitively arrived at the specifications I had in my mind.

Once, a devotee wished to project before His Holiness a personal film with the footage of some of the big temples of Tamil Nadu. His Holiness consented and, after the requisite arrangements for the screening were made, the 16mm projector was turned on. His Holiness stood up and gazed at the machine. “The film is being projected on the screen. Your Holiness is facing the wrong direction,” said the devotee, politely. His Holiness responded, “The working of the projector interests me and so I am observing it. As for the contents of the film, I have personally been to most of the temples in South India.” After a few minutes of studying the working of the projector, His Holiness sat down, watched the film and expressed His appreciation of it to the devotee.

The following was narrated by Professor Mahadevan of IIT-Kharagpur and pertains to His Holiness’s visit to Kharagpur in April 1977.

“I took His Holiness to the various departments at IIT-Kharagpur. In each department, He posed pointed questions about the activities of that department. At the department of Naval Architecture, He was particularly interested in gathering details on the different

“Whatever is done should be done well and the public should reap the benefits.”

- His Holiness

methods of boat navigation during strong under currents. He watched the demonstrations performed there with full attention. When He visited the department of Chemical Engineering, He enquired about the research projects on pollution control. After learning the details, He said, ‘Whatever is done should be done well and

the public should reap the benefits.’

“His Holiness then visited the Railway Workshop. S. S. Narayanan, the Divisional Manager, escorted Him around. With avid interest, His Holiness posed several questions, such as,

‘With the facility here, how many locomotives can be attended to at a time? What kind of repair works are done here?’ To Narayanan, it was indeed a different kind of experience, for the entire ‘showing around’ was not a routine activity he was expecting akin to the visits by most of the dignitaries.

Climbing the cockpit ladder and reaching the pilot seat, His Holiness surveyed the interiors and learnt about several control devices and instruments in the cockpit.

“A visit to the Air force station was next on the agenda. I had my own doubts as to whether His Holiness, a staunch practitioner of *ahimsā*, would be interested in visiting a place associated with warfare. His Holiness asked me, ‘What is the next place of visit?’ Hesitantly, I said, ‘There is an Air Force station here. Will His Holiness visit such places where warfare training and drills are conducted?’

Thoroughly amused at my question, His Holiness responded, ‘Why not?! What is wrong in my visiting it?!’ Duraiswami, the Officer-in-command, and other officers reverentially welcomed His Holiness. He evinced keen interest in the fighter aircrafts. Climbing the cockpit ladder and reaching the pilot seat, His Holiness surveyed the interiors and learnt about several control devices and instruments in the cockpit from Duraiswami.”

During His visit to Coimbatore in the 1960s, His Holiness sent word to G. D. Naidu, an industrialist, teacher and inventor, who has been referred to as the Edison of India, that He would like to visit Naidu’s industrial exhibition. Naidu welcomed Him and, though His visit was meant to be for a few minutes, He spent, as Naidu said in a talk (on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1969), a few hours observing everything in the exhibition minutely. So impressed was Naidu with His Holiness’s interest, grasp and knowledge and, as reported by him, His Holiness’s “many constructional works” that he named the training institute that he subsequently started, “Sringeri Jagadguru Sankaracharya Vidyatheertha Training Institute.” He later named after His Holiness a hall that he built as also one of the two big bore wells that he set up to supply water to more than 1500 families. Such was the impact that His Holiness had on Naidu, an atheist. Interestingly, Naidu had the institute named after His Holiness inaugurated by ‘Periyar’ E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker, the well-known social reformer and diehard atheist of Tamil Nadu. His Holiness, for His part, inaugurated, on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 1971, the “E. V. R. Periyar Hall” constructed by Naidu. Naidu said in a speech on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1969, “One may be tempted to ask as to what connection is there between Periyar and Swamiji, who are poles apart in religious matters. I am a Sishya of Periyar and at the same time I am also a Sishya of the Swamiji.”





*With G. D. Naidu*



*At G. D. Naidu's Industrial Exhibition*



At the request of Raja Venkata Rao Limbekar, whose devotion to His Holiness was deep, His Holiness camped at his bungalow in Secunderabad for a part of May, 1960. A rotund jug filled with water and a tumbler were kept for His use in His private room. Sometimes, without even His attendant being aware of this and just for the fun of it, He wrapped a piece of cloth around the neck of the jug and secured it to a window such that the jug hung freely from the window. He then placed the tumbler upside down on the jug in such a manner that its rim covered the mouth of the jug. When He required water, He tapped the lower part of the rotund jug, causing it to swing and tilt; this, in turn, caused the tumbler to fall. In one swift and smooth motion, He dexterously caught the tumbler and collected the water that poured out from the jug before the jug swung back to its vertical position. When He wanted less water, He tapped the jug with less force and this resulted in jug tilting to a small extent; when He wanted more water, He tapped the jug harder. Such was His grasp of the dynamics of the jug and the flow of water that He was able to ensure that His requirement of water was exactly met through a single tap and such was His manual dexterity that not a single drop fell to the ground. {These details were provided by V. Rajagopal Sharma who happened to witness His Holiness's setup and playful collection of water.}

His Holiness established branch *Maṭhas* at various places and consecrated many a temple. These branch *Maṭhas* are intended to aid *dhārmika* activities and serve to establish close contact between the devotees and the Sringeri Math. Some of the branch *Maṭhas* also contain facilities for devotees to stay. *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapas*, libraries and research centres have also been founded by Him.

Sringeri and the nearby regions did not have any hospital. Hence, K. S. Natarajan mooted to His Holiness the idea of establishing a hospital and Vaidyasubramanya Iyer threw in his full support. A hill belonging to the *Maṭha* at the entrance to Sringeri was made available by His Holiness for the hospital. Apart from providing land, His Holiness donated many lakhs of rupees and, in His time, the medical facility grew from a small out-patient unit to a full-fledged hospital in the early 1980s, with sophisticated medical equipment and a full-fledged lab. Dr. V. Parameshvara, a leading cardiologist of Bengaluru, served as the hospital's Chairman. K. S. Natarajan functioned as its secretary and rendered yeoman service to the hospital's cause by his multi-faceted role. His Holiness frequently visited the hospital and cheered and blessed the sick ones. With full knowledge of the role of His Holiness, Natarajan reported, "His Holiness is indeed everything to the hospital, and it is nothing without Him." A scientific Research Academy with His Holiness as its trustee engaged in the conduct of medical research.



*Inauguration of hospital*



*Laying of foundation stone for the Maternity Block*



*His Holiness with doctors and other devotees*



*The hospital as it stands now*

In the 1970s, His Holiness set up in Narasimhavana a new gate leading to the river. The old gate was about 50 metres to the west. The route through it and the temporary wooden bridge beyond it to Goddess Śāradāmba's temple was circuitous. The path through the new bridge would have been significantly shorter. However, the problem was that the river beyond it was deep and putting up a temporary wooden bridge here (supported by short wooden poles resting on the river bed) was unfeasible. The common view was that the new gate was useless and several people even told His Holiness this. However, during the floods that year, a huge deposit of sand filled that location. This had never happened before. The post-flood depth there became comparable to that in the portion of the river opposite to the old gate. To this day, decades later, the situation remains unchanged. It was almost as if the river acted promptly to ensure that the gate put up by His Holiness became optimally positioned. It was easy thereafter to put up a temporary wooden bridge every year near the new gate; during the rainy season, as in the case of the old bridge, it had to be removed and crossing of the river had to be done by boat.

Since people were put to inconvenience in the rainy season and since there occurred an unfortunate event of boat capsize, His Holiness decided in the early 1980s to put up a permanent bridge there. He meticulously collected details of various bridges in India and abroad. He entrusted the construction of the bridge He envisioned to Gammon India. When T. N. Subba Rao, the Managing Director of the company, visited His Holiness, he was surprised to find Him speaking knowledgeably about various bridges, such as the Laxman Jhula in Rishikesh, Howrah Bridge in Kolkata, Sydney Harbour Bridge in Sydney and Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. He exclaimed to H. S. Nageswaran, a disciple of His Holiness who had accompanied him (and who reported this in a talk), "I think He has travelled all over the world!" His Holiness expressed His preference to avoid columns in the middle of the river because, as He put it, He did not want the fishes in the river to be disturbed by the construction work. Finally, after taking various factors into consideration, He approved of Gammon India's proposal to build a bridge with one column in the middle of the river. He regularly watched over the construction.

According to Nageswaran, a superstitious consultant objected, "Connecting north to south by a bridge is not a good idea." His Holiness responded, "If you want to connect east and west, it cannot happen here." He added, "The *Maṭha's* cowshed is in a certain place. You may say that as some cow or calf has died here, this is not the right location for a cowshed. I may accept your advice and build another cowshed at the place specified by you. If, after I shift the cows to the new place, a cow or calf dies, what should I do?" Turning to Nageswaran, He remarked that in such matters one should be pragmatic, not superstitious.



*View of the bridge across the river*



*The Arches on both the sides of the Bridge*

Not only was His Holiness not superstitious, He was acutely discerning and logical. When He was around 21 years of age, a magician came to Sringeri and had His *darśana*. He then demonstrated to Him in private what he called, “My power of *indrajāla*.” He showed His Holiness the front and back of his open palm. He then quickly waved his hand and closed his fist. When he opened his fist, His Holiness saw a golden ring there. The magician went on to demonstrate several such tricks. Finally, he prepared a paper cone, showed it to be empty and then poured some water into it. After a few moments, he jerked the cone as if he were about to throw the water on His Holiness. But what fell near Him was a variety of small flowers. He liked the performance and told the man so. He, however, did not ask the magician how exactly he had performed the tricks because He felt, “Let me not embarrass him with questions about the secrets of his trade.”

In the 1980’s, one day when I went to His presence, He stretched out His right hand and told me, “Examine My palm.” I did so. “Is it not empty?” He asked. “Yes, it is,” I replied. He waved His hands swiftly and while doing so, closed His fist. Then He burst out laughing and opened His fist. It contained *kuṅkuma* (turmeric powder reddened by adding lime juice). Giving some to me, He said, “This *kuṅkuma* did not materialize from thin air. It is from Śāradāmbā’s temple.”

He then told me, “Fetch a bowl of oil without telling anyone.” When I returned with a vessel containing oil, He instructed me to heat it on a small electric heater. The oil was soon boiling. Even as I watched, He dipped His right hand into the oil and pulled it out, all smiles. It was then that He told me about the magician who had come to Him when He was around 21 years of age.

“Though I did not ask the magician how he performed his tricks, I deduced them myself on the basis of what I had seen. Just as he produced a ring, I manifested the *kuṅkuma* purely by sleight of hand. He who is not discerning is likely to think that articles such as rings and *kuṅkuma* can be so manifested only through supernatural powers. I did not get burnt when I dipped my hand in the oil because, prior to My doing so, I had wet my hand without your knowledge. Thanks to the water, the temperature on the surface of my hand was far below that of the oil. I have read that a foreigner dips his hand briefly in molten metal. Unfortunately, molten metal is not accessible to me right now or else I would have duplicated his feat for you,” elaborated His Holiness.

“Feel My pulse,” He continued. As I did so, He closed His eyes. Soon, I was unable to detect any pulse in His left wrist. A little later, the pulse was again detectable and He opened His eyes. “You might have imagined that because I went into a state of deep

meditation, my pulse ceased to be detected by you. Actually, I did not meditate. Instead, it was through a strictly physical means that I briefly inhibited the blood flow to the hand. My heart continued to beat normally.”

He then closed His eyes once more and began to speak in a variety of markedly dissimilar voices. Had I merely been given a recorded version of the sounds, I am certain I would not have been able to identify them as emanating from a single source; in fact, some of the sounds clearly seemed to be those of females with high-pitched voices. He opened His eyes and said, “What passes off as possession by a spirit is normally not so. It is easy for a person to consciously speak like different people. So a deceitful man can pretend to be possessed by some divine being and earn name, fame and money. People often do not realize that their faces and, in particular, their eyes betray far more about the workings of their minds than they imagine. This and information gathered through assistants can help a fraud to pass off as a mind-reader. The behaviour of a person in the grip of hysteria may give rise to the impression that he has been possessed by some spirit.”

His Holiness was an avid lover of nature. Not just pleasant scenery, trees, flowers, and crops but also animals, birds, fishes and even insects interested Him. One day, when He was nearing 16 years of age, He beheld a wasp in the course of His walk. It was bringing a motionless grasshopper to the mouth of a hole prepared by it. His keen power of observation and knowledge of insects led Him to know that the grasshopper was not dead; it had been paralyzed by a sting of the wasp. The wasp entered the hole, emerged and then dragged the grasshopper in. Thereafter, it closed up the hole and went away. He had heard that the wasp lays an egg and provides a grasshopper as food for the larvae that emerge from the egg.

He desired to see the developments within the hole but did not want to partially uncover it. Nature, however, favoured Him. The next time He came to the spot, He found that, for reasons unknown to Him, the mud cover of the hole had a small opening. He brought His face close to it and peeped in. He saw the larvae that looked different from an adult wasp. He decided to examine the larvae and the grasshopper in greater detail. For this purpose, He required a magnifying glass but had not brought one. He did not want to put off His study to another day. Being resourceful, He picked up a dried leaf, poked a small hole into it and put a droplet of rain water on the hole He had made. Suitably holding the leaf, He used the water drop as a magnifying glass and conducted His studies.

On another occasion, He beheld a monkey sitting seemingly pensively with its hand in the small gap between two very low-lying, horizontal branches of neighbouring trees. He placed His head close to the ground to see what was in the monkey's hand. He noticed that it held an apple which, apparently, someone had dropped there. As the monkey was unwilling to let go of the fruit, it was unable to extricate its hand and leave. "In spite of its intelligence, this simian does not choose to let go of the fruit, withdraw its hand and then pick up the same fruit by grasping it from below the gap," thought His Holiness.

He felt pity for the monkey. With a plan to free it from the bondage of its own making, He peeled a banana and took the fruit near its mouth. The monkey leaned forward and began to eat the fruit but continued to hold on to the apple. He peeled a second fruit. This time, He kept it at some distance from the monkey. The simian had no choice but to release the apple in order to get the banana it wanted. As it was eating the banana, He pulled out the apple and presented the same back to the monkey.

His Holiness has said, "God's creation is so fascinating. Nature reminds us of God and is, in fact, His manifestation before all. When one watches the ocean, one is overcome with peace and when one looks at the starry sky at night, one experiences tranquillity and becomes conscious of how very miniscule one is in the enormous cosmos. Sun-rays playing on the ripples in water, green fields, the pranks of monkeys, the affection of cows etc., are delightful. Even insects that many tend to spurn have so much to teach us. Nature is a free, lovely show available for all to experience."



*Frontage of Pravachana Mandiram at Sringeri*





*Inside Pravachana Mandiram*



*Private Secretary's Office*



*Laying foundation stone for Sri Bharathi Vihara*



*Sri Bharathi Vihara*



*Venu Vihara in Narasimhavana*



*Quarters for Maṭha officials*



*Malahānikareśvara Temple Vimānas*



*Kalady Temple after renovation*





## CHAPTER 15

# All-round Administrator

His Holiness's taking over, in 1959, the reins of administration of the *Maṭha* from the hands of the Government bears testimony to His administrative acumen. How this happened is noteworthy. The administration of the *Maṭha* did not pass into the hands of the Mysore Government on account of any mismanagement or impropriety in the *Maṭha*. On the other hand, since Srikanta Sastry, who had been handling the administration of the *Maṭha* from the time of the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff, formally retired in 1931 and since Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī, the then pontiff, was often in a state of seclusion, the Government of the Maharaja of Mysore was requested on behalf of the pontiff to help in handling the administration. In response to this written request from the *Maṭha*, the Government, by an order (G.O. No. 397-99/Muz 118-33-8) dated 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1934, placed at the disposal of the *Maṭha*, the services of a senior Amildar and issued instructions that the Revenue Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner, Kadur District, should generally supervise the affairs of the *Maṭha* from time to time.



His Holiness's taking over, in 1959, the reins of administration of the *Maṭha* from the hands of the Government bears testimony to His administrative acumen.



His Holiness dealt with the Government with great dexterity so as to effect the restoration of the administration to the *Maṭha*. His efforts bore fruit in 1959.

Since the 34<sup>th</sup> pontiff continued to be in a state of seclusion now and then, the Government of the Maharaja issued an order (No. 1030/Muz 174-35-2, Bangalore) on 30<sup>th</sup> January, 1936, that, “the present arrangement of lending an officer of Government to work under the Math will not be satisfactory and some further action has become necessary to exercise closer control over the affairs of the Math. In these circumstances, Government are pleased to direct that Sri Sringeri Math with all its endowments and properties be taken over under their management under Section 25(3) of the Mysore Religious and Charitable Institutions Regulation VII of 1927 for a period of two years in the first instance. ... Mr. Y. Srikantaiya, Assistant Commissioner, will be appointed as officer in charge of the affairs of the Math and will be responsible for the proper administration of the Jahagir under the general control of the Deputy Commissioner, Kadur District. The Muzrai Commissioner is requested to take necessary action immediately and

to submit separate proposals for all subsidiary steps that may be found necessary for giving effect to this order. He should make proper arrangements for the regular conduct of the usual religious services in the Math and the Institutions attached thereto.”

The Maharaja of the Princely State of Mysore, Jayachamaraja Wodeyar, signed the instrument of accession to the Indian Union on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1947. With India gaining independence on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947, and becoming a Republic on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1950, the Princely State of Mysore merged with the Republic of India. Thereafter, the control of the Sringeri Math vested not with the Maharaja, a devoted disciple, but with the Indian Government. It is known that if the administration of an institution passes into the Government hands it is almost gone for good. His Holiness, however dealt with the Government with great dexterity so as to effect the restoration of the administration to the *Maṭha*. His efforts bore fruit in 1959.

In response to a *śrī mukha* from Him dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1959, the Government passed the following order (Order No. RD 22 MDI 59 dated 26<sup>th</sup> March, 1959): “His Holiness Jagadguru Mahaswamigalavaru of Sringeri Math has expressed a desire to assume personal management of the Math and its properties. As the circumstances in which the Math and its properties were taken under Government management in 1936 have ceased to exist, Government are pleased to direct that the management of the Math and the properties belonging to it, both in and outside the state, with the exception of the villages notified for vesting in the notification read in para 3 of the preamble be handed over to the management of Sri Swamigalavaru with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1959.” In pursuance to this order, ‘the Secretary to the Government, Revenue Department, Bangalore’, wrote to ‘the Deputy Commissioner, Chickmagalur District’, “In enclosing herewith a copy of the Government Order No. RD 22 MDI 59 dated 26<sup>th</sup> March, 1959 directing the restoration of the management of the properties of the Math to His Holiness the Mahaswamigalavaru, I am directed to request you to go to Sringeri and handover the management personally to His Holiness the Mahaswamigalavaru or his Private Secretary at the close of 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1959 and report the action taken to Government.”

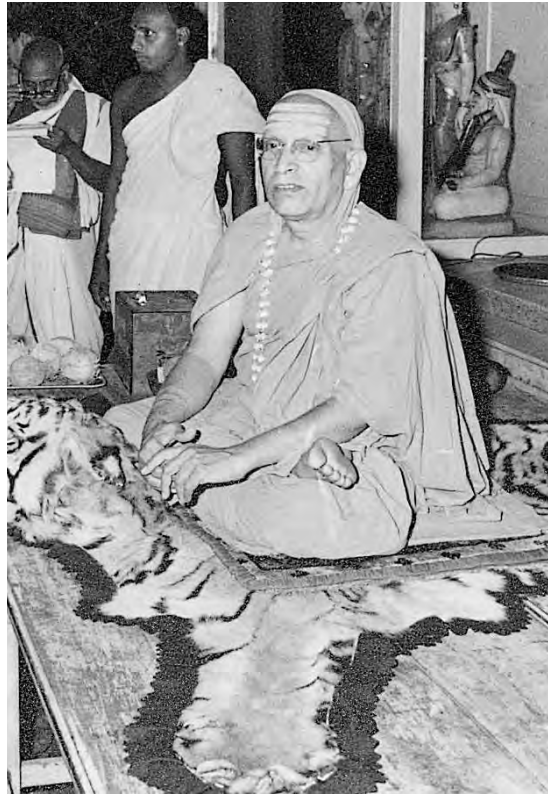
The transfer of power was to be effected on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1959. His Holiness was camping at Karur in Tamil Nadu; He was there from 22<sup>nd</sup> March to 14<sup>th</sup> April. At Sringeri, Sampangi Ramaiah was the Officer-in-charge appointed by the Government. When the Deputy Commissioner arrived at Sringeri, Sampangi Ramaiah was to hand over charge to Lakshminarayana Sastry, His Holiness’s Private Secretary. His Holiness directed Lakshminarayana Sastry to formally take control on His behalf from Sampangi Ramaiah and asked Sampangi Ramaiah to continue to handle the *Maṭha* administration as before, with the difference that he report to Him instead of to the Government. Sampangi Ramaiah, who was a retired official who had been appointed specially for administering the Sringeri Math, readily consented. While His Holiness continued His tour, Sampangi Ramaiah functioned as His Administrator at Sringeri. This move of His Holiness was a master stroke because it took some time before people could realise that the change had occurred and by then it was too late for those opposed to it to do anything.

The Government did return the administration of the *Maṭha* to His Holiness but without the 23 villages that had constituted the Sringeri Math’s *Jahagir* and 22 other *Inam* villages that had belonged to the *Maṭha*. Hence, a body blow was struck to the income of the *Maṭha*. In the place of the income from many villages and from an area within six miles around Sringeri, the *Maṭha* had to make do with a limited compensation to be paid annually. His Holiness took the matter in His stride. When the loss of income was

mournfully related to Him, He cheerfully replied, “The *Maṭha* had been functioning well even before the lands were granted. There is no cause for worry.” His stand was thoroughly vindicated, for the patronage of the devotees took over the patronage of the former kings. He firmly held, “*Īśvara* is there to take care of everything. Whatever He decides is indeed the best.”

His immaculate intuition and His razor-sharp intellect contributed to His unerringly evaluating situations and how they would unfold. While He was easily and willingly swayed by a person’s purity of heart and very accommodative of incompetent but sincere persons, He quickly sensed hypocrisy, insincerity and the buttressing of data to camouflage underperformance. Whenever anyone confidentially disclosed some matter to Him, He never divulged the source when initiating enquiries and taking action and ensured that the confider was not put to any embarrassment or difficulty. However, He was fundamentally unwilling to lend His ears to backbiting or prejudiced nit-picking.

His Holiness once asked a group of devotees who came to see Him to sit. As one of them started to speak, He unexpectedly closed His eyes and said, “Before you start, I would like to make one thing clear. I cannot do anything that would hurt anyone’s feelings. So please do not put me in that situation.” He then opened His eyes and told them, “Yes, you can proceed.” The devotees had



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He had the knack of subtly nudging groups that did not see eye to eye to get together for a common cause.

wanted to complain about a person but were effectively denied the opportunity to do so. They spoke about other matters and left. Later, His Holiness solved their problem on His own in a diplomatic way, ensuring that both they and the person they had a problem with were satisfied.

He had the knack of subtly nudging groups that did not see eye to eye to get together for a common cause. A set of devotees showed His Holiness a building plan for a branch *Maṭha* and sought His opinion about it. He said, “It is good.” They left. Another set of devotees who did not get along with the first group came to His Holiness with a plan of their own and asked His Holiness what He thought of it. His Holiness said, “It is good.” Learning of this, the first set of devotees subsequently asked Him, “How is it that Your Holiness approved of our plan and then theirs?” His Holiness clarified, “Suppose you show me a cow and ask me about it. I may say that it is nice. Someone else may show me a different bovine and I may say that that is nice. If both are shown to me and I am asked which is better, I may specify one. Similarly, if all of you had come to me together with the two plans, I could have chosen one and the construction could have been based on that.”

On another occasion, when some were upset that a person who had taken the lead was being appreciated, He set them at ease saying, “Suppose a big log has to be lifted. Several people need to put in effort together to lift it. On the other hand, this approach will not do if a needle is to be picked up. For this, a single person needs to take the initiative. In the same way, sometimes people may need to work together as equals





to accomplish a task and sometimes may need to work with someone taking the initiative and leading. Here, the situation is of the second kind. So why grudge his leadership, especially when it is good and effective?”

A person who was visiting a temple regularly, stopped doing so. When asked by His Holiness about it, he responded, saying, “There is too much politics in the temple and I feel that there is no need for me to get embroiled in all this. I do feel guilty about not going there. But what can I do?” His Holiness asked him, “Have you been to KGF (Kolar Gold Fields)?” “Yes,” replied the devotee. His Holiness asked, “What did you see there?” “Gold extraction and a few other things,” the person replied, hesitantly. “You know how much mud and other unwanted material is extracted and brought to the factory daily. From tons of what is excavated, gold is obtained after a long process. How much gold is obtained? Only a miniscule fraction of the material brought. However, the authorities do not stop the mining because of this. They discard what is unwanted and persist since the reward is worthy. What I am trying to impress is that your attitude should be like that. Do not bother yourself with unpleasant happenings. You offer your worship and leave.”

“Suppose a big log has to be lifted. Several people need to put in effort together to lift it. On the other hand, this approach will not do if a needle is to be picked up. For this, a single person needs to take the initiative. In the same way, sometimes people may need to work together as equals to accomplish a task and sometimes may need to work with someone taking the initiative and leading.”

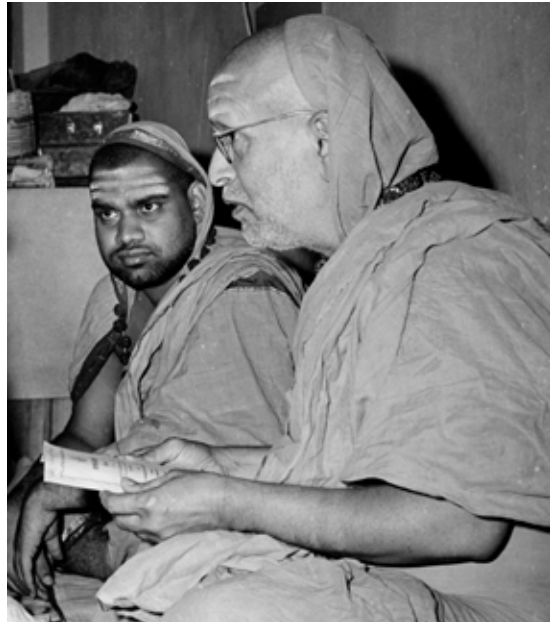
- His Holiness

To the extent feasible, His Holiness resorted to skill-based allocation of jobs and gave officials and supervisors considerable freedom to function in their respective departments. The norm was that He did not bypass any hierarchical order of control that He had established or allowed. For instance,

in Narasimhavana and in Narasimhapura, there were *mestris* (supervisors) under whom many labourers worked. His Holiness frequently made enquiries about the welfare of all the labourers, whether permanent or temporary, and also personally interacted with them. However, when it came to giving orders, He directed them through the person in charge. Likewise, He channelled several of the relief measures through the supervisor. Hence, the prestige and the authority of the supervisor were not undermined though His Holiness visited often. Power in the *Maṭha* was initially concentrated in the hands of a few persons. This provided scope for bottlenecks. His Holiness effectively implemented decentralisation, thereby reducing the chances of disruption of smooth functioning. He was of the view, "There is no one who is wholly incompetent. It is just that it is difficult to find a person who effectively brings his abilities to the fore." As for Himself, He could comfortably manage even with staff who, as far as others could discern, were brainless and obdurate too. He gave all the *Maṭha* staff, regardless of the person's rank, age or experience, a patient hearing and considerately and promptly took steps to mitigate grievances. He gladly accepted and implemented any good suggestion from anybody.

The following was narrated by S. Srinivasaragahavan of Madurai.

"Once, at the *Maṭha* premises near the Meenakshi Amman Temple in Madurai, I



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said to His Holiness, 'All the other properties of the *Maṭha* have been the recipients of Your Holiness's gracious glances. Since this place is yet to receive the same, it continues to be in this state, with no expansion.' As if perplexed, His Holiness asked, 'What makes you to say so? With a road as the northern boundary and the remaining three sides flanked by other buildings, where is the scope for expansion?' I said, 'There is still one side left unoccupied,' pointing towards the ceiling. Laughing aloud, His Holiness said, 'Oh, you wish to extend the building skywards! Alright, you have my blessings. Go ahead and commence the construction. I will perform

the *kumbhābhiṣeka* of the temples here.' Several senior devotees petitioned His Holiness to dispose off the old building and construct a new and spacious building for the *Maṭha* at a different place in the city. His Holiness rejected the idea saying, 'I consider this sacred, for it was here that Vṛddha Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin (the 32<sup>nd</sup> pontiff) invoked Goddess Mīnākṣī in a coconut for the public to worship. I cannot even contemplate disposing off this sacred place. Let the expansion take place here.'"

He was extremely just in His dealings. The following three instances relating to court cases were narrated to me by Giridhara Sastry, who was the Administrator of the Sringeri Math in the early 1980s.



A person had donated a stretch of land to the *Maṭha*. As years went by, an adjacent portion too came into the possession of the *Maṭha*. The heir of the donor wanted to retake that ungiven land. The then administrator of the *Maṭha* declined the claim and the matter went to court. Legal opinion was in favour of the *Maṭha* winning the case by virtue of adverse possession. At this juncture, the claimant wrote directly to His Holiness seeking His intervention. His Holiness examined the facts and remarked, “Withdraw the case. Give back what was not donated to the *Maṭha*.” The fact that the *Maṭha* had already spent thousands on the case and was likely to get a favourable verdict did not deter Him from taking this decision. In the meantime, the person concerned wrote a letter expressing his willingness to pay a sum of Rs.12,000 to effect an out-of-court settlement. It was also learnt that the *Maṭha*’s lawyer was negotiating the offer. His Holiness instructed that not a single paisa should be collected and that the disputed land should be returned forthwith. His instruction was complied with.

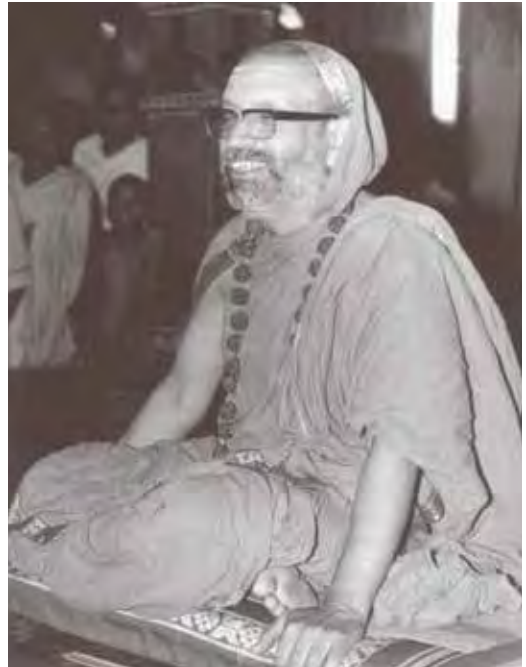


His Holiness was extremely just in His dealings and was unwilling to allow any deliberate misinterpretation of the facts.

In a certain hearing in Bengaluru, it was the turn of the *Maṭha* to present evidence. When reporting the case to His Holiness, the administrator voiced the legal opinion obtained that presenting the facts in a certain buttressed fashion would be monetarily beneficial to the *Maṭha*. “Will we be able to keep up in the future what we plan to indicate in the court now?” queried His Holiness. The administrator’s honest answer was, “No. It will be difficult for us to carry out what all we are going to declare.” “In that case, do not represent the case in that fashion. Just state the facts as they are,” directed His Holiness. He was unwilling to allow any deliberate misinterpretation of the facts.

His Holiness’s sense of justice was well-known. A particular *saṁnyāsin* was asked to take charge of the branch *Maṭha* at Rajahmundry in Andhra Pradesh. He regularly rendered

accounts to Sringeri. Before he passed away, he requested a person, Nageshwara Rao by name, to attend to the branch *Maṭha*. With the passage of time, Nageshwara Rao claimed that the property belonged to him. The matter went to court. One day, Nageshwara Rao met His Holiness. His Holiness asked him, “Why should we unnecessarily take such matters to a court of law? Will not an out-of-court settlement be better?” “Yes, indeed,” responded Nageshwara Rao. His Holiness then proposed, “Why not we present the facts to a common arbitrator? You may choose any judge or lawyer. We will submit all our papers. You too submit your documents. Let the arbitrator examine the case. If the decision is in our favour, you may relinquish your claim. Otherwise, we will hand over the property to you.” The proposal was of course fair and in fact, advantageous to Nageshwara Rao since the choice of the arbitrator was to be his. Surprisingly, he replied, “This will not be of any benefit to me. Your Holiness is a *Jagadguru* and is held in high esteem by the Hindus. As such, any Hindu arbitrator will decide in your favour.” “You may select a Christian or Muslim as the arbitrator. There is no reason why such a person should be biased in my favour,” reasoned His Holiness. Nageshwara Rao was not agreeable to even this. He said, “It will make no difference even if I select a non-Hindu. Your fairness and sense of justice are very well-known. Whomsoever I select will decide in your favour.” The case continued. The court decided in the *Maṭha*’s favour.



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A former manager of a branch *Maṭha* nursed, for some reason, displeasure against His Holiness. He incited the people in the houses neighbouring that branch and submitted a joint petition to Him. To cut a long story short, he sought to raise an agitation against Him. He readily accepted His Holiness's invitation to see Him at Sringeri. They had conversed for barely a few minutes when the former manager fell prostrate at His feet, begging His pardon. That His Holiness readily forgave and blessed Him needs no saying. The former official even offered his loyal services. Prior to meeting him, His Holiness had remarked to me, in the passing, "An agitation is pitched against me." Subsequently, in the course of His evening stroll that day, He casually told me (and here, I reproduce His exact words), "Agitation cancelled!"

A somewhat similar incident transpired in connection with a branch *Maṭha* in Kerala. There, an employee of the *Maṭha* who was taking care of the place took possession of some of the *Maṭha's* lands. The land laws made it difficult for the *Maṭha* to recover the property that was misappropriated. His Holiness, on His visit to the place, sent for the person concerned and spoke to him at length. The employee, who had reverence for His Holiness, was convinced and voluntarily parted with a part of what he had taken over.

His Holiness had the knack of dexterously handling even complex situations. Once, during His first All-India tour, a young boy darted across the road in front of the pilot van. The driver slammed the brakes and the van screeched to a halt directly over the boy, who had slipped and fallen flat. Fortunately, he fell between the wheels and escaped uninjured though the vehicle was stationed atop him. The villagers who beheld the scene presumed the boy dead and rushed in a rage towards the hapless driver, who was already stricken



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with trepidation. Meanwhile, the boy crawled under the van, emerged from the rear and took to his heels, without the others noticing him. Not finding the boy, the irate crowd began to rain blows on the driver. In moments, he was bleeding. The security guard got out of the vehicle to rescue the driver but that was not to be his day. He grappled with a villager who attempted to snatch his rifle and soon, both went tumbling down the slope. The workhand managed to run away with the rifle, leaving the pitiable security guard not only injured but also very insecure.

In the meantime, His Holiness's car arrived there. He immediately identified the head of the group and beckoned to him. Tempers ran high and villagers rushed towards His Holiness's car, gesticulating wildly. The force of their ire was spent the moment His Holiness addressed them with soft words. His Holiness's magnetic personality and soothing words had a miraculous effect on the furious gathering. Wrath gave way to reverence so much so that soon that the leader and the others stood with folded hands before His Holiness beseeching Him to stay at that place and grace them. At His Holiness's instance, the leader sent for the man who had snatched the rifle away and returned it to the security guard. The villagers had obtained a *Guru* and order was restored.

In the course of His tour of Kerala, His Holiness graced a temple in Pattambi on 6<sup>th</sup> December, 1979. About that time, some statements of His Holiness had been misrepresented in a section of the press and a hornet's nest had been stirred. A strong crowd gathered outside the temple demanding that they see His Holiness and talk to Him. They were armed with sticks and were apparently belligerent. The then Personal Assistant to His Holiness, K. M. Balasubramanian, talked to the accompanying security officials. Unfortunately, they were far outnumbered by the crowd, which certainly would have the upper hand in the event of an outbreak of violence. Worried, the Personal Assistant appraised His Holiness about the situation. For His part, His Holiness was thoroughly unperturbed. After a while, He emerged from the temple; the vociferous crowd became all the more boisterous. Unexpectedly, taking a tray full of dry fruits He beckoned to an agitator. The man was taken so much by surprise that he mutely stepped forward. His Holiness handed him the tray and said softly but with force, "Distribute the *prasādas* to the people." The man began to do so. Meanwhile, His Holiness beckoned to a second agitator and gave him a lot of fruits, again to be distributed. The distribution was thoroughly unexpected by the crowd which had, as though mesmerised, stopped shouting by then. His Holiness then said, "Repeat after me" and began to chant, "*Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare. Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare.*" Initially, only a few followed Him, but soon it became an impressive chorus. A belligerent crowd was transformed into a *bhajan* party. Minutes later, His Holiness drove off in His car after He had succeeded in assuaging the persons with comforting words.

At times, His Holiness had to do something on the spur of the moment in order to avert impropriety but without giving rise to any misgiving in those present. He once graced a certain place in response to a pressing invitation. There, the *maṅgalārati* was performed. It would have been improper if He had, in the customary manner, accepted the *ārati*. The *arcaka* approached Him with the *ārati* in his hands. Had His Holiness refused it, it would have created a bad impression on the assembled ones. It took only a split second for His Holiness to find a solution. He reached for the bowl containing *mantrākṣata*. Surely, He could not be expected to receive *ārati* when He was having *prasāda* in His hands. The *arcaka* realised that he had to accept *prasāda* and so had no choice but to place the *ārati* down and come bare-handed. His Holiness blessed him and the others and soon left.



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His Holiness could handle even embarrassing situations in an impeccable manner and with consummate ease.

His Holiness could handle even embarrassing situations in an impeccable manner and with consummate ease. During His camp at Hyderabad from 20<sup>th</sup> April to 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1960, His Holiness was one day visiting the houses of devotees for *pādapūjā*. Padmanabha Upadhyaya (His Personal Assistant) and Kalasha Shamanna were in the front seat apart from the devotee driving the car. The driver of the pilot vehicle that was in front of His Holiness's car realized that he was on the wrong road and, intending to make a U-turn, suddenly stopped the vehicle. Noticing the sudden stopping of the pilot vehicle, the driver of His Holiness's car also stopped. His Holiness, who was discussing some important issues with Upadhyaya and Shamanna, took it for granted that He had reached a devotee's house and immediately alighted. He walked straight into the house after opening the gates by Himself; the front door of the house was open. Upadhyaya and Shamanna blindly followed.



What His Holiness had entered was the house of a Muslim family. He quickly sensed this and that there was some slip-up. The people in the house were mourning an unfortunate death that had occurred a few days back. His Holiness did not turn back and leave. Instead, addressing a middle-aged woman who was weeping inconsolably, He enquired kindly as to what the matter was. The people in the house stood up and one of them mentioned the cause of their grief. His Holiness spent some time with them, uttering soothing and consoling words. Such was the way in which He freely interacted with them that they spoke with Him as if they had been intimate with Him for long. In a matter of minutes, not only was there no weeping in the house but the inmates appeared cheered up. His Holiness asked for fruits to be brought



from the car and gave them to the family members. Having virtually become one of them and assuaged them, He started to leave. The entire family followed Him to the

car and saw Him off. After He left, neither did His Holiness chide His staff for the mix up nor did He even show any sign that something had gone amiss; it was as if He had been to a devotee's house and left as He would normally have done. {The source of this information was Kalasha Shamanna.}

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At times, He took totally unexpected decisions, the reasons for which were unapparent to the officials of the *Maṭha*; generally, these were prompted, as per His own admission, by the '*preraṇā*, divine inspiration' that He received.

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in 1977, during His second all-India tour, He was scheduled to proceed to Delhi from Varanasi. Extensive arrangements were initiated at Delhi on the basis of the prior information available to the organisers there about His tour programme. Suddenly, He changed His stance and revealed His wish to proceed towards Kolkata. None could understand what had prompted Him to say so nor did His Holiness give any explanation. Since commitments had already been made for Him to visit Allahabad, He decided to go there from Varanasi and thereafter proceed towards Kolkata. All agreed later that His Holiness's decision had been very timely and wise. The then President of India, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, expired about the time His Holiness was scheduled to have arrived at Delhi. It would have been rather odd if His Holiness entered the capital at a time when there was State mourning. Postponement of the visit to Delhi enabled the devotees there to put in extra efforts to hasten and complete the constructions in Shankara Vidya Kendra, the branch in Delhi of the Sringeri Math, prior to His Holiness's arrival. Hence, when He came to Delhi, He could perform the *kumbhābhiṣeka* of the temples there. Had He arrived at Delhi as scheduled earlier, this would not have been possible as the works could not have been completed by then.



Being a light sleeper and capable of making do with only four hours of sleep, He used to wake up once or twice at night, call out to see if the watchman was vigilant and, off and on, go round Narasimhavana, checking even whether the cows and elephants were doing well and ensuring that everything was as it should be, such as that just the required lights were turned on and that too at the appropriate places only. After returning, He fell asleep in a trice. He once demonstrated this to me in Sringeri, in 1975. Just after completing giving *darśana* in the evening to the public, He sent for me. He was seated

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in His room. He said, "I had told you about falling asleep in a trice at night. Now watch." Immediately thereafter, He closed His eyes and promptly fell asleep; His head drooped. A few moments later, He awakened and said, with a laugh, "Good sleep." It was only when he was in His sixties that He fully gave up going out at night to check Narasimhavana.

The following was narrated by K. M. Balasubramanian.

"Once, when His Holiness and His entourage were camping at a certain place, a man was appointed as a watchman to take care of the security and to ring the bell each hour. There was a big hall in which everyone slept. The watchman was also there. One night, His

Holiness went around having a look, as He sometimes did. When He inspected the hall, he found the watchman fast asleep. Without waking him up, He took the clock that the watchman required to ring the bell every hour and left. When the watchman woke up from his slumber, he could not find his clock. There were many sleeping in the hall. The watchman woke up some people, including me, asked if any of us knew what had happened to the clock. I reprimanded him saying, 'If you are not able to safeguard your clock, how are you going to guard the assets of the *Maṭha*?' The watchman desperately searched for the clock and, on not finding it, did not know what to do. Later on, His Holiness called me and said, 'The watchman was sleeping during the night. That is the reason I took the clock and came away. Tell him this.' He returned the clock; the watchman learnt a lesson."

It is well-known that favouritism is detrimental to effective administration. His Holiness never gave room to any favouritism. Without exception, all those in the know who have been interviewed have maintained with certitude that His Holiness's dealings were ever perfectly fair and they had not come across of a single instance of His Holiness having acted biasedly in favour of any *pūrvāśrama*-relative.

Members of His Holiness's former family were fully aware of His Holiness's impartiality. A person once approached Ramanatha Sastry, His Holiness's younger brother, requesting

him to arrange for an allocation from His Holiness. Understanding His Holiness's nature, Sastry told him, "There is no point in your trying to seek a recommendation from me. It will not strengthen your case. At best, I can accompany you. If you are fortunate, His Holiness will oblige; else He will not."

His Holiness never let down anyone who served the *Maṭha* sincerely.

Once, Ramanatha Sastry was in financial difficulties. Nageshwara Sastry, His Holiness's boyhood friend, approached His Holiness and asked Him to extend special help to Ramanatha Sastry. His Holiness dispassionately replied, "What all there is in the *Maṭha* does not belong to me. It belongs to Śārādāmba. I cannot extend special help to Ramanatha merely because he happened to be my brother. I can be impartial and that is all."

His Holiness never let down anyone who served the *Maṭha* sincerely. A case in instance is that of Padmanabha Upadhyaya. Upadhyaya was, when young, a student of the *pāṭhaśālā*. He came to the favourable notice of His Holiness. For some reason unapparent to others, His Holiness instructed the cook to supply him some milk every day. The cook grew jealous and started mixing some salt in the milk before giving it to Upadhyaya. Upadhyaya never uttered a word of protest; he did not complain about this to His Holiness either. His Holiness Himself discerned what was happening and, pleased with Upadhyaya, took him into His service. Perhaps, His Holiness had wanted to test Upadhyaya, aware of how the cook would balk at the idea of specially supplying the lad milk. His Holiness personally trained him to handle *Maṭha* affairs with dexterity and, in particular, to establish rapport and get things done. He became His Holiness's Personal Assistant, who reported directly to Him and whose job primarily consisted in carrying out whatever task His Holiness gave him. He served His Holiness with great sincerity and was at His Holiness's side at any time he was required, be it day or night. In 1974, he had to go to Delhi in connection with some *Maṭha* work. His Holiness intuitively felt that the trip should not be made as



planned by Upadhyaya. Pressed to permit the trip, He gave His half-hearted consent. Upadhyaya passed away in an accident during that trip, in 1974. His Holiness had his body flown to Bengaluru and transported to Sringeri by road.

At that time, Upadhyaya's three sons were young and his two daughters were unmarried. His Holiness continued to provide them accommodation in Narasimhavana itself and took full care of them. In due course, all of them became comfortably settled in life. His Holiness remarked, "Upadhyaya did so much for the *Maṭha*. It would have been highly unjust if I had not taken care of his family." His Holiness had, some years before Upadhyaya's death, given him suggestions that proved to be monetarily beneficial to him. There had been a dispute in his family regarding a division of property. His Holiness had asked him to stake his claim for a particular plot of land in Mangaluru and not to bother much about the rest. Upadhyaya had obeyed. Later on, the city developed in such a way that that land's value shot up.

Simple living and high thinking have characterised

His Holiness was particular about doing His personal works Himself. He took His attendant's assistance only when that was essential or related to His pontifical duties.

He maintained His things methodically. He arranged His books so well that He could locate a book placed by Him even years later, without the least difficulty.

*Mahātmans*.

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He maintained His things methodically. He arranged His books so well that He could locate a book placed by Him even years later, without the least difficulty. Mahabala Bayari,



who served as His personal attendant, recalled, when I interviewed him, that when His Holiness wanted him to fetch a book, rather than telling him the name or the author of the book, both of which would have been unfamiliar to him, His Holiness specified to Him the room where that book was, in which bookshelf in that room, the shelf in that bookshelf, the relative position of the book in that shelf and even its size and colour. Whenever Mahabala searched as per His directions, he invariably located the desired volume.

He had a prodigious and eidetic memory. He once told me, "I used to remember the details of all works that were carried out in my presence. In fact, I could even recall the exact number of nails used for a particular task carried out in my presence and also the number of strokes with which each nail was driven in." Many people were pleasantly surprised that even after a lapse of several years, His Holiness not only remembered them but also the particulars of their families. He was able to do this in spite of the fact that thousands of people flocked to have His *darśana*. As He passed into His seventies and His health deteriorated, there was some deterioration in His retention, which, nevertheless, continued to be above par. Regarding this, He humorously commented, "Earlier, my mind was like a camera. When an object came before it, it was registered and the negative was permanently stored. Now, it is like a mirror, which reflects only what is in front of it."

In 1984, a person, who came to Sringeri for *darśana*, asked His Holiness, "I would like to do *Śiva-pūjā*. May I have the *liṅga* that I submitted to Your Holiness earlier?" His Holiness immediately fetched the *liṅga* concerned and handed it over to the devotee. As He did so, He remarked, "It is twenty-seven years since you submitted

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the *liṅga* to me. At that time, you did not tell me that you would like to have it back some day. Hence, there was every chance that I might have given it away to some devotee in response to his asking me to bless him with a *liṅga*."

In the eighties, His Holiness started to have difficulty in climbing stairs because of His cardiac condition and to reduce the height to be climbed at a time, a small wooden plank about seven centimetres in height (with its legs) used to be placed on a step. On reaching

a step, He would sidestep onto the plank and climb to the next step. In August 1989, I thought of designing a thin, portable, electro-pneumatic device with a flat surface for His Holiness to stand on that would, when placed on a step, lift up His Holiness gently and smoothly to the exact level of the next step. To cater to steps of different heights, I wanted to know the highest single step in Sringeri. Hence, I took measurements at various places in Narasimhavana and in the temple complex. When I reported the matter to His Holiness, He told me, "You need not have taken the trouble of measuring various steps. I would have told you that the highest step is the first one in the Vidyāśānkara



Temple, counting from the surface for doing *pradakṣiṇa*. Its height is twelve and three quarter inches. The top step there is ten and three quarter inches high." His Holiness then mentioned the step-height at the *Samādhi* of His *Guru* and that in the front of Sacchidananda Vilas. When I checked the paper on which I had noted the heights, I found that every single measurement that His Holiness had mentioned was completely accurate. This was mind-boggling. It is noteworthy that His Holiness had never got the steps in the Vidyāśānkara Temple measured. He must have spontaneously and accurately judged their heights when swiftly climbing them in the past. Similar was the

case with the other steps. Moreover, He had been able to recall effortlessly what He had judged even when, as per His own statements, His memory had deteriorated.

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Every day, His Holiness attended to a large number of letters from His various devotees, not only from India but also from abroad. The way He attended to the missives was a treat

to watch. I have seen Him reading one letter, writing something and dictating a reply to a second letter read out to Him earlier while not failing to accord by a nod, permission to sit down to some person who had been sent for – all at the same time. His Holiness often grasped the essence of a letter even when only a portion of it was presented to Him. It was well-known in *Maṭha* circles that when He hesitated to give *prasādas* in response to a prayer for recovery from illness, there was no hope for recovery. I have come across several such instances.

Jalaja Sakthidasan was a staunch devotee of the *Maṭha*. She and her husband, Sakthidasan, were writers and had co-authored books about the *Maṭha* and His Holiness. When her husband was in a serious condition, she wrote to His Holiness praying to Him for His blessings for her husband's recovery. I took the letter to His Holiness and conveyed the contents, expecting Him to readily give *prasādas*. His Holiness heard me out but at the end gravely replied, "There is no point in sending *prasāda*." A little later, a telegram was received stating that Sakthidasan had passed away.

A lady wrote a pathetic letter to His Holiness stating that she had lost her *māṅgala-sūtra* with pendant and that she would consider herself blessed if His Holiness graced her with one. When Giridhara Sastry presented the contents of the letter to His Holiness, He readily asked for one to be sent. Giridhara Sastry despatched a *māṅgalya* and forgot about it. His Holiness, however, enquired whether the needful had been done. A little later, a variety of *māṅgalyas* of Goddess Śāradāmbā were brought to Him. He pointed at one of them and told Giridhara Sastry, "This type of *māṅgalya* should have been sent to that lady." As if in fulfilment of His Holiness's wish, that very kind of *māṅgalya* was what had been despatched to her.

His Holiness's kindness manifested even when punishment had to be meted out to an erring staff. Once, an employee of the *Maṭha* was extremely careless and this resulted in a substantial loss. Giridhara Sastry, as the Administrator, decided to recover the lost amount in instalments from that person's salary and fixed the rate of recovery. When he reported the matter to His Holiness, He felt pity for the person and said, "I concede that punishment has to be given but what you have imposed is too much. Care should be taken to ensure that no trouble is caused to his family and to him. You have been recovering some fine until now. That is sufficient. No further recovery need be done." Giridhara Sastry acted accordingly

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He was ready to forgive and even help an erring *Maṭha* staff who was repentant.



though the remission meant that hardly ten percent of the lost amount was recovered.

Another staff of the *Maṭha* had committed a grave offence. Some strongly recommended to His Holiness to dismiss the man. His Holiness, however, did not take the extreme step saying, “It is not difficult to relieve the man of his post and send him home. However, we should bear in mind that he has wife and children who are solely dependent on him. Any punishment inflicted upon him should not be so severe that his family finds itself in dire straits. Hence, it is not proper to make him jobless. On the contrary, it will not be advisable to let him go scot free either, for his misdeed does deserve some chastisement. Hence, he should be transferred and given another post in the *Maṭha* which is suitable to him.” His Holiness’s instructions were carried out and the person concerned, who was remorseful for what he had done, was given another assignment. Later, at His Holiness’s instance, a devotee got that person a job elsewhere with a much higher salary. Thus, His Holiness gave the man a temporary punishment but never harboured any ill-will and later, even did him a special favour.



On an occasion, a staff poured ghee from the *Maṭha*’s kitchen into a vessel that he had brought from home. As he had to attend to some work, he kept the vessel at a particular spot. This was observed and the matter brought to His Holiness’s attention. His Holiness could have very easily exposed the concerned person and put him to shame but He did not wish to do so. He asked another worker of the *Maṭha* to give the ghee to the kitchen and to replace the vessel at the exact spot where it had been left. When the culprit returned, he must have been in for a shock. He would have known that his theft had been discovered but would have been thankful that it was not made public. At any rate, he was in no position to complain, “I had kept some ghee in my vessel. It is missing now.”

A short employee wanted to fetch something that was beyond his reach. Seeing His Holiness’s *āsana* near him, he used it as a stepping stone, reached up and collected what he wanted. In the light of the scripture, his act was sinful; the *Guru*’s seat is sacrosanct. When His Holiness came there, He noticed a faint imprint on His *āsana* formed by the dust on the employee’s foot. From the faint footprint itself, He instantaneously identified the offender. He summoned him and explained to him, in

private, the impropriety of what he had done and advised him to abstain from doing so in future.

Without making suitable entries in the accounts, an official of the *Maṭha* gave money to a person of his own personal choice. The time for the official's retirement came. He wanted to hush up the affair. However, His Holiness immediately comprehended the situation. He told the official to settle the accounts and verify with the available cash. The man struggled and appeared worried. He was told that he could take rest and come the next day as that would be sufficient. The man went home. His Holiness felt sorry for him, for the worried man was likely to have a sleepless night. He sent word to that person's residence telling him to be at ease. The guilty official was moved by His Holiness's kindness. Feeling ashamed, he rushed to His Holiness and confessed what he had done. He said that he had lent money in an unjustifiable manner and the beneficiary was delaying the repayment. His Holiness consoled him and asked him to enter the amount as a loan in the books and to get that person to repay in instalments. Thus, not only did His Holiness set right the problem, but also put the official at ease. He was ready to forgive and even help an erring *Maṭha* staff who was repentant.

Shortly after His Holiness became the pontiff in 1954, He told Ramanatha Sastry that He wished to meet Chennakeshava, a former employee. For some time prior to and after His Holiness's *samnyāsa* in 1931, Chennakeshava used to prepare and serve food to Him. He had subsequently retired and settled down in Kota, a small town in Dakshina Kannada district, not far from Sringeri. His Holiness directed Ramanatha Sastry to go and fetch him. Sastry went to Kota and, after making some enquiries locally, managed to locate and reach Chennakeshava's house. Chennakeshava was in a very pensive mood and recalled that he used to covertly divert much of the milk and curds meant for His Holiness to his family. He continued to do so till he left the *Maṭha* and settled down in Kota. He told Sastry that a strange disease had then crippled his limbs. He attributed this to his misdeeds. He felt that he could never set foot on Sringeri since His Holiness would be extremely angry with him and would never forgive him. Sastry comforted him by saying that he had come on His Holiness's instructions for the very purpose of taking him to Sringeri. Chennakeshava's fears only increased and he flatly refused to come to Sringeri. Helplessly, Sastry returned alone and reported back to His Holiness.

On hearing Sastry's account, His Holiness sent him again to Kota, this time in a vehicle of the *Maṭha* and told him to bring Chennakeshava at any cost. He added that if Chennakeshava still refused to come, He would be forced to go to Kota Himself. When Sastry went and informed this to Chennakeshava, the latter became very apprehensive but, left with no option, accompanied Sastry to Sringeri.

As soon as Chennakeshava was ushered into His Holiness's presence, he broke down and, falling at His feet, confessed that he had wronged Him and sought His pardon. His Holiness quickly assuaged him and told him that he was like a father to Him since he had fed Him during His boyhood days in Sringeri. He added that He wished to reward him for his services and gave him what was a very significant amount in mid 1950s. Taken aback, Chennakeshava again referred to his usurping what was earmarked for His Holiness and said that he was in no way worthy of receiving the money. His Holiness completely comforted him. Chennakeshava then accepted the reward and received His Holiness's bountiful blessings. He returned to Kota in peace, relieved of his psychological and financial burdens. {This incident was narrated by Ramanatha Sastry.}

It is pertinent that in the 1930s His Holiness did not initiate any remedial measures even though He knew that Chennakeshava was largely taking away what he had been officially instructed to serve Him in view of His frail health at that time. He also did not give anybody any inkling of what was happening. Even when sending Sastry in the mid-1950s, He did not assign any reason; it was Chennakeshava who confessed what he had done to Sastry. Such was His utter indifference to any wrong done to Him. One can only conjecture that His Holiness had intuitively discerned that Chennakeshava was contrite, burdened with guilt and badly off. Moreover, in His unbounded compassion, He decided to make him psychologically and financially unburdened and therefore sent Sastry to him not once but twice and had been prepared to Himself go to Kota, if required. Many are the cases such as this one where one cannot fathom why His Holiness went very much out of the way to grace even someone who was apparently undeserving and resistive too. What is patent, however, is that His Holiness overlooked a wrong done to Him but was satiated to the extent of telling Chennakeshava, "You are like a father to me," just because Chennakeshava cooked and served Him food when young.

During His visit to Chennai, His Holiness was scheduled to visit a temple of Lord Vināyaka in K. K. Nagar on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1977. He was received at the start of the street with *pūrṇakumbha*. A devoted lady with a long association with the *Maṭha* was waiting there just hoping that His Holiness would visit her house, which was on the same street, but understanding that such an unscheduled visit and that too, on His way to a temple was quite improbable. However, when she managed to express her wish to Him, He walked to her place, entered it and left shortly thereafter. Later, she went to His Holiness's place of stay and submitted a small silver tumbler filled with sugar. His Holiness, aware of her modest means, sought to know why she was making this offering. She told Him that He had mercifully graced her house but she had submitted nothing to Him at that time.

A few months later, when she went to Sringeri in 1978 to have *darśana*, He remarked to the devotees near Him, “Just because I had been to her place at Madras (now Chennai), she offered a large silver vessel to the *Maṭha*.” The lady was amazed, for what she had submitted was only a small silver tumbler. After a few months, when she made another trip to Sringeri, He told the devotees there, “Just because I visited her place, she offered the *Maṭha* a large silver vessel,” and as He said this, He spread His hands wide apart. She realized that such was His magnanimity and kindness that He viewed even a small offering made to Him with devotion as great.



The following was reported by S. Y. Krishnaswamy.

“On one occasion, in response to a small donation from me, for which I was apologetic, He replied, ‘There is no question of it being small. The rain falls only in threads but it makes a flood.’”

Shankara Adiga, a personal attendant (who is now an *arcaka* at Goddess Śāradāmbā’s shrine), had a few dreams in which he beheld Padmanabha Upadhyaya who had passed away years earlier and with whose son he was close. His Holiness provided Him an opportunity to narrate the dreams to Him and even offered an interpretation that pleased Adiga. During His Holiness’s camp at Bengaluru, Challa Annapoorna Prasad, another attendant, was performing, on his own, *pūjā* to a small image of Gaṇapati in the predawn hours of the *dhanur-māsa*. His Holiness happened to pass by that room and, hearing a soft sound of a *pūjā*-bell, entered. He beheld Challa devoutly commencing the *mangalārati*. Pleased, His Holiness waited and fully witnessed it. Challa was in for a surprise when he turned and realised that His Holiness had patiently beheld even his simple personal worship. When he had come to the *Maṭha* as a lad, he had been unable to speak normally. His Holiness had intervened and set right his shortcoming.

His Holiness frequently made enquiries about the welfare of the staff and did whatever was possible for their well-being. For instance, His Holiness once questioned the

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*khiledār*, Sitarama Bhatta, regarding his health. Sitarama Bhatta mentioned that he experienced abdominal pain and indigestion. After suitable questioning, His Holiness felt that the likely cause was gastric ulcer and had him examined by a competent doctor.

The doctor confirmed that Sitarama Bhatta had gastric ulcer and prescribed medication for it and some dietary restrictions. His Holiness made the necessary arrangements and also ordered that a glass of milk be supplied to Sitarama Bhatta every morning till his ulcer abated. Years later, when I interviewed him, Sitarama Bhatta recalled, with gratitude, that His Holiness's act of kindness had resulted in his suffering ending and his health being restored.

The second son of a person employed in the *Maṭha's* cowshed was greatly handicapped; he could not see, hear, speak or walk and everything for the boy had to be done by someone else. The worker did not know whether *upanayana* should be performed for his son or not. The *paṇḍitas* whom he consulted were not able to give a definite answer and so he decided to ask His Holiness. His Holiness patiently heard him out and said, "Upanayana should be performed but because the boy cannot perform his *nitya-karma*, it will suffice if you do some extra *Gāyatrī-japa* daily on his behalf." Not stopping with this, He arranged for the conduct of the function in the *Maṭha* and at the *Maṭha's* expense; the employee merely had to initiate his son.



His Holiness never stood on prestige and unhesitatingly helped even in ways that could be misconceived as undignified for a greatly venerated *Jagadguru Śaṅkarācārya* of a celebrated, orthodox *Āmnāya-pīṭha* (Vedic Seat). One night His attendant, Malnad Venkatesha, had difficulty in sleeping on account of mosquitoes. However, exhaustion got the better of him and he fell asleep. Being an early riser, His Holiness woke up prior to His attendant. Seeing mosquitoes on Venkatesha, His Holiness neared him, fanned him with His handkerchief and kept them at bay. The breeze happened to stir the sleeping

one from his slumber. As he awakened, His Holiness silently moved on. It took moments for Venkatesa to realise that His Holiness had Himself fanned him to drive mosquitoes away from him.

The following was narrated by A. Subramonia Iyer who retired as the Principal of Sree Sankara College at Kalady.

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“As a student, I was fortunate to be under the tutelage of the great scholar, Sri Neelakanta Sastry of Trivandrum. Sastry and I visited Sringeri during the annual *Gaṇapati-vākyārtha-sadas*. Once, after the night *Candramaulīśvara-pūjā*, His Holiness summoned Sastry for a discussion. By the time we both left, it was past 11 p.m. While we were approaching the river, His Holiness’s attendant came running and caught up with us. He had in his hand something wrapped in a towel. To our pleasant surprise, he handed us about twenty ripe fruits and said, ‘As it is already late, the kitchen may not be open. Hence, His Holiness has sent these for you.’ Indeed, by the time we reached the *bhojanaśālā* (dining hall) on the other shore, it was locked. Subsequently, when we had His Holiness’s *darśana*, He said, ‘It is better that you have your dinner and then come for the *pūjā*. People serving dinner have to clean the kitchen after everyone eats and only then leave for the day. If you go late for dinner, it would delay them further. Further, since they should report for duty as usual, early in the morning, their reaching their home late at night would put them to much inconvenience. Leave all the *vratas* (austerities) to me.’ We were touched by His Holiness’s thoughtfulness and compassion in sending us the fruits at that late hour, lest we go hungry at night. Moreover, it was a lesson in being considerate to all that His Holiness taught us in so gentle a manner.”

During His Holiness’s tour, at times, when some vehicle failed to catch up with the rest of the convoy, His Holiness instructed that His car halted to give time for that vehicle to arrive.

During His Holiness’s tour, at times, when some vehicle failed to catch up with the rest of the convoy, His Holiness instructed that His car halt to give time for that vehicle to arrive. In case of delay, He stepped out of His car, stood on the roadside and got His staff to make enquiries from the drivers of passing vehicles as to whether they had seen

the *Maṭha*’s car. If He found the staff slow or inefficient in doing this, without the least



sense of self-importance that is common for personages of His stature, He waved His handkerchief, and on a passing vehicle stopping, Himself asked the driver.

On an occasion, a car of the *Maṭha* failed to catch up with the convoy even after some time. No information about it could be gleaned from the vehicles passing by.

His Holiness ordered that His car turn back in search of the missing vehicle. After a while, the *Maṭha* vehicle, which had stopped due to some problems, was located. Giridhara Sastry, who was in it, came out and requested His Holiness, “We will repair the car and come. Your Holiness may please proceed.” In a firm tone, His Holiness said that He proposed to wait until that car was set right. After the repair, the convoy proceeded to the next camp. There, He summoned Giridhara Sastry and told him, “How could I have proceeded leaving you all behind? Would I not have had to spend time thinking of your welfare!” His Holiness was willing to even put up with delay or change in His schedule for the sake of those who were serving Him.

The following was narrated by K. S. Natarajan.

“When His Holiness came to Mumbai in 1967, I requested His Holiness to grace my apartment for *pādapūjā*. He agreed and came home. My house was very close to the sea. When His Holiness saw the waters, He was delighted. One day, my wife received a phone call from the *Maṭha* stating that a lorry containing an idol sent by His Holiness was on its way to the apartment. She rang me up and, on receiving the message, I rushed home. The lorry delivered a box that was about four feet long, three and a half feet wide and two feet high; it contained a marble statue of Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda. I learnt that His Holiness had selected my house for keeping the idol till installation because my house had an extra wide door. So acute was His power of observation that He had noticed this even on His short visit.”

Violence and compulsion were objectionable to Him and He consistently maintained that the means as well as the ends should be righteous. When His Holiness camped at

Delhi in 1967, the problem of enacting compulsory legislation to prevent cow-slaughter was strongly agitating the country. In response to the demands of various devotees, He gave a message, although personally He was reluctant to involve Himself in any controversy in which the passions of the moment submerged the faculties of reasoning and the ultimate interests of the country were forgotten. The message issued on His behalf was as follows:



“Adhering correctly to the edicts of the *Vedas* and *śāstras* would be conducive to welfare and prosperity. No injury should be caused to any living being. Leading a life wedded to *ahimsā* brings happiness. Among animals, the cow is most helpful and useful to mankind and is also an object of supreme reverence. Protection of the cow is, therefore, an act of great merit and killing it is a heinous sin. Protection of the cow is thus an absolute necessity. At present, various efforts at a number of places are being made to get cow-slaughter banned. It is the considered opinion of the *Jagadguru* that the efforts being made to achieve the objective should be absolutely peaceful and should not cause even the slightest injury or harm to anyone. Injury or harm to others results ultimately in difficulty and loss to the country as a whole. In regard to the enactment of suitable legislation for this purpose, knowledgeable persons should jointly consider, examine and decide in what manner such a legislative measure could be brought about.”

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Thus, in His message, He not only expressed His concern about cow-slaughter but also advocated the eschewing of any violent methods to achieve the enactment of legislation to ban cow-slaughter.

The following was reported by P. S. Narasimhan.

“An incident which lives in my memory happened on *Vardhanti* day in 1976. His Holiness’s forthcoming tour of North India and His visits to Benaras and Delhi were being discussed.



A leading disciple from Delhi was insisting that His Holiness should, during the stay in Delhi, take part in a rally for the protection of cows; this was scheduled as a big public protest and was to be televised. Raising His voice, He told the disciple, "I do not want all this. It is not necessary that I should join a demonstration for cow-protection or appear on television. I am, however, very much interested in the protection of cows and maintain several cows in Sringeri. This, one and all can see." The next moment the fleeting show of anger had subsided and His Holiness was His usual personification of peace. After all the other disciples had left, my wife and I had stayed back to take leave of His Holiness. I referred to this incident and expressed my humble admiration for the extraordinary way in which His Holiness had been able to summon a show of anger and then to revert to His usual poise in an instant. His Holiness remarked, 'There are certain occasions when we have to exhibit a show of anger. Anger must be under our control, to be used when necessary and abandoned when the need ceases.'"

When His Holiness was touring Tamil Nadu in 1964, the convoy of *Maṭha* vehicles passed through a certain village. The villagers stopped His Holiness's car and surrounded it. They were suffering due to prolonged lack of rain. The simple and troubled village folk said to His Holiness, "We have heard that you are the 'Mazhai-Svāmigal

(Śvāmin who brings rain).' Please bless us with rain." His Holiness called the *Maṭha* officials and announced His decision to camp for the night in the village. He explained, "These people have a lot of faith in God and to some extent, in me. If I now go away from this village, their faith will be impacted." The officials had their own concern that all arrangements had been made for the evening programme at



**"There are certain occasions when we have to exhibit a show of anger. Anger must be under our control, to be used when necessary and abandoned when the need ceases."**

**- His Holiness**

the next scheduled stop and that the *Maṭha's* trucks had already left for that destination earlier. However, His Holiness was firm in His resolve to stay there and do *pūjā*. It was around 3:30 p.m. at the time. In a while, the trucks laden with all the requirements for the *pūjā* returned. With some difficulty, a small house was identified to store the belongings



and to set up the *pūjā*. The *pūjā* was completed that night. Within an hour, it started pouring heavily, accompanied by thunder and lightning. The rain continued unabated through the night. The next morning, the headman of the village accompanied by some others approached His Holiness and prayed to Him to kindly stop the rain. They expressed their immense gratitude to His Holiness and told Him that they now had sufficient water. The rain stopped soon thereafter.

His Holiness had earned the sobriquet "*Mazhai Swamigal (Śvāmin* who brings rain)" in His first tour of Tamil Nadu in the late 1950s. At that time, there was a severe drought in the region, with rains having failed for long. Tanks and wells had become dry or were drying up. However, wherever He was prayed to for rain and invited, it had rained.

During His All-India tour, when He was observing *cāturmāsya* in Ujjain in 1966, a group of persons approached Him and respectfully asked Him, "Swamiji, why have You not yet blessed us with what we want?" His Holiness asked them what they desired. They said, "Rain." His Holiness had special prayers offered at a temple of Hanumān. It started raining and they came to Him and expressed their gratitude. The next year, when He reached Gaya on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1967, He was escorted by the Chief Minister to a meeting held in a vast ground and attended by tens of thousands. The region was afflicted by drought and His blessings were sought for rain. In His benedictory address, His Holiness referred to the hardship the people were facing and said that He would pray to Śāradā-Candramaulīśvara for rain. Subsequently, He prayed; it rained.

The following was penned and given to me years ago by H. N. Shankar, who served as the Deputy Administrator of the *Maṭha* in the 1980s.

“His Holiness had set out for His evening walk in Narasimhavana. I had been following Him a couple of paces behind. He was approaching the car park adjoining Sacchidananda Vilas. Strolling along the pathway and looking at the rose and jasmine gardens to His right and left, all of a sudden, He chanted the Kannada nursery rhyme ‘*huyyo huyyo male rāya; hūvina toṭake nīrilla (O rain god, pour forth, pour forth. There is no water for the flower garden).*’ By the time he had chanted it the third time, it started drizzling. As we approached the shelter of the car shed, the drizzle had picked up into rain. Entering the shed, He turned around, faced the garden and surveyed the scene in front of Him with a sweeping glance. After a brief silence, He remarked, ‘This is strange. We were taught this line when we were kids. Whenever I recall it and chant it, it somehow starts raining. See, it is raining now. *Svāmigalu* (referring to His successor designate and present pontiff Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin) even says, ‘Your Holiness should not recite this rhyme randomly. It will immediately rain.’ On a later date, I mentioned this to Śrī Sannidhānam. ‘Yes, indeed! I have said so. I have seen it rain after even a casual utterance of that line by His Holiness. It may be surprising but I shall testify to it,’ was His reply.”

When His Holiness was touring the Tanjavur District of Tamil Nadu in June 1959, two persons met Him and asked Him in private, “How do you bring rain?” “I do not,” replied His Holiness. “You are said to be the *Mazhai Swamigal*.” “People are free to call me what they wish,” was His Holiness’s response. He added, “The one who blesses people and bestows rain is God. I merely submit a request on behalf of people. The rest is entirely

“The one who blesses people and bestows rain is God. I merely submit a request on behalf of people. The rest is entirely up to Him. If I were to ever imagine that I am the cause of rain, even my submission to God will be in vain.”

- His Holiness

up to Him. If I were to ever imagine that I am the cause of rain, even my submission to God will be in vain.” His Holiness told me of this conversation in May 1974 when I told Him that I had just heard from the *purohita*, Ganapati Subrahmanya Avadhani, that He had been referred to as “*Mazhai Swamigal*” in Tamil Nadu in the 1950s.

The following was narrated by A. S. Raghavan, an eminent musical exponent of the *Tiruppugazh* (Saint Aruṇagirināthar’s profound, devotional outpouring in Tamil primarily in praise of Lord Kārtikeya).

“During His Holiness’s visit to Kolkata in 1967, when the organizing committee members were undecided about whom to invite for singing *bhajans* on a morning, His Holiness told P. Subramaniam, the chief organizer, ‘Invite Raghavan of Delhi to sing *Tiruppugazh bhajans*.’ My group members and I were pleasantly surprised that none had any difficulty in obtaining a week’s leave. On the scheduled day, I sat on the stage to begin the *bhajan*. However, I learnt that His Holiness had left the venue earlier to fulfil devotees’ wishes that He grace their houses, witness their *pādapūjā* (performed to the *pādukas* of His Holiness’s *Guru* or to those of Goddess Śārādāmbā) and bless them. I commenced singing with a heavy heart. I sang for over two hours. Just as I finished singing the last verse, His Holiness entered the venue, went straight to His seat and started blessing the devotees with *tīrtha-prasāda*. I joined the queue, cursing my ill-luck that in spite of being called to Kolkata at the behest of His Holiness, I could not sing anything in His august presence.

“When my turn came to receive *tīrtha*, His Holiness remarked, ‘You sang very well. I enjoyed listening to the *Tiruppugazh*.’ Unable to contain my disappointment, I blurted out, ‘Your Holiness was not here when I sang.’ Smiling at me, His Holiness said, ‘Oh, so you think that I did not listen to your *bhajan*?’ I nodded my head. His Holiness continued, ‘I arrived at the venue when your performance was hardly halfway through. I observed that the audience was engrossed in the *bhajan*. Had I entered the hall, I would have only disturbed your performance. People would have got up and even queued up to receive *tīrtha-prasāda*. There would have been commotion and you would have been forced to stop the *bhajan*. Hence, I sat outside the entrance to the hall. I instructed my staff not to let anyone know of my arrival. I enjoyed hearing your songs. I came in only after you completed your singing.’ I was awestruck by His considerateness and lack of ego.

“Later, when I went to Sringeri, I expressed to His Holiness that I felt bad that I did not know Sanskrit and had not studied *Vedānta*. His Holiness asked me to recite a set of verses of the *Tiruppugazh* and expound them. I did so. His Holiness pointed out that the verses reflected the essence of the *Upaniṣads* and told me, ‘Have no regret. Chant the sacred verses of the *Tiruppugazh* and sincerely reflect on their meaning. You will attain *śreyas* (felicity).’”

His Holiness had instructed that the accounts of the Private Secretary’s office be recorded for Him in a book and that that book be submitted to Him every fortnight. He used to go through it carefully. He was particular that the money donated to the *Maṭha* be spent for the right causes only. He said on different occasions that there was a great responsibility on Him and the authorities in the *Maṭha* because devotees donated in the belief that



their donations would be rightly used for good causes and that it would be a grievous transgression if what they gave was misused. He added that as far as the donors were concerned, regardless of what happened in the *Maṭha*, they would earn *punya* by virtue of their having performed charity.

His Holiness personally oversaw the running of the *Maṭha*. When He was on tour, He penned letters to the Administrator to update him, make enquiries and give instructions. For instance, in a letter (in Kannada) dated 12.12.1981 to Giridhara Sastry and sent from Namakkal (in Tamil Nadu) He wrote, "At Rajapalayam, the *Śatacaṇḍī-homa* was conducted with much faith, devotion and grandeur. In Madurai, Sri Gopalakrishna Iyer and others offered their services and greatly furthered

the zeal of the devotees. The Organizing Committee made an offering of Rs. 50,000. In the gathering itself, I passed on to Sri Vaidyasubrahmanya Iyer that amount towards the functioning of the Sanskrit College. ... Letters received from the branch *Maṭhas* must be diligently looked into and replied to in a timely fashion. Else, the managers there will lose interest. ...How many quintals of areca nut were harvested this season? I was informed that the she-elephant breached the *gaja-śālā* (elephant shed) at night and destroyed some coconut saplings. To what extent is this information factual? It must be ascertained time and again that a sentry is in place at the temple of Śrī-Śāradā during the day and at night. Convey my enquiries and benedictions that are preceded by *Nārāyaṇa-smaraṇa* (the thought of Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme) to the main personnel of

His Holiness had instructed that the accounts of the Private Secretary's office be recorded for Him in a book and that that book be submitted to Him every fortnight. He used to go through it carefully. He was particular that the money donated to the *Maṭha* be spent for the right causes only. He said on different occasions that there was a great responsibility on Him and the authorities in the *Maṭha* because devotees donated in the belief that their donations would be rightly used for good causes and that it would be a grievous transgression if what they gave was misused.

Narasimhapura, Narasimhavana and the *Maṭha*. Ensure that they function with enthusiasm. I have shown your letters to my *Śiṣya-svāmin* (the present pontiff, Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin) and conveyed your salutations to him.”

In a letter dated 30.7.1982 and penned in New Delhi, His Holiness wrote, “The tours of *Gaṅgotrī* and *Yamunotrī* have been completed comfortably. ... The proposal to bring black granite for the Malahānikareśvara Temple and dress those stones must be laid to rest. ... It would be prudent to drop the idea of letting out *Sharada Niketan* to others. We will need it. ... It is apt to dispose off the lands of *Anantapura* now. ... From those funds, a permanent Trust may be established. ... Sri Ganeshaiyya of Narasimhavana writes to me frequently. Do keep me posted about your views on the matters concerned. Has any damage been caused to the coconut grove at Narasimhapura because of the delayed rains? Has the water from the pumps been adequate? I accept your suggestion that an officer has to be appointed whose job is to hasten the matters related to land reforms. Make the appointment... What is the *muhūrta* of your younger sister’s marriage? Do not bother about the funds required for that. I will make them available when required. Inform forthwith. Do not hesitate... Hold the meeting of the Managing Committee of the Sri Sharada Dhanvantari Charitable Hospital at Delhi. Sri Dharmatma {Vaidyasubrahmanya Iyer} is expected to arrive at Delhi by 14<sup>th</sup> August. If Sri Natarajan, Sri Parameshwara and the other essential people come at the same time, it will be conducive... Inform the concerned, get their opinions and write to me.”



In a letter dated 10.12.1981 and sent from Rajapalayam (in Tamil Nadu), His Holiness expressed with reference to the works in the Sri Shankar Math in Sultanpete in Bengaluru, “All the works taken up but not yet completed must be completed. There are no two ways about this. ...It would be sufficient if the existing structure is properly repaired so as to provide good facilities for the people.” With reference to the Shankar Math in Shankarapuram in Bengaluru, He conveyed, “If we keep adding to the works, that may become a cause for concern for us later. ....It has been our experience that an initial

estimate of a lakh of rupees ends up as an actual expenditure of two lakhs.” Referring to the Sharada Dhanwantari Hospital in Sringeri, He wrote, “We must take note of the fact that after the new doctor-couple has joined, the hospital has been functioning well and the public opinion about it is rather favourable.” His Holiness directed Giridhara Sastry to visit an elderly widow who had lived for long in Narasimhavana and was then an inpatient at the hospital and convey to her His blessings. At the close, He enquired about Giridhara Sastry’s mother. {Giridhara Sastry was kind enough to allow me access to all the letters written by His Holiness to him.}

The following was narrated by V. Rajagopal Sharma.

“This happened during His Holiness’s camp at Hyderabad in January 1966. He had allowed me to sleep in His room at night for a few days. The Maharaja of Mysore and Raja Venkata Rao Limbekar had submitted high quality, imported mattresses and blankets for His Holiness’s use. The attendant laid the bed for His Holiness at night before He entered. After the door was closed, He removed His upper cloth, rolled it up and used this as His pillow. He lay on deerskin on the floor; His lower cloth served as His blanket. He chanted ‘*Śambho Mahādeva*’ thrice and fell asleep. In the morning, as soon as He got up, He slightly rumbled the blankets on the bed. This went on for a few days. One day, I asked Him, ‘Why is Your Holiness doing this?’ He clarified, ‘I am a *saṁnyāsin* and I do not want comforts. However, those who donate such articles expect me to use them. If they come to know from the attendants that I am not utilising them, they may come to the conclusion that the items offered were not regarded by me as good enough and feel bad about it. As a result, they may trouble themselves further and get me even more valuable objects. Why give room to all this? Because of seeing the blankets rumbled, the attendants will not report to the eminent donors that I did not use them.’”

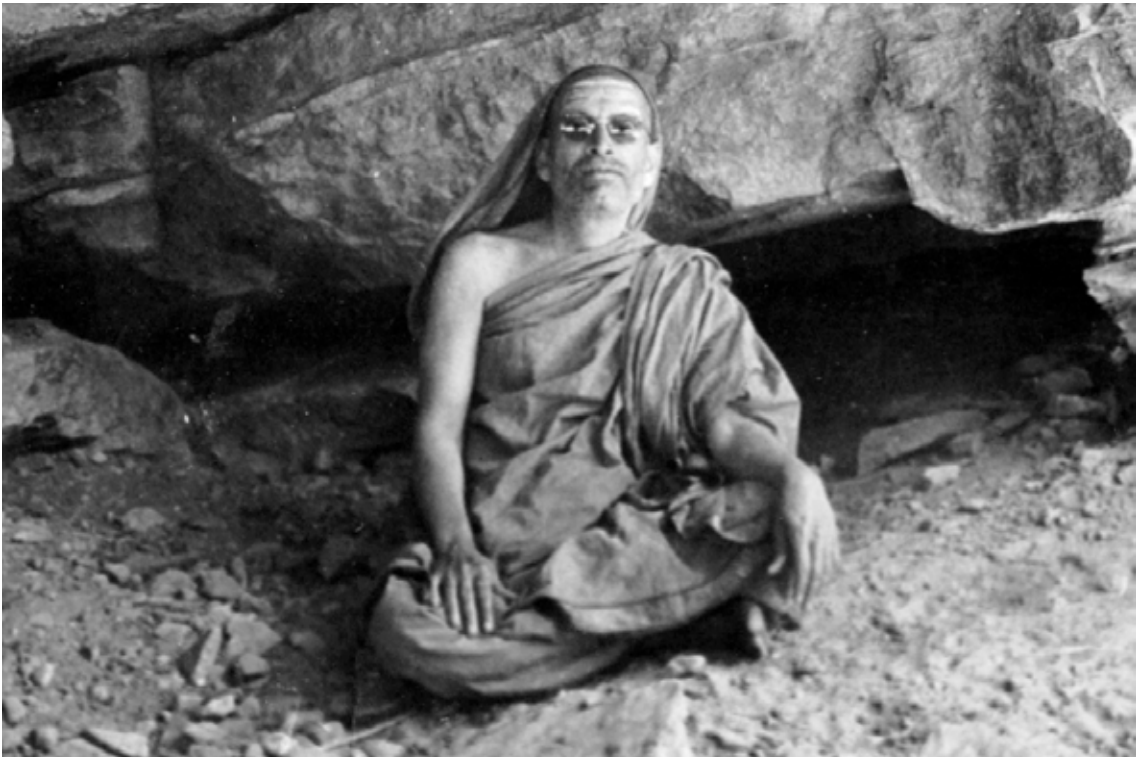
The following was narrated by Dr. H. C. Visvesvaraiya.

“During one of His Holiness’s visits to Delhi, I was desirous of making a special wooden cot for Him to sleep on, as the weather was extremely chill. Later, I found that His Holiness did not lie on it but on the floor. Anxious, I submitted, ‘I have arranged for the cot exclusively for Your Holiness’s use. It is brand new and no one has used it so far. I will be very happy if Your Holiness uses it.’ His Holiness smiled and said, ‘Yes, I will.’ Later, I was surprised to find that He used it only to keep His articles on that and to occasionally sit on that, but not for sleeping. He continued to sleep on the floor, unmindful of the testing weather.”

Justice Somanatha Iyer (who retired as the Chief Justice of Karnataka and had been the Governor of the State for some time) once asked His Holiness: “Your Holiness can have all the comforts in the *Maṭha*. Instead of experiencing any comforts, Your Holiness strains Yourself so much every day, from early in the morning to late at night. What does Your Holiness get out of this?” His Holiness smiled at him and said, “Suppose you are offered a choice between plain jaggery and *badam halwa* (a sweetmeat made of almonds), which one would you choose?” Somanatha Iyer said, “Where is the doubt here? I would choose *badam halwa*.” “Likewise,” responded His Holiness, “those who have tasted the bliss of the Supreme will not seek mundane comforts.” {This was reported by Justice Somanatha Iyer’s son, S. Shivaswamy.}

The following was reported by S. G. Narasimhaiyya.

“I asked His Holiness, ‘In the photos published in the *Maṭha*’s almanac and other publications, Your Holiness is just dressed as a *samnyāsin*. Should we not publish, instead, photographs of Your Holiness in all splendour, fully decked with ornaments symbolic of the position of the pontiff of this great *pīṭha*?’ He said, ‘This is my preferred way of being. Intrinsicly, I do not want any of the pomp and grandeur that the *pīṭha* is associated with, though they may be required on specific occasions as per the age-old





tradition of the *pīṭha*. By my *Guru*'s grace, I am firmly convinced about this. If I were to have complete liberty, I would go away this very instant and, in solitude, immerse and lose myself in the contemplation of the Supreme.”

Venkata Rao Limbekar wanted to gift what is presently the big branch *Maṭha* at New Nallakunta in Hyderabad to His Holiness Himself. He told Him, “I want this to be the personal property of Your Holiness. Even if, at some time, the *Maṭha* were to come to a bad turn or things were to become greatly troublesome for Your Holiness there, Your Holiness need not bother. Your Holiness could simply move in here.” His Holiness told him, “I am a *saṁnyāsin*. I am not supposed to own anything and I have not even a trace of a wish to do so. I would be quite happy to live in the manner prescribed for *paramahansa-saṁnyāsins*. I would love to move on foot from one place to another, bathe in a river or some other open body of water, subsist on what food I may get by begging, sleep under some tree, in some cave or in some temple, and spend my time largely in meditation, focused on the non-dual Truth and oblivious of the world. My *Guru* has, however, assigned me the duty of heading the Sringeri Math and that is the one and only reason I am shouldering this responsibility. The scripture teaches that the Supreme *Brahman* is all; there is not even a jot or a tittle distinct from It. Purely by the grace of my *Guru*, I know that I am *Brahman*. So what is there in the three worlds that is not mine? At the same time, nothing whatsoever is mine, for I am not the body-mind complex and am just unattached pure consciousness. King Janaka, according to the *Mahābhārata*, averred, ‘My wealth is indeed unlimited; I have nothing.’ I too have nothing and yet have everything. As far as your offer is concerned, I fully appreciate your sentiment and your deep devotion to and concern for me. Please give up the idea of gifting it to me. You could give it to the *Maṭha* instead.” Limbekar told His

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Holiness, “I am blessed to have heard Your Holiness say all this. I shall donate it to the *Maṭha*. Having seen how Your Holiness heads the *Maṭha*, I know that Your Holiness will manage and develop this as if it belonged to Your Holiness.” I learnt of this from His Holiness in 1985.





## CHAPTER 16

# He Graced All

Ever so many people came to His Holiness for blessings, guidance and succour. These included those who were ailing and wanted Him to relieve them of their



Ever so many people came to His Holiness for blessings, guidance and succour. These included those who were ailing and wanted Him to relieve them of their suffering, those faced with difficulties for which they sought His guidance and sacred intervention, people desirous of progressing in the spiritual path and even those who were enlightened. His Holiness dealt with each and every one in an appropriate manner.



suffering, those faced with difficulties for which they sought His guidance and sacred intervention, people desirous of progressing in the spiritual path and even those who were enlightened. His Holiness dealt with each and every one in an appropriate manner.

His Holiness accorded high priority to spiritual aspirants. An Italian came to Sringeri in November 1974, hoping to receive some clarifications regarding Gauḍapādācārya's *Kārikās* on the *Māṇḍūkya-upaniṣad*. However, His Holiness was rather busy at that time; He was to accomplish 'śiṣya-svīkāra (initiating a disciple into *saṁnyāsa* and nominating him as His successor-designate)' on 11<sup>th</sup> November. Hence, it was felt that it would be impossible for the foreign aspirant to have a private audience with His Holiness. Yet, when he made a request to





His Holiness, He readily consented to spare time for him and, with Sri Subbaramaiya acting as an interpreter, answered his questions and resolved his doubts. On being asked about this, His Holiness said, "He is sincere and has come all the way to India to learn. It is my duty to provide him clarifications and, hence, obligatory on me to spare time for him."

On another occasion, three *brahmacārins* from North India came to Sringeri to have His Holiness's *darśana* and obtain spiritual guidance and blessings for their spiritual progress from Him. It was around 6.40 in the evening when they reached Narasimhavana. As His Holiness had finished granting audience that evening and was

to proceed for His evening bath in a few minutes, His attendant was hesitant to inform Him about their arrival. His Holiness, however, specifically asked him, "Has anybody come for *darśana* now?" The attendant answered in the affirmative. "Usher them in," ordered His Holiness. Accordingly, the *brahmacārins* were led upstairs to the presence of His Holiness. They prostrated before Him. He gestured to them to sit down. After asking them, in Hindi, where they were from, He asked them the purpose of their visit. They said that they were interested in progressing in the spiritual path and reverentially posed their questions. His Holiness began His reply in right earnest. Since He chose to give elaborate answers, it was around 7.15 p.m. before the first of their major questions was dealt with. As was his duty, the attendant came and informed His Holiness the time, by way of indicating that it was getting late for His Holiness (who, after His evening bath and *āhnikā* normally commenced His *Candramaulīśvara-pūjā* in public around 8 p.m.). His Holiness continued as if no interruption had taken place. The spiritual question-and-answer session progressed, with both the enquirers and His Holiness fully engrossed in it. Time passed on and at 8 p.m., the attendant again made his appearance, only to be waved off. It was around 9 p.m. before

"How sincere these *brahmacārins* are! It is delightful to be of some help to them. It does not matter however much my bath is delayed. Their requirements deserve top priority."

- His Holiness

His Holiness finished answering all their questions. He then gave them His complete blessings and *prasāda*. They were visibly overjoyed and expressed their gratitude. They left spiritually charged, with joyful hearts and fond memories. I was present during the discussion and, in the middle of it, His Holiness had turned to me and said, “How sincere they are! It is delightful to be of some help to them. It does not matter however much my bath is delayed. Their requirements deserve top priority.”

One day, His Holiness was not keeping well and *darśana* had been highly restricted. A spiritual aspirant in his twenties had travelled a long distance to see His Holiness and was to leave the next day. When I made known the matter to His Holiness, He instructed me to call him in. Unmindful of the strain, He patiently heard the aspirant thoroughly and then gave him valuable spiritual advice.

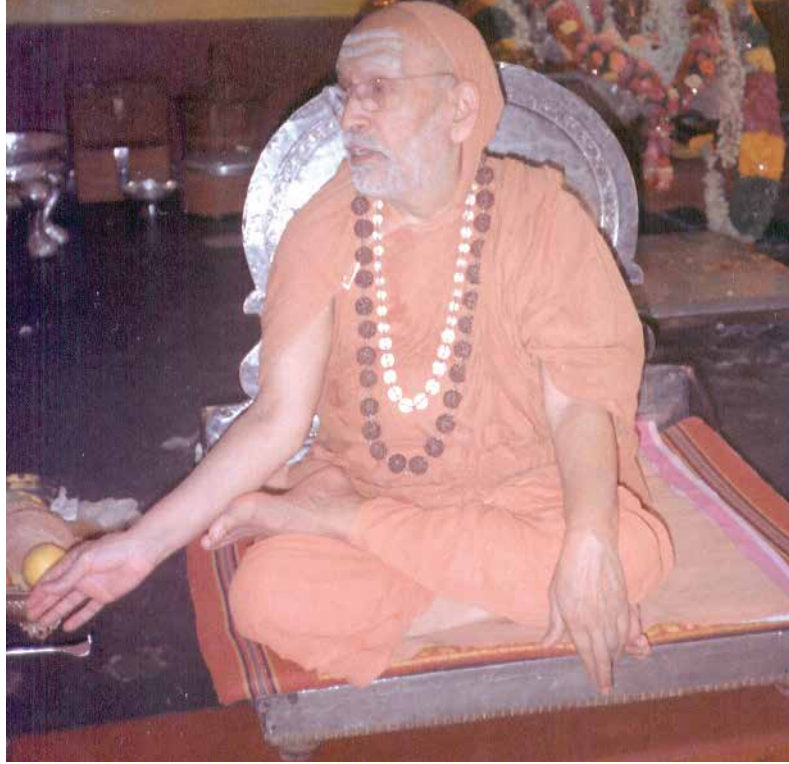
His Holiness told me the following in 1987:

“When I was about twenty years of age, two *Bairāgīs*, who lived on the banks of the Narmadā in Madhya Pradesh, came to Sringeri. They wanted to have my *Guru’s darśana* and seek some clarifications from Him. As He was in seclusion at that time, they were unable to approach Him. They met me. One of them looked weak and somewhat effeminate, while the other had powerful muscles and resembled a wrestler.

“In the course of his conversation with me, the first one hesitatingly said, ‘I have been leading a life of renunciation but am not free from sexual desire. While I never misbehaved with any woman, bad thoughts troubled me off and on. This was the situation till a few months ago, when I met a *Bābā* and posed my problem to him. He gave me a large packet of medicinal powder and said that if I consumed a little of it every day, I would obtain relief. I have been sincerely following his advice. My desires have largely vanished. I think that I have gained a great spiritual benefit. However, my muscular strength has come down and my chest has become a little like that of a female. My companion is in need of help to deal with lust. He is hesitant to take the *Bābā’s* medicine because he fears that his muscles will become weak. He wanted to ask *Guruji* whether in the interest of spiritual growth, he should overcome his hesitation and resort to the medicine. I wanted to ask *Guruji* if I should continue with this medicine or whether *Guruji* would give me some other medicine without the side effects. We have, however, not had the good fortune of being able to talk to Him. Would you like to keep and use some of the medicine that I have? I can replenish my stock from the *Bābā* who gave it to me.’ I declined his offer.

“The second person asked me, ‘You are young. Are you not troubled by sexual thoughts?’ I answered that I was not. At this, both of them asked, almost in unison, ‘Will You please

help us and tell us what we should do?’ I answered, ‘Do not use the medicine. You cannot gain any spiritual benefit by checking the sexual instinct through it. Kings employed eunuchs in their harems because they were confident that the eunuchs would not be tempted and misbehave with the women. However, none regards those eunuchs as great celibates. None deems that they became spiritually great on account of castration. On the other hand, all of us regard sage Śuka as established in continence and as spiritually great. His body



was intact but he was so free from desire that even damsels in the nude did not care to cover themselves when he passed by them. A dumb person cannot utter a lie but because of that he is not looked upon as one who never lies. A person who is unconscious is not revered as a *yogin* just because he is free from all thoughts of the world. Incapacity

does not confer spiritual benefit. The medicine with you temporarily and partially renders you equivalent to a eunuch. It is, as far as gaining spiritual benefit is concerned, no better than castration. I shall provide you a medicine that will enable you to be rid of lust and to gain spiritual benefit.’



Just as desire is bad for the mind, so is hatred. Both likes and dislikes are impurities that agitate the mind. The scriptures speak of seeing the defects in an object just to neutralise a pre-existing attachment born of the notion that the object is pleasurable. The aim is definitely not to generate hatred.



“I asked them to go to Śāradāmbā’s temple, spend half an hour gazing at Her with devotion and to pray to Her with faith to rid them of lust. They returned after half an hour. I told them, ‘In the *Durgā-saptasatī* it is said that all women are the Divine Mother’s forms. Whenever you are tempted by the sight of a woman or think of a female with desire, immediately think of the gracious Divine Mother. Feel that it is She who is in the form of all women. Also implore Her now and then from the bottom of your heart to free you from lust.’

‘Need not contempt for women be cultivated to combat lust?’ asked the muscular *Bairāgī*. I replied: ‘No. Just as desire is bad for your mind, so is hatred. Both likes and dislikes are impurities that agitate the mind. The scriptures speak of seeing the defects in an object just to neutralise a pre-existing attachment born of the notion that the object is pleasurable. The aim is definitely not to generate hatred. Śuka certainly did not hate or look down upon any woman. He looked upon everything as the Supreme Brahman.’ The *Bairāgīs* left Sringeri shortly thereafter.



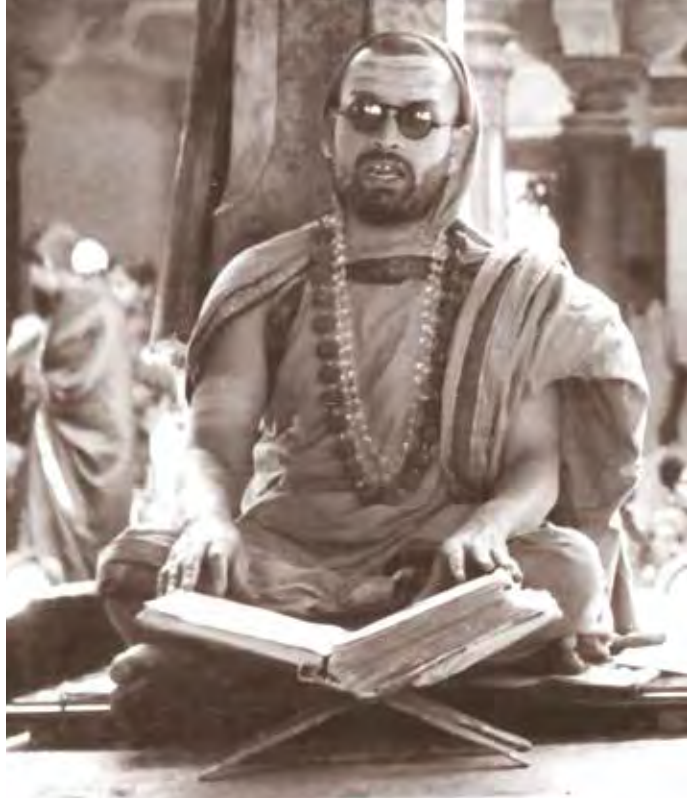
“They returned after about a year. This time, both of them looked healthy and muscular. On seeing me, they joyfully said, ‘Swamiji, your ‘medicine’ is very effective and has no side effects.’ I clarified that Śāradāmbā’s grace and their dedicated efforts were what had cured them. During this trip, they had the great good fortune of getting my *Guru’s darśana* and blessings.”

In the year 1984, His Holiness was scheduled to leave Sringeri for Kalady via Bengaluru. A *brahmacārin* from Rishikesh came a little after noon for His Holiness’s *darśana*. His Holiness had already left for His afternoon bath. The *brahmacārin* told me, “I have seven questions pertaining to *Yoga* and *Vedānta* which I wish to pose to His Holiness. They are very important to me. I contacted numerous scholars, practitioners of *Yoga* and *saṁnyāsins* at Rishikesh, Uttarkashi, Haridwar and Kashi but none was able to satisfy me. A scholar at Kashi directed me to Sringeri, saying, ‘If the *Jagadguru* of Sringeri cannot satisfactorily answer you then there is none in the world who can.’ That is why I have come most eagerly to Sringeri.”

I told him, “His Holiness will be starting on a tour today. If you wait here, you can have His *darśana* just prior to His departure. However, there is no time today for you to have a lengthy private session with Him.” He said, “I will gladly wait to behold Him even if it be for just a moment.” He then told me one of the questions that he had in mind and requested me to tell His Holiness about him. I fulfilled his request shortly after His Holiness completed partaking of His *bhikṣā* (meal).



When I submitted the information conveyed by the *brahmacārin* to His Holiness, He responded, “The question that he conveyed to you is good and pertinent. As there is no time to spare today, he could, if he wishes, meet me at Bengaluru and pose his queries to me there. If I happen to know the answers, I shall tell him. Else, I shall readily admit that I am not in a position to help him.” In about half an hour, His Holiness came out to the front portico of Sacchidananda Vilas. Some devotees, inclusive of the *brahmacārin*, were there.



The *brahmacārin* prostrated before His Holiness. His Holiness looked at him with compassion, raised His right hand in a gesture of blessing and said, in Hindi, “May you be happy.” He then moved on. I quickly conveyed to him what His Holiness had told me. Almost before I finished, he said, “The answers to all my questions became fully known to me when His Holiness blessed me.” In the car, of His own accord, His Holiness informed me, “When I saw that *brahmacārin*, I was struck with his sincerity.


Hence, I requested Śāradāmbā, ‘Please provide him the answers he desires straightaway.’ The kind of sincerity that this spiritual aspirant has deserves to be rewarded.” When I submitted to His Holiness what the *brahmacārin* had said, His Holiness joined His palms and said, “Śāradāmbā is so gracious.”

“When I saw that *brahmacārin*, I was struck with his sincerity. So, I requested Śāradāmbā, ‘Please provide him the answers he desires straightaway.’ The kind of sincerity that this spiritual aspirant has deserves to be rewarded.”


- His Holiness

His Holiness’s spiritual advices were not only unfailingly lucid and effective but also specific to the individuals who sought His guidance. A *sādhaka*, practitioner of spiritual disciplines, once came to His Holiness and said, “I experience acute breathlessness during meditation. As I begin concentrating, my breathing rate gradually decreases and soon respiration stops. Good focus of the mind accrues

but in a matter of moments, I feel suffocated. What am I to do?” His Holiness replied, “You are aware that control of breath and regulation of the mind are related. Hence, you make an involuntary effort to still your breath to improve your meditation. Your *dhyāna* is, however, not deep enough to warrant almost no breathing. To rid yourself of the problem of gasping for air, forcefully take a deep breath. Above all, ensure that you make no voluntary effort to alter the breathing pattern. Just pay attention to fixing the mind on the object of mediation. That is quite sufficient for you and you do not have to resort to any independent steps to lower your respiratory rate.” The person implemented His advice and found that his problem disappeared and his meditation improved.



His Holiness’s spiritual advices were not only unfailingly lucid and effective but also specific to the individuals who sought His guidance.



Another *sādhaka* asked His Holiness, “As I meditate, the Lord’s form becomes increasingly clear. Saliva secretion appears to wax and I am forced to swallow. Since this occurs every few minutes, it is quite a hindrance. What should I do?” His Holiness said, “In your case, folding the tongue such that its tip is turned towards the gullet and rests lightly on the upper palate will be helpful. Secondly, do not consciously or semiconsciously anticipate the necessity to swallow.” On the first day, the *sādhaka* found the folding of the tongue somewhat inconvenient but got used to it from the next day. The need to repeatedly swallow started decreasing and, in less than a week, ceased.

Another *sādhaka* asked, “I experience sharp bodily jerks during my meditation. What is the remedy?” In some cases, His Holiness identified such movements with the arousal of the *Kuṇḍalinī* but in the present case, He clarified, “You are not strong. Eat well and take some physical exercise. The jerks shall not bother you.” The person acted as advised and did find relief.

A young man approached His Holiness and reported, “I find my head feeling very heavy within a few minutes of my commencing my *dhyāna*. The uneasiness gives way to pain and I end up with an acute headache.” His Holiness’s reply surprised the questioner. He said, “The problem will automatically vanish in one week. Till then ensure that you do not even accidentally direct your gaze to the tip of your nose or to the middle of your eyebrows. Further, do not conjecture the form of your *Iṣṭa-devatā* (chosen deity) in the heart. Visualise it in front of you. You can resume your normal procedure after one week.” The specified period passed and the difficulty ceased to be.

A person approached Him and detailed his spiritual practices. His Holiness heard him out and then just advised him to be sincere, have full faith in God and appeal to the Lord to render him pure. After he left, He told me, “He expected me to give him advice about *ātma-vicāra* (enquiry into the Self) and *samādhi*. However, that would have been useless for him. I understood that his mind is full of lust and his behaviour in private sinful. God’s grace is what can transform him. That is why I asked him pray to God for purity of the mind.”

Once H. S. Suryanarayana asked His Holiness, “Where is Śiva? How will He appear?” His Holiness said, “Śiva is right here. He is in everyone; in you, in your wife, in your friend and in your servant. You don’t realise Him because of the delusion that you and the others exist separate from Him.”



His Holiness easily distinguished the enlightened from the unenlightened. A person who called himself Parabrahma arrived at Sringeri in 1956. He was untidy and had long uncut nails and a big beard. His Holiness spoke with him freely and made arrangements for his stay at the old guest house. Brahma observed no regulations and had no qualms about urinating or defecating anywhere in public. He partook of food from a Muslim’s

house. To all appearances, he was an eccentric, bordering on lunacy. His Holiness, however, recognised that He was enlightened. Ananda Rao, who was in charge of the old guesthouse, told his nephew, Venkatasubba Rao, about Brahma. When Venkatasubba Rao met Brahma and offered salutation, the latter said, in English, “Happy man.” “How about realization?” queried Venkatasubba Rao. “You will get it” said Brahma. “How?” persisted Venkatasubba Rao. To this, Brahma responded, “The mind will tell you.” Venkatasubba Rao reported this conversation to His Holiness. His Holiness remained silent and motionless for a while and then told him

“Śiva is right here. He is in everyone; in you, in your wife, in your friend and in your servant. You don’t realise Him because of the delusion that you and the others exist separate from Him.”

- His Holiness

with a tone of finality, “He is a *rāja-yogin* and has realized the Truth of *Vedānta*.” His Holiness soon left on His first tour but before that instructed the officials of the *Maṭha* to cater to Brahma’s requirements.

Much later, Brahma boarded a train one day. He had a proper train ticket with him and entered the appropriate compartment. Seeing his uncouth appearance, the ticket examiner took him to be ticketless and ordered him to alight. Brahma was defiant. In course of the argument that followed between him and the ticket examiner, he physically assaulted the latter. It was strange that Brahma did not show his valid ticket. The altercation with the Railway employee led to Brahma being handed over to the police



and then being produced in court. His giving answers such as, “Brahma has neither name nor action,” led the bewildered Judge to conclude that the defendant was insane. After examination by doctors, he was committed to a lunatic asylum. He chose to spend years there though his disciples wanted to get him out. Their endeavour would have fructified had he cooperated. He, however told them, “Your work is outside and mine is here.” Some months after he was discharged, he died. Speaking of him, His Holiness remarked “He was a *jñānin* but few understood his ways and so he spent time inside a lunatic asylum rather than outside it.”

A *brahmacārin* who was given to meditation stayed for some days at Sringeri. His Holiness freely granted him interviews and provided him suitable facilities to carry out his meditative practices. After he went back from Sringeri, His Holiness told me that the *brahmacārin* had meditated well and praised him. He then took me to the place where he had meditated, pointed out the spot where he had sat and mentioned the direction he had faced. His Holiness then demonstrated the posture that he had adopted. The *brahmacārin* had not given any of these details to Him; on the contrary, towards the close of his stay, he had asserted to me that His Holiness must be unaware of where and how he had practised meditation in Sringeri.

About His mode of answering queries, His Holiness has told me, "I often give a solution based on personal experience. As I have tried out numerous methods when I was young, I usually do not have any difficulty in appreciating the conditions described by the *sādhakas*. Sometimes, after giving the questions a thorough hearing and getting additional necessary clarifications from the questioner, I try out what he practises. I then use the resulting experience to shape my reply. On some other occasions, I just feel like prescribing a particular course of action and so do it. I generally do not find it necessary to quiz disciples before giving them suggestions. It is only God's grace that makes the answers helpful to the seekers."



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- His Holiness



I have beheld His Holiness trying out what had been described to Him. In May 1974, I once asked His Holiness whether the transition to *nirvikalpa-samādhi* during meditation could be effected by merely stilling the mind. He answered in the negative and then said, "Let us try it out. You try to go rapidly into *nirvikalpa-samādhi* by stilling your mind and I too shall do the same." We sat face to face with one another. After about 45 minutes, I gradually opened my eyes, only to find Him doing the same. He had maintained perfect rapport with me and had duplicated my every move; this was unmistakable from the conversation that followed.

His Holiness: Narrate one step of what you did and I shall state the next.

I: I fixed my gaze between my eyebrows.

His Holiness: Today, a light green hue manifested there.

I: Yes. I then started stilling my mind.

His Holiness: The hue vanished and an expanse was perceived.

I: Yes. The mind then became progressively calm.

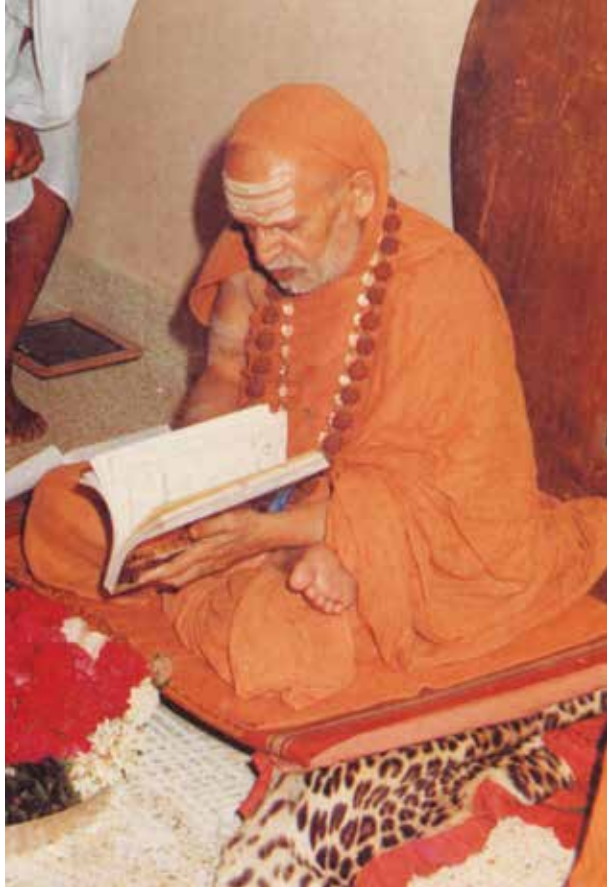
His Holiness: Suddenly, you were transported into *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. It thus appears that no fixation of the mind on the *Ātman* was required. Is it not so?

I: Yes.

His Holiness: Actually, just prior to the transition you had, by force of habit, fixed your mind on the *Ātman*. Still your mind this evening as you did now but pull yourself out of meditation just before you plunge into *nirvikalpa-samādhī*. Tell me later what happened.

At 8:00 a.m. the next day, when I went to prostrate before Him as usual, He, who had just finished a *japa*, looked up and asked, “Did you try it?” I replied that I did and found that what His Holiness had said was perfectly valid. With a smile, His Holiness remarked, “For the sake of confirmation, I too tried out this morning what I had told you to do and noted exactly what I had observed yesterday.”

On many occasions, His Holiness spontaneously said something that put a disciple’s doubts to rest even before the disciple posed any question to Him. In 1983, with the blessings of His Holiness, I was translating into English the ‘*Yoga-sudhākara*’, Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra’s gloss on Sage Patañjali’s *Yoga-sūtras*. The great *yogin* had, in his gloss, cited a verse, the meaning of which is, “Having dissolved *Prakṛti* in its entirety in a sequence which is the reverse of that of its origination, one must contemplate on the residual entity, which is pure existence, consciousness and bliss.” I wished to have His Holiness’s clarification regarding this. That evening, He was seated on a rock in a coconut grove in the Shankara Math at Bengaluru and I sat near Him on the ground. No one else was present there. Not wanting to disturb Him, I did not pose my doubt to Him. He closed His eyes for a while and then melodiously chanted a verse of Bhagavatpāda’s *Brahmānucintana*. That verse means, “*Pr̥thvī* (earth) should be dissolved in *āpas* (water), *āpas* in *tejas* (fire), *tejas* in *vāyu* (air) and *vāyu* in *ākāśa* (space). *Ākāśa* should be merged into *avyakta* (the subtlest material cause); *avyakta*, in its turn, must be merged in the pure Absolute (*Brahman*). I am the Absolute, the dissolver of all.” I was delighted to note that His Holiness had taken up a verse that



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paralleled the verse that I had in mind. Of His own accord, He began to expound the import of what He had cited. He said, “One starts with something gross, say *pṛthvī* (earth). Then one analyses, ‘*Pṛthvī* has no existence apart from its material cause, *āpas* (water), just as a pot has no existence apart from its cause, mud.’ This is the ‘dissolution’ of *pṛthvī* in *āpas*. One proceeds in a similar manner till one reaches *avyakta*. One then reflects, ‘This too has no existence apart from the *Ātman*, just a snake that is misapprehended in the place of a rope has no existence apart from its substratum, the rope.’ This is the intended merging of *avyakta* into the Supreme. Finally, only the Supreme remains. There is no question of dissolving It in anything and one meditates that one is this *Ātman*.”

By His Holiness’s spontaneous citation and exposition, He fully clarified what I had wished to know from Him. Four years later, in a benedictory address delivered by His Holiness, in Kannada, at the Shankara Math in Bengaluru on 5<sup>th</sup> September 1987, His Holiness recounted that when He was young His *Guru* had referred to a verse in Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra’s *Ātma-vidyā-vilāsa* the meaning of which is, “After dissolving, by means of the intellect, the five great elements (earth, water, fire, air and space) in an order that is the reverse of that of their origination, the sage remains calm, beholding the *Ātman*, which is the residue.” Thereafter, His *Guru* had elucidated its import by citing the above-mentioned verse of Bhagavatpāda’s *Brahmānucintana*. It was on hearing this benedictory address of His Holiness that I joyfully realised the correspondence between what His Holiness had told me and what His *Guru* had told Him.



His Holiness could intuitively foresee how things would unfold.

His Holiness could intuitively foresee how things would unfold. A *sādhaka* progressed rapidly by His Holiness’s grace and attained the stage of *savikalpa-samādhī*. Subsequently, he told me that he felt as if nothing was apart from him and that he felt extremely joyful. Till then he had been engaging only in *saguṇa-dhyāna*. I later conveyed the details

to His Holiness when He was strolling in the fields of Kage Hindlu in Sringeri. He patiently heard me but said nothing and just walked on. Presuming that I had not expressed myself clearly and wanting to ascertain His Holiness's assessment of the situation so as to duly convey it to the person concerned, I asked Him, "Is he now fit to be taught *nirguṇa-dhyāna* by Your Holiness?" "No," replied His Holiness with an unexpected emphasis. "Let him continue with the meditation that he is doing. His present state is just temporary. If he is not careful, a fall awaits him." I could not understand why His Holiness's judgment was so uncomplimentary. As it happened, the *sādhaka* failed to be careful about a certain matter and suffered a major spiritual setback.

It is possible for a *Guru* to raise the spiritual stature of his disciple by the force of his *tapas* and the *śakti*



It is possible for a *Guru* to raise the spiritual stature of his disciple by the force of his *tapas* and the *śakti* imparted by him during initiation. The *Śāstras* in general and *Tantra* texts in particular speak of various forms of *dīkṣā* (initiation), such as *sparsā-dīkṣā* (initiation through touch).

His Holiness normally confined Himself to giving *mantra-dīkṣā* though He occasionally imparted *sparsā* or another form of *dīkṣā*.



imparted by him during initiation. The *Śāstras* in general and *Tantra* texts in particular speak of various forms of *dīkṣā* (initiation), such as *sparsā-dīkṣā* (initiation through touch). His Holiness normally confined Himself to giving *mantra-dīkṣā* though He occasionally imparted *sparsā* or another form of *dīkṣā*. Before initiating a disciple into a *mantra*, He usually decided what *mantra* would be most appropriate for a disciple; in doing so, He took into consideration the deity (such as Śiva or Viṣṇu) to whom the disciple had particular fondness. At times, He readily initiated a devotee who requested Him for it; sometimes, in response to a request, He said that He would consider the matter later and, on some later date, gave the initiation on His own.







It was in March 1971 at Chennai that I spoke to Him for the first time, and my first words to Him were a request for *mantra-upadeśa*. My request took me by surprise; earlier, I had no intention of even going for His *darśana*, being under the impression that no intermediary is required between God and a person and hence, a *Guru* is superfluous. What was more surprising was that He straightaway consented and blessed me with initiation the next morning, after His *āhnikā*. Equally surprising was that when, in 1982, I mentioned that some *brahmacārins* were desirous of *mantra-upadeśa*, He said, “Just bring who all you would like to and I will initiate them.”

The following was narrated by Vaidyasubramanya Iyer.

“In 1958, I invited His Holiness to my house in Madurai for *pādapūjā* and *bhikṣā*. He readily consented. Subsequently, when I requested His Holiness for *mantra-upadeśa* (initiation into a *mantra*), He said, ‘We shall see later.’ Later, when, in response to my request, He camped at Tenkarai, He asked me, ‘Have you been initiated into any *mantra*?’ I replied that I had been initiated into the *Gāyatrī-mantra* at the time of my *upanayana*. His Holiness smiled and remarked, ‘When I ask this question, people do not, in their replies, mention their having been initiated into the *Gāyatrī-mantra*.’ On that day, He graced me with *mantra-upadeśa*.”

At times, even in the absence of any request, His Holiness conferred initiation on a devotee on His own; sometimes, He obliged a devotee with an initiation into the specific *mantra* asked for by the devotee; at times, even when a devotee mentioned his *Iṣṭa-devatā*, He chose to initiate him into the *mantra* of some other deity. There have been instances where He did not give initiation even to a close devotee who craved for and even repeatedly pleaded for it. He was the best judge for, it was He who knew what was in the best interests of His disciple.

B. L. Subbaraya Murthy was dear to His Holiness and drove His car on several of His tours. His wife, Kamalamma Subbaraya Murthy, desired that she be blessed by His Holiness with initiation into the *Bālā-tripurasundarī-mantra*. However, she did not express her wish to anybody. Once, when she had the *darśana* of His Holiness just after He had finished bathing in the Gaṅgā at Haridwar, His Holiness told her, “I will give you

*mantropadeśa* tomorrow.” When she went with her husband to His presence the next day, He asked her, “Which *mantra* would you like me to initiate you into?” She had not expected that He would ask her this. Becoming nervous, she mumbled, “I will be happy to receive any *mantra* that Your Holiness blesses me with.” His Holiness said, “I shall initiate you into the *Bālā-tripurasundarī-mantra*.” Overjoyed, she told Him, “Your Holiness is blessing me with the very *mantra* that I had secretly longed for.”

A disciple, Jagannadhan (who, after *saṁnyasa*, was known as Śrī Śāntānanda-bhāratī), was improperly repeating the *Subrahmaṇya-ṣaḍākṣarī-mantra* and that too without due initiation. He approached His Holiness for *mantra-upadeśa* and His Holiness readily consented to bless him with the same. Embarrassment precluded the disciple from revealing his flawed practice. At the time of initiation, he was in for a surprise when His Holiness, of His own accord, began initiating him into the *Subrahmaṇya-ṣaḍākṣarī-mantra*. By doing so, His Holiness set right the lacuna in His disciple’s practice.

His Holiness generally gave *mantra-upadeśa* only in person though there were some exceptions. A devotee had a dream of His Holiness initiating him into a *mantra*. Unfortunately, on waking up, he forgot what he had been



*Mantropadeśa during solar eclipse at Rameswaram*

initiated into. He wrote a letter to His Holiness about this. His Holiness directed His Private Secretary to reply that the *mantra* was ‘*klīm kṛṣṇa klīm*’; through that letter, He also specified in what manner and how many times the disciple should perform the *mantra-japa*.

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willingly gave clarifications about it when asked. For instance, a knowledgeable lady approached Him in Chennai (in January 1982) and requested Him to explain the *dhyāna-śloka* of a particular *mantra*. His Holiness closed His eyes and gave such a lucid description that it seemed to her that He was seeing a form in front of Him and describing it. She remarked that His Holiness's description was so wonderful that she could readily conceive the form. His Holiness admitted, "I did not mechanically translate the *dhyāna-śloka*, for that would not have been of much use to you. I visualised the form spoken of in the verse. I focused my attention on a portion of the divine form, described what I was apprehending and thereafter moved on to another portion. That is why I spoke slowly."

I know for fact that His Holiness could easily give an experience of *samādhi* even to an ordinary person without spiritual training. He, however, did not normally do so. He opined that unless a proper foundation is laid, abrupt elevation of the spiritual stature of a person through *śakti-pāta*, the imparting of spiritual power by a *Guru*, can have adverse consequences. He has said, "If you attempt to confer a sudden impetus to the spiritual life of one who is not ready for it, problems can arise. The will-power and *śakti* of the giver can hold the mind of another in check and even bring it to a sharp focus. The effect is not permanent. The recipient will initially experience the great bliss of deep meditation but will not be in a position to repeatedly attain it because of his mind not being adequately pure and on account of the techniques of meditation not having been duly mastered. So long as the circumstances are alright, spiritual progress can continue but if adverse destiny intervenes by introducing impediments, there are chances of a fall. This is because such distracting and inhibiting influences prevent the smooth practice of spiritual



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disciplines. This makes meditation difficult and induces a certain degree of frustration. Base desires that had been pushed into the background on account of *śakti-pāta* and held in partial abeyance by spiritual endeavour, raise their heads. An internal struggle ensues and if conditions do not become adequately favourable, the situation takes a turn for the worse. Meditation suffers and the consequent check on the lower



instincts becomes weakened. Frustration is enhanced and this is particularly engendered by the non-fulfilment of the urge to regain the bliss experienced in the meditation induced by the *śakti-pāta*. Hence, *śakti-pāta* is a tool that should be carefully handled. For my part, I feel that it is apt to uplift an aspirant step by step and ensure smooth progress. If this is done, as the foundation is strong, the superstructure will not crumble.”

Even Maharajas sought His Holiness’s guidance on material and spiritual matters.

Even Maharajas sought His Holiness’s guidance on material and spiritual matters. Two letters to Him from Jayachamaraja Wodeyar, who ruled the Princely State of Mysore from 1940 to 1947 and, later, was the Governor of Mysore (now Karnataka) and then the Governor of Madras (now Tamil Nadu), serve as illustrations. The following is an English translation of his letter in Kannada dated 6<sup>th</sup> August, 1964 and penned in Mysuru:

☆☆☆

Humble prostrations to the exquisite lotus feet of Śrī Sringeri Jagadguru, Śrīmad Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin by me, who am a recipient of Your Holiness’s grace.

*Mahāsvāmin!* If it be Your Holiness’s will, please consider and plainly advise me what I should do in the future – whether I should stay on in Madras (as Governor) or go abroad (to a western country) and work or enter politics. Of these options, which one does Your Holiness advice?

...I am sending this missive through A. G. Ramachandra Rao in a confidential manner. It would be sufficient if Your Holiness were to convey Your Holiness’s opinion through

him. Though I do not wish to trouble Your Holiness, I am compelled to write this letter as I have no other option.

The extremely obedient server of Your Holiness's feet,

Sd/- Jayachamaraja Wodeyar,

My humble prostrations.

☆☆☆

The following is an English translation of the letter written in Kannada from Mysore by Jayachamaraja Wodeyar on 26<sup>th</sup> December, 1963:

☆☆☆

Having offered prostrations, Your Holiness's dear disciple, the server of the *Guru*, the king Jayachamaraja Wodeyar, submits as follows:



By the grace of the lotus feet of Your Holiness, I am well till today, Wednesday, the *puṣya-śukla-dasamī* of the (cyclical) year *Śobhakṛt*. May the glorious *Guru*, ever remaining in the kingdom of *tapas*, kindly grace this missive with benedictions.

I am bearing on my head the *Śrīmukha* graced by Your Holiness. The *nyāsa* of the *ṣoḍaśākṣarī-mantra* graced by Your Holiness reached me and caused horripilation in me. I desire to hear about the *Mahāvākyas* in the direct presence of Your Holiness. I yearn to come to Your Holiness for this purpose and receive blessings in person.

Praying that Your Holiness's blessing may ever be on me, with repeated prostrations,

Sd/- Jayachamaraja Wodeyar.

☆☆☆

His Holiness went out of the way to make Himself accessible to devotees. Once, a poor lady from North India came to Sringeri to have His *darśana*. She had saved up for a long time in order to be able to make



the trip. She was in a position to stay in Sringeri only for a few days and it was quite uncertain when she would be able to come again. Till she left, His Holiness chose to give *darśana* for a longer time in the evenings than usual, sitting casually on the floor in the front hall of Sacchidananda Vilas. Devotees were able to see Him at close quarters. For the period that she stayed at Sringeri, the lady was present during His evening *darśana*, right from the time He came and sat down to the time He got up and went in. She sat with joined palms throughout, with her attention just on Him and, now and then, wiping her tears of joy. She seemed to be fully contented with just silently savouring His holy presence; she went up to Him and spoke to Him only on two days and that too, briefly. Since His Holiness did not tell anyone why He was giving *darśana* for an extended period and that too quite informally, it is possible that the lady took this to be the norm. Many benefitted from the special, extended *darśana*.

One morning, His Holiness oddly chose to give *tīrtha-prasāda* while standing in the middle of the front hall of Sacchidananda Vilas, rather than while seated in the hall's southwest corner, as He normally did. The vessel containing the *tīrtha* (holy water) was placed on a stool. From His position that day, the road from the Private Secretary's office to Sacchidananda Vilas was in His line of sight. As the distribution of *tīrtha* drew to a close,

He beheld a lame man striving to come as quickly as he could on that road, heading towards Sacchidananda Vilas; apparently, he was coming to have *darśana* and receive *tīrtha* but, as he was slow, was afraid that the distribution might end before he reached. He had some more distance to cover on the road and to then climb two flights of stairs to reach His Holiness. His Holiness called out to Him and told him to stay where he was. Asking His attendant to follow Him with the vessel containing the *tīrtha*, He rapidly descended the two flights of stairs and approached him. He conversed with him for a few minutes. Thereafter, He tenderly gave him *tīrtha-prasāda*. Tears of joy flowed from his eyes as the holy water entered his mouth.

A poor devotee was keen on inviting His Holiness to his house and performing *pādapūjā*. The *Maṭha* staff

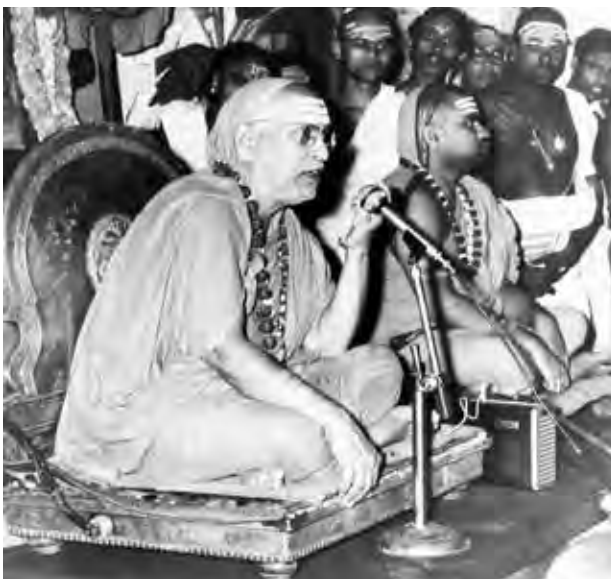
His Holiness went out of the way to make Himself accessible to devotees. Devotees were able to see Him at close quarters.

told him that for that he needed to remit Rs. 250. He did not have the amount and, hence, dropped his plan. When His Holiness went to a house near his for *pādapūjā*, he came there and stood in a corner looking at Him. His Holiness noticed Him and beckoned to him. He then asked him, “What is troubling you?” The man poured forth his tale of woe. His Holiness cheered him up and told him to go to his house and be ready. When the *pādapūjā* and distribution of *prasāda* were completed, His Holiness informed His staff that He proposed to go to the poor man’s house. He went there and instructed that arrangements be made for him to perform *pādapūjā*. After he completed the *pādapūjā*, His Holiness gave Him *prasāda* and blessed him. He asked His Private Secretary to handover Rs. 250 to the man and left. Thus, His Holiness fully fulfilled the man’s desire, saw to it that he did not have to spend anything and, apart from giving him His invaluable blessings also helped him monetarily.

On an occasion, a poor *purohita* (priest) requested His Holiness to grace his house and His Holiness consented to visit his place. Subsequently, it was found that His Holiness’s car could not pass through the narrow lane in which the man’s house was situated. It was suggested to His Holiness to drop the trip. However, His Holiness stood His ground. He got down from the car, walked a considerable distance unmindful of the scorching sun and reached the devotee’s place.

The following was narrated by Smt. Susheela of Erode.

“Once, when His Holiness was camping at Salem, I went for His *darśana*. He made compassionate enquiries about our family business which was then going through a



rough patch. When I reported that we had to sell our house and move to a rented one, His Holiness consoled me. I then made a humble submission to Him: ‘I understand that Your Holiness’s next camp is at Coimbatore and that there would be no camp at Erode this time. If your Holiness passes through Erode without visiting our house, my grief will be uncontrollable. I would like the sacred dust of Your Holiness’s feet to touch my house.’ As I made this prayer, I burst into tears. His Holiness said, ‘Do not worry. That will happen.’

On His way to Coimbatore, His Holiness's car entered the colony where our rented house was situated. When the car stopped in front of our compound gate, His Holiness got out of the car, removed His *pādukās* and started walking barefoot. I was worried as to why His Holiness had to remove His *pādukās*, as the place was full of sand and sharp stones. His Holiness walked slowly and, on His entering the house, I could find the dust from His feet forming footmarks on the floor! He then looked at me with His characteristic smile and said, 'See, I have come. Are you happy now?' Only then did I realize that He had, in letter and spirit, fulfilled my request of gracing my house with the dust on His feet. Choked with emotion, I apologized, 'Just to get my wishes fulfilled, I have committed the sin of making Your Holiness walk on sharp stones.' His Holiness said, 'It was not a problem at all. I am quite used to such terrain.'"

As His Holiness's car was passing through a road in a city, He saw a beggar lying prostrate on the ground, convulsing sporadically. He ordered His driver to halt the car in order to attend to him. The driver said that beggars often put up a show of sickness to earn the sympathy of passers-by and get alms from them. His Holiness refused to budge and said, "Regardless of whether this man is genuine or not, I am going to help him." Hence, the driver halted the car. His Holiness observed that the man had stopped having fits. Without a moment's thought He picked up His water-

vessel and asked for the water to be given to him. In the meantime, another car stopped and its driver rushed with water to him before the vessel sent by His Holiness reached him. When His Holiness resumed His journey, He remarked, "How fortunate the other car's driver was to have been able to help him! I did not have the privilege of doing anything for him."

During His second All-India tour, He was proceeding towards Yamunotrī from Tehri on 19<sup>th</sup> June, 1982. He saw a car parked on the roadside. Sensing that the car might have







broken down, He stopped His vehicle. He then asked the couple occupying the parked car whether there was any problem. The husband replied that his car had stopped but requested His Holiness to carry on with His journey. His Holiness demurred. It was ascertained that the car had a damaged part and that a spare was available in another vehicle of His convoy. His Holiness readily parted with it to fix the problem. The couple was thankful to His Holiness for His timely help. Had His Holiness not come to their aid, they would have had to put up with considerable inconvenience, for it was getting dark, that was a hill section and the nearest habitation was far off.

I was once driving His Holiness from Narasimhapura back to Sacchidananda Vilas, via the Durgāmbā Temple. The road leading to the temple consisted

of many ups and downs and did not have an asphalt surface. At one point, the way was blocked by a bullock cart. The cart driver was coaxing his bullocks up a slope but the load coupled with excessive friction in the axle prevented the cart from moving up. The cart had a faulty axle and this led to the cart swerving sharply to the right when the bullocks put in additional efforts. On seeing His Holiness, the cart driver jumped down from his vehicle and stood reverentially. He then moved his cart to the edge of the road to enable His Holiness's car to pass. Since the road was narrow, the resulting clearance for the car was not much but, nonetheless, sufficient. His Holiness told me not to proceed and asked His attendant to lend a helping hand to the cart man, who, however, said that he would manage. He did not want His Holiness to wait because of Him. His Holiness, for His part, deemed that the man needed aid and so must be helped before proceeding. His Holiness's attendant and I got down from the car and pushed the cart, while the cart driver egged the bullocks on. His Holiness was unwell and so was observing the scene from His seat. He called out, "Do not push the cart from near the axle or from the back. Push the outer portion of the spokes and you shall get additional leverage. Alternatively, you can hold the rim of the wheel." Till then our struggles had been in vain but when we implemented His Holiness's suggestion we were glad to find that the cart started to inch its way up the slope. Soon, it ascended the slope and, thereafter, the bullocks were in a position to pull the faulty cart on their own. His Holiness asked me to slowly follow the



cart in His car till it reached its destination. On the way, He said, “It would have been most unfair and improper to have left the bullocks to struggle and this man to be stranded with his cartload. Had I not been unwell and weak, I would certainly have joined all of you in pushing the cart up the slope.”

When His Holiness was camping at Gobichettipalayam (in Tamil Nadu), while giving *tīrtha-prasāda* to the numerous devotees who were standing in a queue to receive it, He noticed an old lady standing near the entrance of the building and straining herself to have a glimpse of Him. Being aged and infirm, she was not in a position to stand in the queue for long to receive *tīrtha*. Also, she could not go near Him even to have *darśana* as the whole hall was packed with people. Discerning her difficulty, He got up from His *āsana* (seat) and, instructing two of His attendants to follow Him, one with fruits and the other with the vessel containing *tīrtha*, briskly walked to the old lady. He spoke to her, gave her *tīrtha*, filled the vessel she had brought with her and blessed her with fruits and *mantrākṣata* (sanctified rice mixed with turmeric powder). She repeatedly offered her salutations to

Him, shedding tears of joy. He returned to His seat and resumed giving *tīrtha* to those in the queue.

A devout couple visited Sringeri. The husband submitted to His Holiness, “We are very happy that we had the *darśana* of Your Holiness during the three days of our stay. As it has been raining heavily during the nights, the boatman refused to ferry us across the river at night and so we have not been able to witness Your Holiness perform the *Candramaulīśvara-pūjā*. As he ferried us during the day, we have had Your Holiness’s *darśana* in the mornings.” His Holiness heard them and then blessed them.



“It would have been most unfair and improper to have left the bullocks to struggle and this man to be stranded with his cartload. Had I not been unwell and weak, I would certainly have joined all of you in pushing the cart up the slope.”

- His Holiness





In the evening, a surprise awaited the couple. A car had been sent from Narasimhavana by His Holiness to take them there so that they could see His *pūjā* that night.

A tree uprooted by a gale fell across a road. Consequently, all vehicles plying on that route were forced to decelerate to a crawl and swerve to beyond the edge of the road in order to get past the obstruction. The car in which His Holiness was travelling had just crossed the tree when He told the person at the wheel to stop the vehicle. “If we move on, as many others before us have done, motorists will continue to be put to inconvenience at this spot. We should move the tree to the side of the road,” He declared. In deference to His command, His staff applied themselves

to the task of shifting the tree. Though unwell at that time, He did not remain a mute spectator. He gave suggestions and contributed physically too. In a short while, the road became unobstructed. The good deed done, He resumed His journey.

During His first tour of Andhra Pradesh in 1960, His Holiness had one day travelled for about an hour when He espied from afar, a partially overturned automobile lying off the road. Some motorists passed on without even slowing down. He had His car halted near the accident spot and rushed to the badly-damaged vehicle. He saw a motionless, blood-splattered man trapped within it. In a trice, He discerned that the mishap had occurred only minutes earlier and that the man was unconscious, not dead. He instructed a responsible employee to proceed speedily in a vehicle of His entourage to arrange for an ambulance. Those were not the days of mobile phones.

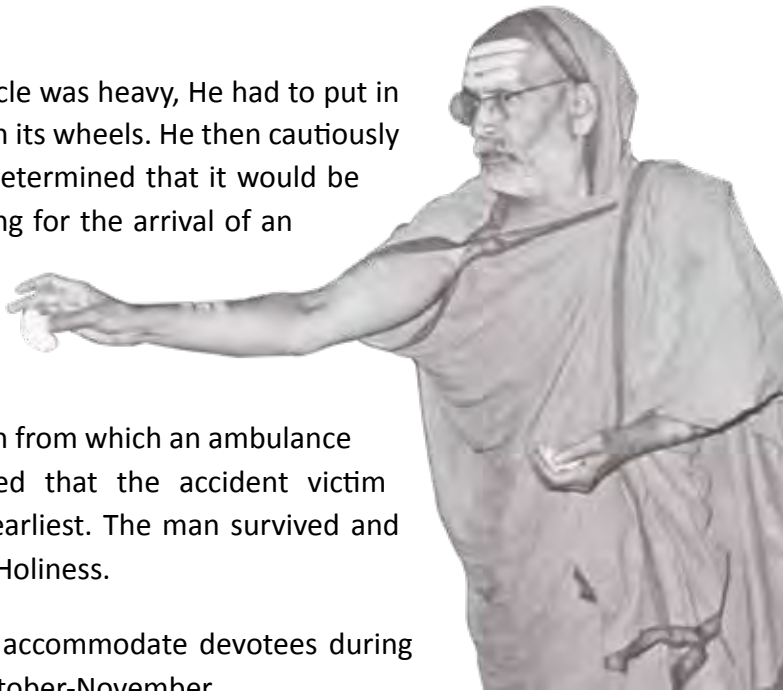
Having determined that the accident victim could be freed only after setting his car upright, He laboured, along with those who were with Him, to do the needful. He was then in His forties and His well-exercised muscles were firm and



A tree uprooted by a gale fell across a road. “If we move on, as many others before us have done, motorists will continue to be put to inconvenience at this spot. We should move the tree to the side of the road,” His Holiness declared. He gave suggestions and contributed physically too. The good deed done, He resumed His journey.



powerful. Nevertheless, as the vehicle was heavy, He had to put in much effort before it finally stood on its wheels. He then cautiously examined the wounded man and determined that it would be safe to extricate him without waiting for the arrival of an ambulance. Using an improvised stretcher, He gently transferred him to a spacious vehicle of the convoy and instructed the driver to proceed smoothly in the direction from which an ambulance was expected. His actions ensured that the accident victim received medical attention at the earliest. The man survived and recovered; he owed his life to His Holiness.



A big *pandal* had been erected to accommodate devotees during His Holiness's stay at Kolkata in October-November, 1982. A few days before His Holiness was to leave Kolkata, during one of His visits to the houses of devotees for *pādapūja*, the *pandal* at His camp caught fire due to bursting of crackers. The staff of the *Maṭha* and the volunteers at the camp site worked bravely to salvage as many items as possible from the *pandal* on fire. In the melee, some suffered burns and had to be administered first aid. One volunteer had to be hospitalized. When news about the fire was conveyed to Him, He returned to the camp-site, inspected the damage and gathered the details. He spoke with, blessed and gave *prasādas* to the mildly injured. After *bhikṣā*, He went to the hospital and spent time with the volunteer admitted there. He blessed him profusely, averred that he would be completely alright soon and gave him *prasāda*. Thereafter, He kept Himself fully informed about that volunteer's progress. He visited him again at the hospital before departing from Kolkata, blessed Him and asked him to come later to Sringeri. The volunteer was overwhelmed by His Holiness's kindness in visiting him not once but twice and specially blessing Him. He soon recovered completely and without complications.

The volunteer was overwhelmed by His Holiness's kindness in visiting him not once but twice and specially blessing Him.

During a visit to Coimbatore in the early 1970's, His Holiness was requested to deliver a benedictory address at a venue. He acquiesced. He noticed that the public address system that had been temporarily installed for His speech reproduced



sound faithfully. Always easily pleased, He publicly appreciated the efforts of the organisers. From His seat, He saw that loud speakers had been placed not only within the hall but also on the sides of the road. His keen power of observation led Him to discern that it would be possible to decouple the speakers outside the hall without difficulty.

He said, "Please disconnect the loud speakers on the road. It is sufficient and, in fact, appropriate that my speech be heard only here and not outside. This is because people who are interested are already seated inside. It is not right that people on the road be subjected to the nuisance of having a speech they

are not interested in dinned into their ears. Often, during marriages, loud speakers are connected in such a way that music blares into the ears of those on the road. They wonder, 'What a pain this function is!' Instead of receiving the good wishes of everyone,

the bride and the bridegroom unnecessarily earn the ill will of some whom they do not even know. Functions, be they weddings or ones such as this, ought not to cause noise pollution."

The organisers were easily able to implement what His Holiness had suggested; after all, He had already discerned that the external speakers could be readily decoupled. His consideration for the public and His keenness to avoid noise pollution, a problem that was largely overlooked in India in the early 70's, unlike now, are noteworthy.

A man who had served in the army came to have His Holiness's *darśana*. He was suffering from severe depression. He considered himself the cause of the gruesome death of hundreds of people and this was tormenting him no end. Belonging to a traditional Hindu family, he had learnt, by rote, the *Lakṣmī-nṛsimha-karāvalamba-stotra* and while entering His Holiness's room, he loudly chanted the

“Please disconnect the loud speakers on the road. It is sufficient and, in fact, appropriate that my speech be heard only here and not outside. This is because people who are interested are already seated inside. It is not right that people on the road be subjected to the nuisance of having a speech they are not interested in dinned into their ears.”

- His Holiness

*stotra*. His Holiness spoke to him compassionately. In response he lamented, “Swamiji, I have killed many people in cold blood. I have thus committed an unpardonable sin. I feel that I deserve to die now. Will there be any expiation for my acts?” When he finished his emotional outpouring, His Holiness did something unexpected. He placed both His hands on the person’s head and declared, “You will be alright. Do not worry.” The man was overjoyed at this unexpected blessing and left with peace of mind.



Quickrise to great eminence is known to be attended with an inflation of one’s ego. Nīlakaṇṭha-dīkṣita, a great devotee of Śiva and poet, has

written, “Regarding eulogies as factual descriptions, looking upon oneself as a god and looking down upon fellow human beings as if they were worms are the consequences

of newfound affluence.” In the case of His Holiness, however, no negative change whatsoever occurred in Him consequent to His acquiring the status of a much honoured and influential *Jagadguru*. For instance, Ramaswamy Avadhani, who had studied with His Holiness in Sringeri prior to His *saṁnyāsa*, told me in 1983, “Even after becoming a *saṁnyāsin* and, later, the pontiff, His Holiness has been informal with me and even playful at times. During a tour, He had been to the sea for a bath. He asked me casually to come with Him into the ocean. I protested that I felt scared stiff. He held me by the hand and led me into the waters. ‘Let us swim,’ He said and began to float on His back. For my part, I feared that I would be drowned. However, He himself



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held me up and, thereafter, led me safely to the shore.”

His Holiness never forgot any good done for Him. His *Guru* had personally taught V. S. Ramachandra Sastri and made him a great scholar in *Tarka* and *Vedānta*; he also became an authority on *Mīmāṃsā*. Later, he was assigned the responsibility of expounding the *Tarka-śāstra* to His Holiness, with His Holiness’s *Guru* regularly overseeing His studies. These were completed in the late 1930s. Even after becoming a pontiff in 1954, His Holiness held him in high esteem and interacted with him accordingly. Ramachandra Sastri’s son, V. R. Gowrishankar, the Administrator of the Sringeri Math and its Properties since 1986, was kind enough to provide me, in 1983, copies of letters exchanged between His Holiness and his father. I was pleasantly surprised to note that in some of His epistles, His Holiness had explicitly addressed Ramachandra Sastri as His ‘*upādhyāya* (teacher)’ and had written to him with due regards. From the letters written



His Holiness never forgot any good done for Him.

His Holiness noted and even praised some good quality or other even in an apparently vile individual. It goes without saying that He was all praise for people with noble qualities. He said, “We are in this world for but a while. Is it not madness to pick holes and quarrel during our short sojourn here?”

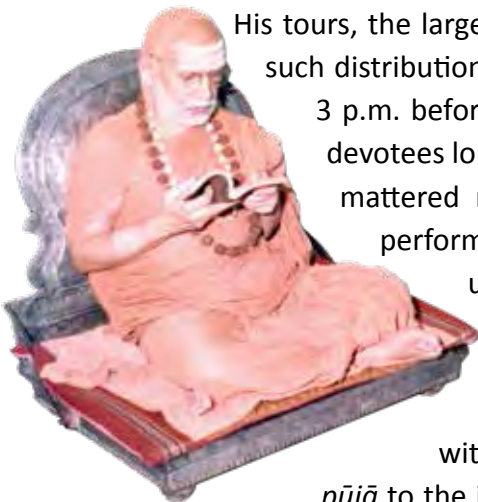
by him to His Holiness during the course of His Holiness’s first South India tour, it is patent how very appreciative he was of His Holiness’s great efforts for the cause of *Sanātana-dharma*. He had even written that the events of His Holiness’s tour deserved to be engraved in gold. That he looked upon His Holiness as his *Guru* was unmistakable and he had, in his letters, sought His Holiness’s advice on various matters. His Holiness had readily obliged; in a letter, He had even recommended the practice of *amanaska-yoga*, involving mental quietude. When he was ailing, His Holiness wanted to travel to Bengaluru to visit him and had to be dissuaded from doing so; when he passed away, His Holiness took a special bath at Sringeri even though it was uncalled-for as He was a *saṁnyāsīn*. Such was His sense of gratitude.

There is a story that the righteous Yudhiṣṭhira was once asked to select a positively evil person. Even after diligent searching and deliberation, he was unable to pinpoint a single person whom he regarded as vile, for, to him, everyone seemed to be possessed of goodness. Duryodhana, for his part, was asked to identify a good man. No matter how hard he searched, he was unable to locate a truly good person, for, in his view, all were stained by sinful tendencies. Having a crystal-like pure heart, His Holiness too, like Yudhiṣṭhira, was only able to identify the good in others. A poet has remarked that noble ones make a mountain of a molehill-like noble quality of another but treat even a major fault of another as if it were insignificant. His Holiness had this trait in abundance. He noted and even praised some good quality or other even in an apparently vile individual. It goes without saying that He was all praise for people with noble qualities. He said, “We are in this world for but a while. Is it not madness to pick holes and quarrel during our short sojourn here?”

Because he grasps the import of the *śāstras*, himself practises them and induces others to follow suit, he is called ‘Ācārya’.

It is said: “Because he grasps the import of the *śāstras*, himself practises them and induces others to follow suit, he is called ‘Ācārya’.” This definition fitted His Holiness. For instance, He advocated the consumption of *sāttvika* food, which is conducive to health and mental tranquillity; His own diet was purely *sāttvika*. He held that *abhiṣeka-tīrtha* (water poured, with *Vedic* chanting, on an idol during worship) conduces to one’s mental and physical well-being. Hence, distribution of *tīrtha-prasāda* formed an invariant part of His daily schedule, both when He was at Sringeri and when He was on tour. During

His tours, the large crowds often necessitated His spending hours for such distribution, so much so that it sometimes used to be around 3 p.m. before His *bhikṣā*. He did not mind this in the least, for devotees longed to receive *tīrtha* from Him and their happiness mattered much to Him. He advocated that people should perform what is ordained for them by the scriptures; He unfailingly and meticulously performed His *āhnikā* in the morning, afternoon and night, with each *āhnikā* being preceded by a complete bath. He advised people to worship God; every night, without fail, He performed *pūjā*. He performed a short *pūjā* to the idol of *Ratnagarbha-gaṇapati* and then elaborately





worshipped the *Candramaulīśvara-liṅga*, a *śālagrāma* and a *śrīcakra*; this worship included the performance of *abhiṣeka* while chanting the *śrī-rudra*, *camaka*, *puruṣa-sūkta*, *durgā-sūkta* and *śrī-sūkta* and the showing of three forms of *ārati*.

Being meticulous and tidy was innate to Him. He utilised an ochre handkerchief made of cotton. Whenever crumpled with use, He refolded it in such a way that it then appeared as if it were a freshly ironed cloth, with the edges forming perfect straight lines. It was not as if He did the folding to the exclusion of other activities. He folded His handkerchief impeccably even while giving a serious discourse or reading a book.



In the course of His evening *āhnikā*, as per the prescribed procedure for *saṁnyāsins*, He used to take up water in an *uddharaṇī* (spoon) from a vessel, chant 'om' and put the water into another vessel, repeating this act over a hundred times. He performed all this so exquisitely that not a single drop of water spilt on the ground. His hand movement was the minimum possible and the speed was in perfect harmony with His rhythmic chant of 'om'. The public had no access to His *āhnikā*-room and so it was not as though His optimal performance was meant as a lesson for another.



One should perform all one's actions in a meticulous manner. Even a minor task ought not to be performed carelessly. The time allocated to it may be small and other tasks may receive priority over it but, when one is engaged in it, one must treat it as important.



He said, "One should perform all one's actions in a meticulous manner. Even a minor task ought not to be performed carelessly. The time allocated to it may be small and other tasks may receive priority over it but, when one is engaged in it, one must treat it as important."

One day, His Holiness sat down in a coconut grove in Sringeri and asked me to read the first 50 verses of the *Vidura-nīti* and select compositions of Bhagavatpāda. As I began chanting verses from the *Vidura-nīti*, His Holiness partially closed His eyes. When I came to the 22<sup>nd</sup> verse, I heard a swishing sound. Before I could react, a big leaf-stalk and a coconut fell from a tree

in the vicinity and landed on the ground with a big thud less than a meter from His Holiness. So concentrated was He on the import of the verses that He was totally oblivious of what had happened.

After reading from the *Vidura-nīti*, I passed on to the compositions of Bhagavatpāda, such as *Maniṣā-pañcaka* and *Brahmānucintana*. His Holiness listened motionless, with a light smile. He opened His eyes only a few moments after I had



finished. Suddenly, He winced in pain. Unseen by me, and unfelt by Him, an army of ants had been biting Him on His legs and hands. His feet were red and swollen.

He knew by rote the verses that He had asked me to read out and had Himself mentally recited them on hundreds of occasions. Yet, He concentrated upon them with such intensity that He remained totally unaware of even loud extraneous sounds and injury to His body. He was never inattentive to anything taken up by Him.

Gudalur Krishna Sastrigal, who was staying in Narasimhavana during a visit to Sringeri, asked His Holiness one morning, “I noticed last night that the lights of Your Holiness’s room were ‘on’ even past midnight. Did Your Holiness not sleep last night?” His Holiness replied that He had been unwell, running high temperature, and this prevented Him from falling asleep. Hence, He started reading a book on *Vedānta* to spend time usefully rather than waste it waiting for sleep.

His Holiness did not believe in keeping to Himself what He had learnt. He personally taught the texts of the *Tarka-śāstra* several times and produced, in batches, scholars fully versed in *Tarka* and themselves competent to teach it in its entirety to others. While *Tarka* serves the end of scholars, His Holiness, being interested in the spiritual uplift of people, laid particular emphasis on expounding *Vedānta*, be it for public at large through His *anugraha-bhāṣaṇas* (benedictory discourses) or through formal classes. In the late 1970s, He started to expound, in depth, the following: The *Bhagavadgītā* with Śaṅkara-Bhagavatpāda’s *bhāṣya* and the sub-commentary of Śrī Ānandagiri; the *Taittirīya-upaniṣad* with Bhagavatpāda’s *bhāṣya* and Śrī Acyutaṛṣṇānanda-tīrtha’s sub-commentary *Vanamālā*; and the *Brahmasūtras* with Bhagavatpāda’s *bhāṣya*, Rāmānanda-sarasvatī’s sub-commentary *Ratnaprabhā* and Śrī Pūrṇānanda’s gloss on the *Ratnaprabhā*. While

these classes were primarily meant for His successor-designate (the current pontiff of the Sringeri Math, Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī-tīrtha Mahāsvāmin), several others, including *saṁnyāsins* and scholars, were also blessed to be the students. I have had the good fortune of attending these incomparable, ambrosial classes and can assert with confidence that His Holiness's



explanations were lucid and without a single inessential word; in several places, it was unmistakable that His Holiness's words were backed by His spiritual practice

and enlightenment. He had said about His *Guru's* exposition of *Vedānta* (Relevant portions of two of His speeches, one in Kannada and another in Tamil have been integrated in what follows), "He expounded the scripture strictly in accordance with the commentary of Bhagavatpāda. He effortlessly integrated into His teaching of *Vedānta*, pertinent points from *Nyāya*, *Mīmāṃsā*, and *Yoga*. When the *Vedānta-sāstra* is taught, one way is to explain a text line-by-line. Another is to expound the lines integrated with one's experience. The latter characterised His teaching; it gave great joy." All this perfectly fitted His Holiness's teaching of *Vedānta*.

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Once a *sabhā* was held at Bengaluru where *paṇḍitas* debated whether Bhagavatpāda recognised *mūlāvidyā*, primordial ignorance that rests in and veils *Brahman* and is the basis of false knowledge about the *Ātman*. Traditional *Vedāntins*, right from the time of Padmapādācārya, have undisputedly held that Bhagavatpāda accepts *mūlāvidyā*. However, Śrī Saccidānandendra-sarasvatī of the Holenarasipura *Maṭha* and his followers contended that Bhagavatpāda did not admit the existence of *mūlāvidyā*; they opined that there is no veil of ignorance in deep sleep and that the only difference

between deep sleep and liberation is that the former is temporary. Representatives of both the schools decided to thrash out the issue in a debate and that was why the *sabhā* had been arranged. His Holiness witnessed the proceedings with avid interest. A person asked Him why He did not pass a verdict in His capacity as the *Jagadguru*. His Holiness's poignant reply was, "I am not sitting here as any *Jagadguru*. On the contrary, I am seated as one who was taught the *Śāstras* and am confirming what I have learnt." He was so unassuming and neutral in spite of His being recognised by scholars all over the nation as an unparalleled exponent of *Tarka* and *Vedānta*. The debate ended in favour of the upholders of the traditional view.

The following is based on a written account, in Tamil, of K. S. Venkatarama Sastri, a *vidvān*:

"Once, the Maharaja of Cochin, himself an accomplished scholar in the *Nyāya-śāstra*, had prayed to His Holiness to resolve one of his doubts in the *Nyāya-śāstra*. He wrote a letter to His Holiness detailing his query and sent it through a scholar from Kerala. At that time, a *vidvat-sadas* was going on in the august presence of His Holiness. When the letter was submitted, His Holiness directed one of the scholars to read it out before the scholars assembled at the *vidvat-sadas*, thereby initiating a discussion among the scholars. One by one, the scholars attempted their resolution of the issue but one or the other scholar promptly rebutted the replies. Erudite *vidvāns* such as Mathur Venkateswara Sastri, who had learnt under none other than Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin and later became a professor in the Mysore University, and Madhusudana Bhattacharya, a renowned *Tārkika* from Kolkata, too offered their explanations only to be subsequently countered by the other scholars. The debate continued and it seemed as though it would be eternity before a conclusion could be reached. His Holiness suggested to the scholars that all of them reflect on the issue further and come out with a tenable conclusion before the concluding session of the *sabhā*.



"As it turned out, even on the concluding day, none of the scholars was able to resolve the doubt to the satisfaction of the *sabhā*. At this juncture, His Holiness Himself intervened and presented an appropriate answer in His inimitably lucid style. The scholars were awestruck by the splendid reply given by His Holiness. Mathur Venkateswara Sastri

openly remarked, ‘Only His Holiness can put any doubt to rest. After all, is He not the Goddess Śāradāmbā in human form?’ It became a memorable *sadas* for the *vidvāns*. The Maharaja’s joy knew no bounds when he received the clarification offered by His Holiness. He promptly wrote a letter to His Holiness conveying his reverential salutations and gratitude for the guidance received.”

The following was narrated by Venkatasubba Rao.

“I felt an urge to have some traditional lessons from His Holiness. I went to Sringeri and made known my desire. Right away, His Holiness agreed and said that He would begin the lesson at three o’ clock in the afternoon. Some *saṁnyāsins* and *paṇḍitas* also attended the classes. The text taken for exposition was the *Śrī-dakṣiṇāmūrti-stotra* of Bhagavatpāda. Having given a lucid exposition of the first verse, His Holiness decided to explain the second verse the next day. He was having a sore throat that day. Yet, He chose to teach me saying, ‘You have come all the way from Bengaluru for this. Hence, I will teach.’ In the course of the class, an aged *saṁnyāsin* posed some questions to His Holiness based on the *Tarka-śāstra*. His Holiness said, ‘These lessons are meant for Venkatasubba Rao. Hence, I am giving only those details that will benefit him. *Tarka* is not important for him. If you seek to understand the text from the standpoint of *Tarka* then I am willing to explain that one point itself for days on end, giving a different interpretation on each day.’ On the third day, His Holiness said, ‘This is enough. In fact, what I taught you on the first day was itself sufficient for you. I took up the second verse on the subsequent day

to ward off any possible feeling you may get that the absence of continuation of the second day is inauspicious.’

“I accompanied His Holiness on His Kundapura camp. I was travelling in the jeep that was piloting His Holiness’s vehicle when, at one point, I noticed that His Holiness had ordered His car to stop. He asked me to sit in the front seat of His car and sent His personal attendant, Mahabala, to the jeep. No conversation ensued. His Holiness lost Himself in the contemplation of the *Ātman*. The effect of His silent *ātmānusandhāna* on me was tremendous.”



After he opted for voluntary retirement, Anantarama Seshan came with his wife Vaikuntham to Sringeri in 1963 with the intention of settling down there. During the *cāturmāsya* that year, His Holiness expounded, in chaste Sanskrit, the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* (an authoritative, technical primer on *Advaita-Vedānta*) to the couple, several scholars and a *saṁnyāsīn*. After the first day's class, the lady approached Him in the evening and said, "I am blessed to attend Your Holiness's class. However, unlike all the others, I am not knowledgeable in Sanskrit and, hence, am unable to understand Your Holiness's exposition." Blessing her, He compassionately responded, "You will be able to comprehend the text." The lady found, much to her own amazement, that from the next day onwards, she was able to follow His exposition

and, that too, without any difficulty. Even the portion of the text that had been covered in the first class became clear to her. Later, His Holiness started expounding the *Vedānta-pañcadaśī* to the couple. Though He did so in Sanskrit, she was able to clearly follow His teaching. After covering a portion of this text, He told them that they could read the book by themselves and that it would be clear to them. That is what came to pass. I was given this information, decades later, by the lady herself. She even demonstrated to me that she had understood the texts concerned by telling me correctly, in Tamil, the import of some textual portions that I read out.

The following was narrated by Ganapati Subrahmanya Avadhani.

"One night, when His Holiness was performing *pūjā* in Lucknow in January 1967 and everybody was enjoying it, an intruder dashed into the place. On seeing him wearing a coat, trousers and shoes, the guard tried to stop him. He simply brushed the sentry on duty aside and sprang forward. As he neared the *pūjā-maṇḍapa*, several others and I gathered around him and tried to prevent him from advancing further. Being a well-built man, he overcame the opposition. His Holiness noticed this. He gestured to us to let him be. On being freed, he moved closer to the dais. His Holiness directed him to sit down. He obeyed like an innocent child and squatted in *Vajrāsana*, with joined palms. He quietly watched the *pūjā* with rapt attention. After finishing the *pūjā*, His Holiness asked him to





come the next day at eight in the morning. He said, 'His Holiness is an embodiment of compassion but the people around are rude. What am I to do if I am treated by them in the same way as today?' His Holiness understood his predicament and advised him to come wearing a *dhoti* and an upper cloth.

"The next day, after finishing His morning *āhnikā*, His Holiness told His attendant, 'The Sethji who was here yesterday will be coming to see me. Usher him in.' Later, the person came wearing a *dhoti* and a shawl, with sandal paste on his forehead as also *vibhūti* and a '*nāmam*'! We were pleasantly surprised to behold him thus. He was taken to His Holiness. After some time, he emerged, beaming.

"On his way back, he met me. I conveyed my apologies to him. I then asked him what brought him to His Holiness. He gave the following account:

"He was having a host of difficulties and was struggling to overcome them. One night he had an unusual dream. A sage with a brilliant and smiling countenance appeared in front of him. On waking up, he wondered who that might be. After some days, when he was in his shop, he accidentally spotted a child carrying a large photograph. To his surprise, he found that it was a photograph of the sage whom he had beheld in the dream. On enquiry, he learnt that the photograph was that of the *Jagadguru* of Sringeri who was then camping in the city. He was filled with joy and immediately rushed to have *darśana*. My companions and I had tried unsuccessfully to stop him. His Holiness had duly blessed him and infused new strength into him."

Sri Subbaramaiya was desirous of His Holiness's *pādukās* but did not request Him to bless him with them. When His Holiness visited Sri Subbaramaiya's place at Bengaluru, he hoped that His Holiness would, of His own accord, grant him His *pādukās*. After His Holiness left, he was pleasantly surprised to find that His Holiness's *pādukās* had been left behind. He thought, "There is no specific instruction from His Holiness that I may keep them at home for worship. Hence, I should return them." When he took them to

His Holiness, He told him, "I left them there for you. Keep them with you." Every time His Holiness camped at Bengaluru, he used to request Him, "Please bless my house with a visit." His Holiness used to smile and say, "I am very much there."

The following was narrated by S. N. Parameswara.

"His Holiness was once camping at my brother Srithandaveswara's place. The room He stayed in had an open cupboard that contained some books. I had kept in that cupboard a notebook in which I had written some *ślokas* in Kannada; I recited these every day. After His *bhikṣā*, His Holiness glanced at some of the books. When I went for His *darśana* in the evening, He told me, 'Bring me the notebook.'

When I did so, He said, 'I went through this notebook in the afternoon when I had some free time. You have written some *ślokas* in Kannada which you are probably reciting daily. Some of the verses contain spelling mistakes. I have corrected them to the extent that I could. I did so because I did not want you to recite them with mistakes. You may verify their correctness and recite them.' Saying so, He handed me the notebook. For His unparalleled erudition and the seat He was occupying, He could have easily said, 'I have corrected the mistakes. You may now recite them without error.' Instead, He only said that He had corrected the mistakes to the extent that He could and that I might verify their correctness. Such was His humility."

During one of her trips to Sringeri, Alamelu Krishnan, who was deeply devoted to His Holiness, submitted a pearl necklace and sari on behalf of her younger brother, S. Subramaniam. His Holiness told her to convey His blessings to her brother and his family. He then remarked, "Subramaniam drove my car when I was camping in Chennai." On her return to Chennai, she conveyed to her brother what His Holiness had said. Pleasantly surprised, Subramaniam said, "As you are aware, I was very keen to drive His Holiness's car while He was camping in Chennai. However, much to my disappointment, I did not get an opportunity to do so. All I could do was to imagine myself chauffeuring His Holiness's car. While that itself gave me consolation, I now am elated to hear from you that His Holiness accepted my mental chauffeuring." There was no question



"I left my *pādukās* there for you. Keep them with you."

- His Holiness



of His Holiness, whose memory was very strong, having erroneously thought that Subramaniam had physically driven His car when He was in Chennai in 1986.

The following was narrated by R. Muthusundaram.

“Once, during my stay at Sringeri, I imagined lotuses in full bloom and offered them one by one at the lotus feet of His Holiness. I commenced my mental *arcana* when His Holiness started from Narasimhavana, continued it as He crossed the river and visited the temples there and completed it only when He returned. Before entering Sacchidananda Vilas, His abode, He turned towards me, smiled and majestically went in. That evening, He sent for me. He held a silver coin with the image of Śāradāmbā on it in His hands and closed His eyes for a few minutes. His normally bright face appeared all the more lustrous. He then blessed me with the coin and gave me *mantrākṣata*. I subsequently went to the structure housing the *samādhis* of the 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> pontiffs and attached the coin to my *yajñopavīta*. Krishnaswami Iyer (who was the author of books on the 34<sup>th</sup> pontiff and who, after *samnyāsa* was known as Śrī Jñānānanda-bhārati) observed me doing so and asked, ‘Did you do any *pādapūjā*?’ ‘This pendant is given only to those who perform it,’ he added. I told him that I had not formally done any *pādapūjā*. I then described to him the mental worship that I had done in the morning. ‘Yes,’ he said with certitude. ‘It is the fruit of that worship which you have got now. Cannot our God-like *Guru*, who can grant the wishes in the minds of those who are thousands of miles away, bestow the result of the *mānasika-pādapūjā* (mental *pādapūjā*) that you did to Him in His presence? This is what He has done.”

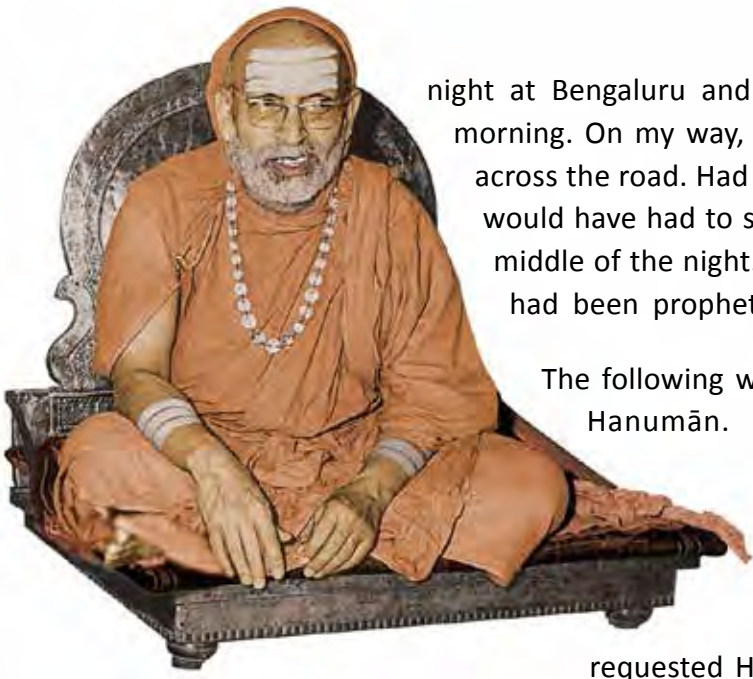
The following was narrated by K. S. Natarajan.



Cannot our God-like *Guru*, who can grant the wishes in the minds of those who are thousands of miles away, bestow the result of the *mānasika-pādapūjā* (mental *pādapūjā*) that was done to Him in His presence?



“In 1968, I stayed at Sringeri for five days and then took *mantrākṣata* from His Holiness. As I was about to leave, His Holiness asked me, ‘Where are you going?’ ‘To Salem,’ I replied. His Holiness advised me to spend the night at Bengaluru before driving on to Salem. Being rather obstinate, I causally said, ‘I can manage to proceed to Salem without a stopover at Bengaluru.’ Just as my car reached Bengaluru, its axle broke. It was evening by the time the repairs were completed. My resolve to proceed to Salem remained. As I was to start, there was a heavy downpour. This put paid to my plan. Perforce, I halted for the



night at Bengaluru and resumed my journey early in the morning. On my way, I found that a huge tree had fallen across the road. Had I left Bengaluru the previous night, I would have had to spend my time here, stranded in the middle of the night. I realized that His Holiness's advice had been prophetic."

The following was narrated by Ramani, a votary of Hanumān.

"We had a 32 feet tall statue of Āñjaneya sculpted for installation at a temple in Nanganallur in Chennai. In 1989, we went to Sringeri and requested His Holiness for His blessings for the proposed consecration of the idol. His Holiness was very pleased with my efforts and blessed me. He then asked, 'Where do you intend to position the statue?' I replied, 'In front of the statue of Lord Rāma.' His Holiness remarked, 'In front of Lord Rāma, is it? I gather that Āñjaneya's hands are folded in reverence but His tail is raised above His head. When standing in front of Rama, would not Āñjaneya have stood with His tail somewhat lowered? If His tail is to be curled upwards, with its end above His head, why not place Him beside Lord Rama?' 'It is impossible to place Lord Āñjaneya's statue there, because there is no space for this in the sanctum sanctorum,' I responded. His Holiness did not say anything. The other committee members and I discussed the matter and decided, 'His Holiness did not say anything when we reported the lack of space. Hence, we shall go ahead as planned. As the date of the *kumbhābhiṣeka* has been decided upon and there is not much time left, it would be very difficult to make any changes now.'

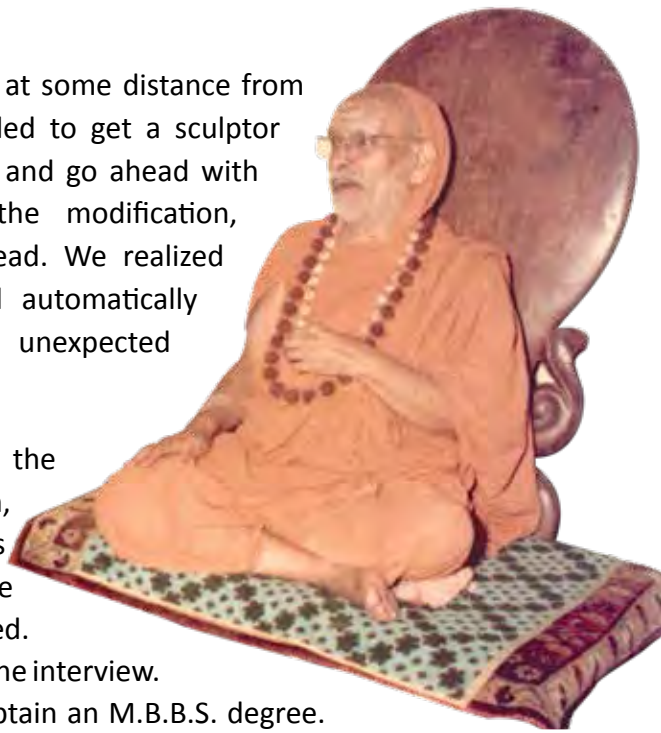
"It so happened that when the idol of Śrī Āñjaneya was being brought to the temple site, a monkey suddenly jumped in front of the lorry. To avoid collision with the monkey, the driver slammed the brakes. A distressing consequence



His Holiness asked, "When standing in front of Rāma, would not Āñjaneya have stood with His tail somewhat lowered? If His tail is to be curled upwards, with its end above His head, why not place Him beside Lord Rāma?" What His Holiness had had in mind automatically came to pass.



was that the tail of Āñjaneya's statue broke at some distance from its end. We were in a quandary. We decided to get a sculptor to modify the remaining portion of the tail and go ahead with the *kumbhābhiṣeka* as planned. With the modification, Āñjaneya's tail was no more above His head. We realized that what His Holiness had had in mind automatically came to pass in a way that was totally unexpected by us."



R. Pandurangan was desirous of pursuing the M.B.B.S course and becoming a doctor. When, in the early 1960s, he sought His Holiness's blessings, He said that by the grace of the Divine Mother, his wish would be fulfilled.

Pandurangan, however, failed to get through the interview.

His Holiness again told him that he would obtain an M.B.B.S. degree.

Pandurangan failed to secure admission the second time too. His Holiness yet again told him that he would obtain an M.B.B.S. degree. Finally, in the year 1963, he joined the College of Integrated Medicine at Kilpauk, Chennai, for the G.C.I.M. course. This course led to a G.C.I.M. degree that was not on par with the M.B.B.S. degree and involved the study of Indian systems of medicine such as Ayurveda. When this information was conveyed to His Holiness, He reasserted His response. The infallibility of His blessing became clear only when it so happened that, in response to representations, the Government decided to give the first and second year G.C.I.M. students the option of joining the M.B.B.S. course, with their earlier studies being given due credit. Pandurangan was accommodated in the M.B.B.S. course at Stanley Medical College and graduated four years later; what His Holiness had assured him repeatedly came to pass.

Pandurangan then worked as Medical Officer at Vallanadu, near Tirunelveli. Later, he completed a D.O. course at the Egmore Eye Hospital and was posted as Assistant Eye Surgeon, Nagercoil. In this manner, though seemingly impossible earlier, he was able to graduate with an M.B.B.S degree as blessed by His Holiness and thereafter, obtain a diploma in ophthalmology too. {Dr. R. Pandurangan's cousin, Sankaran, told me in the early 1980s of how His Holiness had graced Pandurangan. Both Pandurangan and Sankaran are deceased. Further details and some corroboration were provided recently by the late Dr. Pandurangan's wife, Vasanthi Pandurangan.}



The following was narrated by Rajam Nagarajan.

“In 1961, when His Holiness was camping in Chennai and my father and my husband went for His *darśana*, He told my father, ‘Ask your daughter to sing during the *Candramaulīśvara-pūjā* tomorrow night.’ When this instruction was conveyed to me at home, I was petrified. I had almost completely lost my voice due to severe throat infection over the previous few days. I was unable to utter even a few words without breaking into painful bouts of cough. I took all possible steps to remedy my throat but there was no improvement. Even as I left for the *pūjā* the next evening, the cough had not stopped. After the *abhiṣeka*, when His Holiness looked in my direction and gestured that I may begin singing, I immediately started. I did not cough even once for the entire duration of my singing. After the *pūjā*, His Holiness gave *prasāda* to all of us and told my father, ‘Your daughter sang very well. Many here do not pronounce the Sanskrit letters *śa*, *ṣa* and *sa* distinctly. However, your daughter did so.’ He blessed me. When I reached home, I was flooded with questions from my family. However, by then, my voice had shut down once again and I could not speak a single word. It took another few days before I regained my voice. It was only because I sang in obedience to His instruction that, by His grace, I could sing without the slightest discomfort.”



“The lady’s devotion caused the Divine Mother to grace her. Impelled by Her, I merely functioned as a conduit for Her blessings.”

- His Holiness



On seeing that a good singer of Madurai who had lost her ability to sing regained it on His Holiness blessing her, K. M. Balasubramanian asked His Holiness, “How did this happen?” His Holiness replied, “By God’s grace.” “How exactly did her power of speech return?” persisted Balasubramanian. His Holiness said, “They are highly devoted people and came here with the firm belief that the problem would be solved. The lady’s devotion caused the Divine Mother to grace her. Impelled by Her, I merely functioned as a conduit for Her blessings.”

The following was narrated by V. Chandramouli.

“When His Holiness was camping in Ghatkopar in Mumbai, a Muslim had the opportunity to have His Holiness’s *darśana*. Being conversant with Sanskrit, he introduced himself to His Holiness in Sanskrit. His Holiness was surprised and conversed with him in Sanskrit to encourage him. The man was very happy and told His Holiness that he had been yearning to have His Holiness’s *darśana* for a long time and added that his father, who was in Kolkata, too had the same desire. His Holiness told him that his father could have His *darśana* when He visited Kolkata. His Holiness then asked for some stones to be brought. Giving them to the man, He said, ‘These were given to me by some Muslims who had returned from Mecca. You can keep them. If your father requires one, you can give it to him too.’ The man then asked His Holiness if he could watch the *Candramaulīśvara-pūjā* that night. His Holiness told him that he may do so. At the end of the *pūjā*, His Holiness blessed him with flowers. He preserved the flowers. Furthermore, he embedded one of stones given by His Holiness in a ring and wore that ring.”

During His Holiness’s tour to Rameswaram, two Muslims named Allah Pasha and Ibrahim came to have His *darśana*. Allah Pasha’s wife had suffered six miscarriages earlier and the couple was childless. Desirous of a child, he had come to seek the blessings of His Holiness. His Holiness blessed him saying, “You will beget a good son.” Needless to mention, in due course, a male child was born to the couple.

The other person, Ibrahim, submitted to His Holiness that someone was causing him great trouble in his business. He was in utter despair and had almost reached the point of having to shut down his business. His Holiness said, “All your problems will cease and you will be happy.” Soon, the one who was creating trouble went away. His departure paved way for Ibrahim’s business to recover and grow without any impediments.

With their prayers fulfilled, both Allah Pasha and Ibrahim went to Sringeri and sought His Holiness’s permission to offer *pādapūjā* (involving *pūjā* to the *pādukās* of His Holiness’s *Guru*). His Holiness advised them not to do *pādapūjā* as such a mode of

worship was discordant with the tenets of Islam. They then requested Him to permit them to make some offerings to the *Maṭha*. His Holiness granted their fervent prayer and blessed them. {The source of this information is an article authored by K. V. Santhanagopalachariar in 1977 and published in a souvenir.}

“All your problems will  
cease and you will be  
happy.”

- His Holiness

On 15<sup>th</sup> April 1984, His Holiness presided over the conclusion of an *Atirudra-mahāyāga* at Anegunda (near Sringeri) and then returned to Sringeri. A few days later, as He was giving *tīrtha-prasāda* in the front hall of Sacchidananda Vilas in the morning, a devotee showed His Holiness two small idols of Lord Vināyaka and requested His Holiness to sanctify them by His touch. His Holiness took the idols in His right hand and remarked that they were beautiful. With the idols in His closed palm, He remained with His eyes closed for a while. Thereafter, as He was about to give them to the devotee, He asked, “Are you intending to worship two idols?” The devotee replied, “I was desirous of receiving one from Your Holiness and of submitting the other to Your Holiness.” His Holiness smiled, gave him one idol and kept the other near Himself.



His Holiness took the idols in His right hand and remarked that they were beautiful. With the idols in His closed palm, He remained with His eyes closed for a while.



As the devotee moved on, His Holiness looked in the direction of the entrance of the hall, beckoned to me and said, “Tell them, in Hindi, to come after 20 minutes.” I discerned that His Holiness was referring to two persons who were standing on the final step leading to the hall and were looking quite ill at ease. They were wearing white *pyjamas* and *kurtas*, were bearded and had white skull caps. One of them appeared to be in his fifties and the other in his thirties. I walked up to these Muslims and conveyed the message of His Holiness. They promptly left.

In a few minutes, the distribution of *tīrtha-prasāda* to the devotees was complete. His Holiness went inside, proceeded to the room on the eastern side of Sacchidananda Vilas on the ground floor and sat on His wooden seat there. He had gestured to me to follow Him and I did so. He called His attendant and assigned him a task that required the attendant to go to the *Maṭha* complex on the northern side of the river. After the attendant left, His Holiness told me to shut the door through which He had entered. Having sat silently for a while, He told me, “The two would have come. Bring them in. Shut the door behind you.” I did as told.


On His Holiness asking them to sit, they sat, not cross-legged but with their knees joined and positioned on the ground. Abruptly, His Holiness started to recite something that




seemed to me to be in Arabic. He began with the words, “*Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim*”, which I had heard Muslims chant and knew that these words meant, “In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful.” Hence, I conjectured that His Holiness was reciting something from the Quran. All I could quickly register was that His subsequent chant had at its start what sounded like, “*Alam nashrah laka sadrak.*” I was surprised because I had never heard His Holiness chant anything like this before. I noticed that the two Muslims were awestruck. They quickly held their hands in the Muslim gesture of prayer, with their open palms held towards their faces. When His Holiness ended His chant, the elder of the two said, in Urdu, “Bābā, how wonderfully you chant the Quran!” His Holiness ignored the compliment and asked, in

Urdu, “What is the purpose of your visit?” The younger man said, “My child is very ill.” Without waiting for him to continue, His Holiness said, “Bring the boy.” The man said, “I shall do so. He is with his mother in the car.”

As he went out, the elder person told His Holiness, “I teach the Quran in a madrasa and my son does so in another. Both of us, his wife and child arrived at Mangalore (Mangaluru) a few days ago. We planned to see some pretty places in Karnataka and Kerala. We took a taxi and proceeded through Agumbe to the Jog Falls near Shimoga (Shivamogga). We then wanted to proceed to the origin of the river Tuṅgā. However, as we were nearing Koppa, my grandchild began to scream in pain, clutching his abdomen. My daughter-in-law tried her best to pacify him but could not. We took him to a doctor at Koppa. He examined the child and suggested that we admit him to a hospital there. We did so. Despite several tests and treatment, there was no improvement. The child was suffering much and could not eat or drink anything. He threw up even water. At night, due to exhaustion, my daughter-in-law must have dozed off for a few minutes. She dreamt that the child was dead and was inconsolable



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after waking up. Three years ago, her first son, when aged two, had clutched his abdomen and screamed. Later, he died in a hospital as his appendix had ruptured. Understandably, this child's suffering severe pain in the abdomen and that too at the age of two was terrible for us. As there was no improvement even by this morning, we decided to shift the child to some big hospital in Mangaluru and got the child discharged, against the advice of the doctor at Koppa.

"As we were starting, the taxi driver suggested that as we would be passing through Sringeri en route to Mangaluru, we should get the child blessed by you. He was sure that with your blessings itself, the child would get relief. On hearing this, my daughter-in-law insisted that we should bring the child to you. My son and I strongly objected. We told her that

her father was an Imam and we were orthodox Muslims. How could we take our child for blessings to some Swami who would know nothing of the Quran and would possibly prescribe some idol worship, which was clearly prohibited in the Quran? She, however, became hysterical and no matter how much we voiced our two objections to come to you, she continued to insist. As she was becoming unmanageable and as the child was crying non-stop and unable to take even a drop of water, we agreed, unwillingly, to bring the child to you. When I saw you from a distance, you were giving an idol to someone. That made us uncomfortable. I felt that not knowing that idol worship is taboo for us, you would give us also some idol and ask us to worship it for the sake of our child. We were somewhat relieved when you asked us to come back after twenty minutes. Now, by your excellent chanting of the Quran, you have completely dispelled our misgiving about our bringing our child to some Swami who would have no idea about the Quran."

His Holiness listened passively. A few moments of silence followed. The younger person entered with a bawling child in his arms and followed by his wife who was in purdah. Even as she entered, she repeatedly wailed, in Urdu, "Bābā, bless my child." His Holiness assured her, "Do not worry. The child will be alright. Allah is most merciful." She gained some composure and, in response to His Holiness's gesture, both the husband and wife sat down. The child continued to cry. His Holiness asked the child's father to hand Him the child. Placing the boy on His lap, His Holiness lifted the child's upper garment up. Gently rubbing the child's exposed abdomen, His Holiness chanted something in Arabic that, as far as I could make out, started thus: "*Allahuma rabbi-nas.*"



Even as He ended His chant, the child stopped crying. The mother blurted out, in Urdu, “Bābā, thank you, thank you.”

His Holiness asked her, “Do you have anything with you to feed the child.” She said, “Yes. I have milk and some eatables.” His Holiness handed the child back to his father and asked her to give the boy milk. The child drank the milk given in a cup. Helping the child to stand up, she told him, “Perform salaam to Bābā.” The child smiled and did so. His Holiness smiled back. The elders profusely thanked His Holiness. He just said, “Be thankful to Allah and not to me,” and permitted them to leave.

As they were about to leave, the elder Muslim said, “It is because of the driver that we came to you. Would you see him?” His Holiness said, “Yes. Send him in.” In a couple of minutes, the driver entered. He had removed his upper garments. He was having *kuṅkuma* on his forehead and seemed to be in his fifties.



On seeing him, His Holiness smiled and said, in Kannada, “You have come here before.” The man confirmed that he had and performed *namaskāra*. As he was getting up, His Holiness asked him, “Do you continue to chant ‘*sumukhāya namaḥ*’ and the rest?” The driver replied, “I do so every day, without fail. After I started chanting the twelve names as taught by Your Holiness and offering worship through them to the picture of Vināyaka that Your Holiness had blessed me with, my problems ceased and I am living happily since then.” His Holiness asked, “How is that picture now?” The driver apologetically said, “As I travel much and carry it with me in my car everywhere I go, it has faded.” Giving the driver the

Gently rubbing the child’s exposed abdomen, His Holiness chanted something in Arabic that, as far as I could make out, started thus: “*Allahuma rabbi-nas.*” Even as He ended His chant, the child stopped crying. The mother blurted out, in Urdu, “Bābā, thank you, thank you.”

Vināyaka idol that had been submitted to Him earlier in the day, His Holiness told him, “Hereafter, worship this instead of the picture.” He then gave him a fruit and permitted him to leave.

It is only recently that I ascertained, in the light of the words that I could recall of His Holiness’s chanting of the Quran, that He had recited *Surah* 94, called “*ash-Sharh* (The Opening),” and that this *Surah* comprises eight lines that convey:

1. *Have We not opened your breast for you.*
2. *And removed from you your burden*
3. *Which weighed down your back?*
4. *And have We not raised high your fame?*
5. *Verily, along with every hardship is relief,*
6. *Verily, along with every hardship is relief.*
7. *So when you have finished (your occupation), devote yourself for Allah’s worship.*
8. *And to your Lord turn (all your) intentions and hopes.*

As regards what His Holiness chanted when rubbing the child’s abdomen, I recently ascertained, on the basis of His initial words, that it is a *dua* (supplication) about which, according to the *Hadith*: “Aisha (R.A.) narrated: Whenever Allah’s Messenger (S.A.W.) paid a visit to a patient or a patient was brought to him, he used to invoke Allah saying, ‘*Allahuma rabbi-nas adhhabal ba’sa, ashfi wa entashafi, la shifa’ illa shifa’uka shifa’ la yughadiru saqama* (O Lord of the people! Remove this pain and cure it. You are the One Who cures. There is no cure but Yours. Grant such a cure that no illness remains).” This supplication is to be chanted while rubbing with the right hand the affected part of the patient and that was precisely what His Holiness had done.

His Holiness was once camping at Kotekar, near Mangaluru. It was about 2:30 p.m. He was seated in His private room. He was telling me about an event when He abruptly got up, walked to the door leading to the open veranda in the front of the building and opened it. In moments, a man came rushing there. He was sweating, his shirt and trousers were dirty and his forehead was bandaged. His Holiness gently asked him who he was and what he wanted. The man blurted out, in Kannada, “Please save,” but

could not proceed further as he began to sob. Even without his having said anything more, His Holiness told him, "Your son will be alright soon. Do not worry." Then gesturing to him to wait, He went inside and brought two big packets of cashew nuts and one large pack of almonds. He gave them to him, saying, "Give some of these to your son daily, after some days." Having respectfully taken the dry fruits, he told His Holiness, "My son is in hospital. The doctor told me today that my child is suffering from cancer." "No, he does not have cancer. He will come home soon from the hospital and be well," His Holiness stated emphatically. The man joined his palms, thanked Him and left. His Holiness shut the door, resumed His seat and continued to talk to me from where He had left.



The next evening, when He was completing His evening walk, He saw the man standing at a distance, with palms joined. He smiled at him and entered the building. The man remained where he stood. After His Holiness had gone for His evening bath, when I came out, the man walked up to me and said, "Last evening, after I had returned to the hospital from here, the doctor came and said, 'There was a mistake; reports had got mixed up. Your son does not have cancer. We can discharge him in two days. After taking him home, give him good nourishment.' Please convey this to Swami. I am very thankful to Him. As I did not wish to disturb Him today, I stayed at a distance." I replied that I would submit his information to His Holiness. As I was starting to leave, he added, "I am a Christian. When I was shell-shocked on hearing that my child has cancer, a Hindu friend

told me to approach Swami for blessings. That is why I rushed here yesterday. I am glad that I did so." Later, when I reported the matter to His Holiness, He just heard me in silence.

The following was reported by Venkatarama Sastry.

A devotee took a group of foreigners including a Christian priest to Sringeri and had the *darśana* of His

“No, he does not have cancer. He will come home soon from the hospital and be well,” His Holiness stated emphatically.

Holiness. His Holiness started chatting with them in His customary cordial style. The foreigners too freely voiced their doubts about Hinduism and its various tenets, including idol worship. His Holiness responded to their queries with convincing answers. The topic then shifted to *Advaita* philosophy. His Holiness gave a lucid explanation of the non-dual philosophy. Noticing the priest's inability to grasp the subject, His Holiness resorted to catechism to drive home the points that He expounded earlier.



His Holiness: Who are you?

Priest: I am so and so.

His Holiness: No, I did not ask your name. Who are 'you'?

Priest: I am the son of so and so.

His Holiness: No, no, not that. Who are 'you'?

Priest: I am the priest of...church.

His Holiness: I did not mean that. Tell me who 'you' are.

Priest: (Confused) I don't know.

His Holiness: (Smiling) See, this is the problem. We do not know who we really are. Your name, relationship to someone else and your profession – all these pertain to your body and not to you. Now, tell me, what are you called when you are starving?

Priest: A hungry man.

His Holiness: Correct. What are you known as when you are overeating?

Priest: A glutton.

His Holiness: That's right. Well, when you are travelling?



There you are. 'You' are that unchanging common entity behind all these changing names and forms. That indeed is your true identity.

- His Holiness



Priest: A traveller.

His Holiness: Yes. Now consider this. Descriptions like 'hungry man', 'glutton' and 'traveller' are based on actions, again, pertaining to your body. Do you get the feeling that you are a different man every time you are called by a different name?

Priest: No, it is 'I' known by various names and relationships.

His Holiness: There you are. 'You' are that unchanging common entity behind all these changing names and forms. That indeed is your true identity.

His Holiness then expounded the unreality of the universe according to the tenets of *Advaita* and the underlying Supreme Reality, the substratum of all names and forms. The delighted Christian priest profusely thanked His Holiness and was happy that he had received a valuable teaching that day.

The following is abstracted from an article penned by T. R. Ramachandran, a close disciple of His Holiness.

"One day in Hong Kong, I wanted to recite a *śloka*, a gentleman had advised me to but could not get the text there. So when I came to Mumbai, I looked it up and after a few days went to see His Holiness who was camping in Madurai. Casually one afternoon, He sent for me upstairs and simply said the same *śloka* and explained the meaning. There was no provocation, no reason why it happened; it just happened. Was I flabbergasted and stunned? No, I was excited and thrilled. 'Isn't it verse 12 of *Śataślokī*?' I asked (having read it only a few days earlier). He nodded with a twinkle in His eyes.

"On another visit, I requested His Holiness to guide me in my *sādhana*, and He said a verse from the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, which means, 'The fool thinks 'I am the body.' The *śāstraic* scholar has the sense of 'I' in the body and the *jīva* (the soul). The *mahātman* who has knowledge born of discrimination always thinks of himself in the form, 'I am *Brahman*.' ' I told His Holiness that I understood the meaning well, but would like to get the *anubhava* (experience). Simple, straight and as usual, sweet was His reply: 'Oh, it will happen when you practise *sākṣibhāva*, identifying yourself with



consciousness, the witness of even the mind.' I feel grateful for this most useful guideline which can make the goal easy within reach."

The following is culled from an article penned by K. V. Narayanaswami.

"In 1965, I mentioned to His Holiness that I wanted to give up my professional work (as a lawyer and concentrate on the study of the *Upaniṣad bhāṣyas* and the *Sūtra-bhāṣya*. His Holiness smiled and asked me if I would like a cow with one horn or a cow with both horns. The question surprised me and I could not catch its significance, I replied, 'Of course, a cow with both horns.' 'So should it be with you,' said His Holiness and continued. 'You must pursue the worldly occupation and also study the *śāstras* side by side, slowly shifting the emphasis to the latter until the world falls off from you. You are well grounded for a *dhārmic* way of life. You are influential and are respected. You should utilize this opportunity for securing support for service to society, which is only another name for worship of God.' A glorious concept: Service to society is worship of God."

"Oh, it will happen when you practise *sākṣibhāva*, identifying yourself with consciousness, the witness of even the mind."

- His Holiness

The source of the following information is K. S. Sankaran.


"A lady who was hardly thirty lost her husband in an accident. The responsibility of looking after her two young sons fell on her shoulders. One day, she requested His Holiness for an audience with Him. He asked her to come and see Him the next morning and told me also to come with her. She asked Him, 'Why is it that I have to undergo so much suffering? I have not committed any sin. Why then should I suffer? Now that my husband is dead, who will look after me?' Despite His busy schedule, His Holiness spent His time consoling her. He explained to her that the whole world is impermanent. He then proceeded to point out that one suffers due to one's own *karma*; there is nobody who does not undergo suffering. He advised, 'Your children are like your eyes. It is your duty to bring them up well. You are academically well-qualified. Take up a teacher's job. That would fetch you sufficient money to meet the needs of your family. My blessings are with you.'

No sooner had His Holiness blessed her, she felt great peace. Her morale grew manifold and she resolved that she would do as per His Holiness's advice. She visited the *Maṭha* regularly. By His Holiness's grace, she and her children did well in life."

The following is a transcription of excerpts from a talk by Dr. G. Lakshmiopathy.

"I had the great good fortune to be His Holiness's personal physician for a time. When I was first asked to treat His Holiness, I certainly could see this as a great honour. However, I had my own trepidation and little anxiety on this score because I was being asked to treat not an ordinary person but a great and exalted person, a *jīvanmukta*. My thoughts were on the following lines: 'Treating a great and exalted person like His Holiness is something quite beyond my training. Normally, when I examine a patient, I feel clean while the patient is the one who is unclean. In this case, however, I am going to examine someone who is so completely pure, physically, mentally and spiritually. I am the one, in this case, who is impure, for I am full of worldly ambitions and capable of unholy thoughts. Next, how am I going to ask His Holiness questions regarding sleep and diet, because persons like Him go into *nirvikalpa-samādhi* often and subsist on very little food? In fact, *yogins* can cure themselves if they want; doctors are only used as instruments by such people to enact divine dramas.' The first thing He told me when I saw Him was, 'Please treat me as a patient and not as a preceptor.' With that, His Holiness completely put me at ease. In fact, in the presence of His Holiness, I felt a kind of peace that I

had never known before. Every time that I examined Him, I used to do a *sāṣṭāṅga-namaskāra* and pray, 'Swamiji, I have given a prescription. Please make Yourself better.'



His Holiness said, "I stopped taking *āyurvedic* medicine because the *vaidya* is aged and has to put up with difficulty to prepare it. Of course, he is quite willing to do it for me but I don't want him troubled." Such was His compassion that He was more concerned about the physician's strain than His health.

"His Holiness had some breathing trouble and was under the treatment of an *āyurvedic* physician in Bangalore (Bengaluru). He told me that his medicine was giving Him great relief. Being an allopath, I felt jealous. When I went to see Him later, He said that His trouble had recurred. I queried, 'What about the *āyurvedic* medicine?' With some satisfaction, I thought that that medicine was ineffective. However, He said, 'I stopped taking it because the *vaidya* is aged and has to put up with difficulty to prepare it. Of course, he is quite willing to do it for me but I don't want him troubled. Hence, let me take your



medicine. Your medicine is also effective.’ Such was His compassion that He was more concerned about the physician’s strain than His health and was willing to satisfy me in spite of my jealousy.

“I suffer from migraine. Once, when I reached Sringeri, I had a terrible headache, nausea and vomiting. I was suffering greatly and lying in a corner, almost moaning. The *Maṭha’s* office then reached me with the message: ‘As soon as the doctor comes, His Holiness would like to see him.’ The moment I got the message, I sat up and was completely alright. This had never happened before. Miracles do happen.



"Left to myself, I would like to sit like this and meditate." Saying so, His Holiness went into a trance.



“His Holiness was ever in a state of equipoise and total peace. Once, in Coimbatore, His Holiness visited the Śāradā Temple and I went to have His *darśana*. A function was in progress. All kinds of people were around and the sound level was pretty high. *Nādasvara* was being played loudly. Apart from noise, there was smoke from the *homa-kuṇḍa*. I was finding it difficult to sit amidst the din and bustle, crowd, smoke and sweat. However, His Holiness was sitting on the dais, completely at peace, with a

beautiful smile on His face, eyes half closed. I thought that this was the greatest sight I had ever seen because I could not take my eyes off Him.

“When I went to see Him some time later in Sringeri, I was thinking that it would be nice if I saw Him again in that state. At that time, He was very busy and was also ill. I told Him, ‘*Gurunātha*, I think You are exerting too much and should take rest. If You were not a *Jagadguru*, I would not have allowed You to take up all these responsibilities.’ He said, ‘What can I do? Left to myself, I would like to sit like this and meditate.’ Saying so, He went into a trance. I did not know what to say. Once again, I had the opportunity to behold Him as He was when seated on the dais, glowing with *tejas*.”





The following was narrated by K. M. Balasubramanian.

“I once contracted severe diarrhoea and lay in my room. I did not even go for His Holiness’s *darśana* as I was exhausted, having had loose stools for three days. He asked someone in the *Maṭha* the reason for my absence. That person reported that I was unwell and suffering from diarrhoea. His Holiness straightaway came to where I was staying in the *Maṭha*. On seeing Him, I got up and prostrated before Him. He said, ‘Do not worry. I will send you some medicine’ and left. He then sent some medicine through an attendant. I found that it was made of herbs and was delicious and tasted like halwa. I had it once in the morning and again in


the evening. Actually, the first dose itself put an end to my diarrhoea. When I went for His Holiness’s *darśana*, He asked me, ‘How are you? How was the medicine?’ I replied, ‘I am fine. The medicine was like nectar.’ To this, His Holiness responded, ‘Earlier, when you had the disease, the medicine was nectar for you. If you have the same thing now, it will be poison. If anything remains of it, discard it.’”

After retirement, Thyagaraja Dikshitar settled down, with the permission of His Holiness, in Narasimhavana. He once fell ill. The doctor who examined determined that he needed to be hospitalised for a few days. He was, however, unwilling to consider this on the ground that he performed *agnihotra* every morning and evening and this would be disrupted if he were to be admitted. On learning of His refusal, His Holiness came to his house and asked him, “Would you prefer to perform *agnihotra* today and stop doing it for long thereafter or would you prefer going to the hospital now for a few days and, thereafter, duly resume performing *agnihotra*? If you do not effectively deal with your present illness, you would be going in for the first option that I mentioned.” Thyagaraja Dikshitar decided to get admitted to the hospital; he returned fit in a few days and, in the prescribed manner, resumed his daily *agnihotra*.

A *saṁnyāsin* staying in Sringeri was in a very poor state of health and not in a position to do even his *āhnika*. His Holiness told him to present his condition to the doctor who had come to Narasimhavana. The monk did so. He later told His Holiness that the doctor had prescribed medicines for him but he did not intend to take them. The reason he gave was, "I am a *saṁnyāsin*. A *saṁnyāsin* is not supposed to take care of his body."


His Holiness: Do you know that I, a *saṁnyāsin*, am also taking tablets?

*Saṁnyāsin*: Your Holiness is the Jagadguru Shankaracharya of the Sharada Peetham.



"I am not asking you to take medicines to render yourself fit to enjoy life. I want you to take medicines so that you are physically fit enough to carry out the duties of your *āśrama*, which you are unable to do now."

- His Holiness



His Holiness: I am not asking you to take medicines to render yourself fit to enjoy life. I want you to take medicines so that you are physically fit enough to carry out the duties of your *āśrama*, which you are unable to do now. By properly engaging in spiritual disciplines, you would do good to yourself and also be an inspiration to those who are suitably inclined, to lead a life of renunciation. If you are just lying in a corner breathing twenty times a minute, not only will you not be in a position to uplift yourself through spiritual disciplines, you would even cause some of those who are dispassionate to feel distaste for *saṁnyāsa*. As for myself, I take medicines because my *Guru* has instructed me to take care of this *Maṭha*; I am supposed to engage in what is prescribed for a *saṁnyāsin* and also to attend to people who come here for solace, clarifications and so on. In order to keep the body functional enough for this, I take the medicines prescribed. You too do so.

The *saṁnyāsin* was convinced with what His Holiness told him and took the medication prescribed for him.

The following was narrated by V. Subramanian.

"My association with His Holiness started in 1956 when He made His first visit to Kerala. He visited Nagercoil and from there my father (Vaidyanatha Iyer) escorted Him to a tiny village called Bhimanagari, which houses our family deity, Bālāmbā. His Holiness entered the small temple. He then instructed the priest to lift the small platform on which Bālāmbā



was kept, pointing out that in a particular portion below, a tile would be missing. One can imagine everybody's surprise when that was exactly what was found. His Holiness said, 'That is the place where an accomplished saint who was a member of this family attained *siddhi*. He passed away as a monk and so *ārādhana*, as is done for *saṁnyāsins*, must be performed for him; it should be done on the full moon day of the month of *vaiśākha*.' From then on, the *ārādhana* is performed every year on that day."

His Holiness was camping in Vathirairuppu (in Tamil Nadu) in October, 1957. After *pūjā*, He retired for the night to His room there. After some time, He

abruptly got up and quietly walked out of the residence. Except for a few street lamps that were flickering, it was pitch dark everywhere. The Chaturagiri hill was at a distance and the Mahalingaswami Temple was on its summit. His attention was drawn to it. He closed His eyes in contemplation, and after some time, started to head back to the camp. In the meantime, some disciples and townsfolk had woken up and, perplexed, approached His Holiness. His Holiness asked, "There is a temple on top of the hill. What temple is that?" Some replied, "That is the Mahalinga Temple." His Holiness declared, "I am going there tomorrow morning. Make preparations without delay." The

"That is the place where an accomplished saint who was a member of this family attained *siddhi*. He passed away as a monk and so *ārādhana*, as is done for *saṁnyāsins*, must be performed for him."


-His Holiness

next day, He proceeded by car to a small town at the base of the hill and from there ascended the hill by foot. He walked briskly. The others were unable to keep pace with Him and lagged far behind. He reached the top of the hill around 12:30 p.m. There was not even a trace of strain or fatigue on His face. He went to the Sundara-mahalinga Temple and then that of the Goddess. It was around 5:00 p.m. by the time His afternoon routine was completed. He then decided to visit another shrine on the hill, that of Candana-mahāliṅga. His Holiness permitted only Sundaram, a man who lived on the hill and knew every portion of it, to accompany Him. His Holiness proceeded in silence, leading. He had *darśana* of Candana-mahāliṅga. Telling Sundaram to wait, He headed for another peak. He crossed some rough paths and proceeded swiftly as if He was most familiar with the place. Sundaram was stunned to see the speed with which His Holiness was navigating the dense path and proceeding so comfortably to a part of the hill rarely visited by anyone. He had never before seen a stranger walk at such a great pace on the hill he knew so well. When it was past six o'clock but there was no sign of His Holiness, Sundaram climbed up a huge tree nearby. From his position at the top of the tree, He spotted His Holiness seated in a clearing on the hill. In front of His Holiness was a person in ochre robes, with matted hair tied in a knot. His Holiness appeared to be conversing with him. Sundaram thought he was hallucinating, for His Holiness had gone there alone and he had never seen that person before. Inexplicably experiencing haziness of vision and tiredness, he descended, rested for a while and returned to where He was supposed to wait. In a short while, His Holiness climbed down and returned to where Sundaram was waiting. His Holiness did not stop but continued to walk. He went to the Candana-mahāliṅga's shrine and climbed down the mountain. Sundaram quietly followed His Holiness. Subsequently, His Holiness returned to Vathirairuppu. Sundaram did not breathe a word of what had transpired that evening to anyone. However, later, when a *saṁnyāsin* known to him visited Chaturagiri, he told him all that had transpired. The *saṁnyāsin* was amazed and exclaimed that the person His Holiness conversed with that day was a great *siddha-puruṣa*, unavailable to




others. {These details were culled from two articles that appeared in the fortnightly Tamil magazine, *Shakti Vikatan*, in the issues dated 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2008 and 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2008. These two articles were written by Kudanthai Shyama and were a part of a series titled *Chaturagiri Yattirai* (Pilgrimage to Chaturagiri).}

Hariharasubramanian, a native of Vathirairuppu recently recalled that his father had told him, “His Holiness wished to meditate in solitude in the Chaturagiri hill for a few days. The devotees of the town had a tough time dissuading Him from doing so as they were afraid of His safety; the hill was home to wild beasts.”



His Holiness wished to do penance in solitude in the Chaturagiri hill for a few days. The devotees of the town had a tough time dissuading Him from doing so as they were afraid of His safety; the hill was home to wild beasts.



The following was narrated by Srinivasan of Singikulam.

“When His Holiness camped at Singikulam in Tamilnadu, on the day after His arrival, He walked early in the morning to the backyard of the house. I had to walk past the backyard to fetch milk for the *pūjā* and make other arrangements for the camp. I beheld His Holiness standing there and looking at the hill on top of which the temple of Goddess Bhagavatī is situated. Not wanting to disturb His Holiness, I stood silently at a distance. His Holiness noticed me and signalled me to proceed with my work. I obeyed. Later, at about 10:00 a.m., an attendant of His Holiness came to me and said, ‘His Holiness wishes to go to the hilltop and have the *darśana* of Goddess Bhagavatī.’ This was unexpected and we were all thrilled to hear this. Sometime later, He climbed the hill and spent some time in Her shrine. He then went to and saw all the eighteen fountains on the hill before descending.”

A person in his late twenties happened to visit Sringeri in 1984. On entering Sacchidananda Vilas, he told me, who was standing in the front hall, that he was a lawyer and proceeded to say, “I came here for sightseeing. I am an atheist but am curious to see what the head of this *Maṭha* is like. Can I see Him? As I have no respect for *saṁnyāsins*, I will neither remove my shirt nor prostrate before Him.” I told him, “His Holiness will be giving *darśana* in a few minutes. Anybody can go in. You can decide for yourself whether you want to go in or not.” I then went inside and, in a few minutes, opened the door for people to enter the room in the eastern side of Sacchidananda Vilas where His Holiness was seated. The lawyer followed a group of devotees into

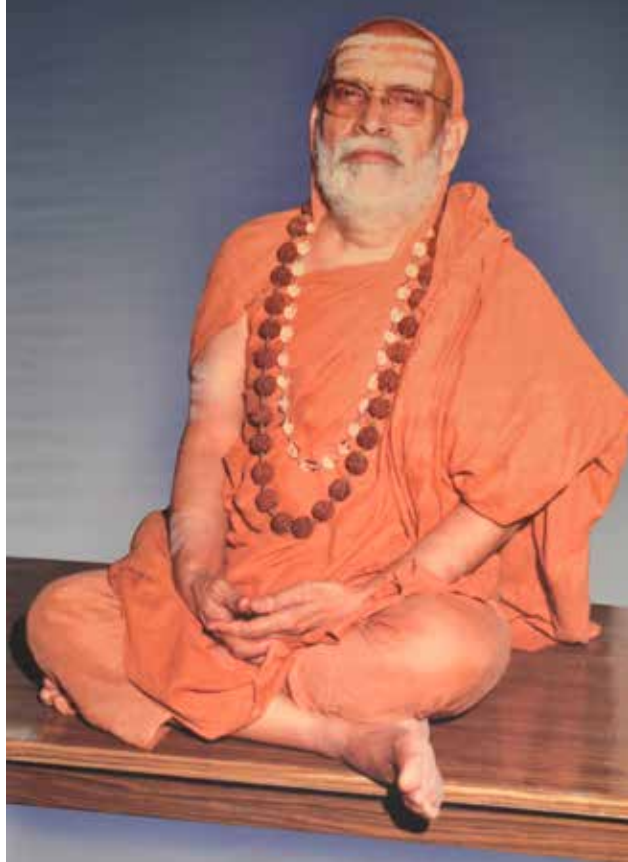
the room. He stood right at the back. In a few minutes, His Holiness's eyes fell on him. His Holiness beckoned to him, holding a fruit in His hand. The lawyer stepped forward, abruptly prostrated and remained so. Some time passed but the lawyer did not show any signs of getting up. Finally, His Holiness asked him to rise. He got up with tears in his eyes and, in a choked voice, requested His Holiness to bless him. His Holiness gave him His blessings and also *prasāda*. The man then went out. When I came out after some time, I found that the lawyer was the sole person in the veranda. He approached me and said, "Are you wondering why I behaved in this fashion?" I responded, "No, I have seen such things happen many a time."

The following was narrated by K. C. Mahadevan.

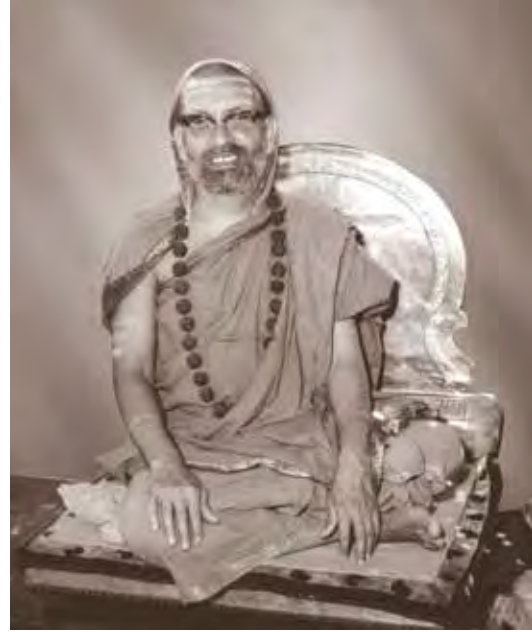
"A man came to the place where His Holiness was camping and started shouting, 'What are these Swamis for? What is their role in this world? I want to see this Swami and question him.' He had a pistol on his person. When the matter was reported to His Holiness, He calmly said, 'Let him in.' As he entered His Holiness's room, He welcomed him with a smile. The moment he looked at His Holiness, he unexpectedly joined his palms and then prostrated before Him. After he got up, His Holiness spoke with him and blessed him. He emerged a reformed man."

The following was penned by Nagendra Rao.

"In the summer of 1967, at the end of my first-year classes at the Indian Institute of Management in Calcutta (Kolkata), I went to Delhi to visit my parents. His Holiness was camping in Delhi at that time and my mother was very particular that I should go to seek His blessings. I mentioned to her that I was extremely allergic to meeting and wasting time on holy men and *samnyāsins*. However, after much persuasion by her, I agreed but told her that under no circumstances would I go in the traditional mode of visiting Him (which is wearing a dhoti and *aṅgavastra*). I would go just as I was, in a shirt and a pair of trousers, or I would not go at all. My mother had little choice and she accepted what I said with a somewhat heavy heart.



“We went to visit His Holiness. At that time, He was staying in the house of the then Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha. People had congregated to meet Him but somehow, we were called in immediately for a personal audience with Him. His Holiness was seated on a silver *āsana* in a corner of a fairly large room in the front portion of the house. When we were ushered into the room, He immediately beckoned to us to come to Him. It was at this point that, suddenly, a spontaneous transformation came over me. The innate purity of His nature and the great power of His *tapas* were such that I suddenly felt unclean and rather out of place in the vestments that I had come in and, therefore, was extremely reluctant to go forward. He was kindness itself and repeated several times that I should come forward and made me sit within a couple of feet from Him. His first response on my sitting down was, ‘Why did you not come to see me in Calcutta, my son? Your mother had shown me a photograph of yours and I was watching every day to see whether you were among the hundreds of people who came by.’ This was but one more surprise, which left me totally dumbfounded. In the first instance, I never really thought we could get in to see Him so quickly. And in the second instance, I certainly did not expect that He would remember me from the photograph that He had seen. Of course, at the time I had no idea of His Holiness’s phenomenal memory and His punctilious attention to even matters of the smallest



detail. Ordinary people often imagine limitations in great souls which are really not there, because they judge them by their own limited abilities and attitudes.

“Why did you not come to see me in Calcutta, my son? Your mother had shown me a photograph of yours and I was watching every day to see whether you were among the hundreds of people who came by.”

-His Holiness

“As I started to recover my power of speech, I felt one should be very honest in the presence of one who, I now started feeling, was a very unusual person and one of great spiritual magnitude. I launched into my explanation as to why I had not come to see Him in Calcutta. I explained to Him rather tersely that I had heard that He saw only people of wealth and high social standing and that I had really little use for meeting such personalities, no matter how spiritual

or famous or eminent they were considered to be. There was pin-drop silence from all the servitors around. In my estimate never before had anyone been quite so irreverent and that too in so explicit a manner, in front of His Holiness. I fully expected to be told to leave the room, never see His face again – in other words, some form of the Hindu equivalent of excommunication on the spot.

“His Holiness’s response was totally unexpected. He just smiled and said, ‘I am told you are a student of business administration. Are you?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ He then asked me if it was not true that I had to study some elements of law as part of my course work. I again said, ‘Yes.’ And He said, ‘Is it not also true that in law, as it is practised in the land, hearsay information is not considered evidence?’ I began to see what He was driving at and said He was correct. He then asked me that as a man endowed with considerable education and a fair degree of discrimination, was it not expected of me to have come there personally to see whether the allegations were true or unfounded. He was so logical and reasonable that I had really nothing left to say and I agreed with Him. What I also found remarkable at the time was that His Holiness used not the arcane letter and word of the traditional *śāstras* of which I knew little at the time and for which I had even less regard. He used the very branches of secular learning

with which I was fairly conversant and for which I had high regard, to make His point. This was another surprise to me. I had really not expected His Holiness to have such an immense understanding of and familiarity with the various branches of secular knowledge.

“At this stage, it suddenly seemed as if the flood-gates of a dam had opened and I then asked Him in very homely language as to what I should do to improve myself spiritually. His Holiness immediately said that I had already been initiated into the *Gāyatrī-mantra* and it was sufficient for me to repeat this. He then also told me to go to the seashore whenever





I had the opportunity, sit on the beach, and observe the waves coming in. I asked Him, 'Then what, Your Holiness?' He said, 'And observe and observe, and observe.' 'But Your Holiness, I am not anywhere close to the sea,' I said. He replied, 'Then go and look at the blue skies when there are no clouds.' 'And then, Your Holiness?' I asked. 'And then look and look and look and that would be the *sāadhanā* for you,' was the reply from Him. Since I had absolutely no acquaintance then with the formal methods of *dhyāna* and I had heard the word '*samādhi*' in only a vague sort of way, the full significance of what His Holiness told me escaped me. It has been my experience since that time that His Holiness's words were never uttered in vain and they always bore fruit sooner or later."

The following was narrated by Ramasubramania Iyer.

"My ailing grandmother was in her nineties when His Holiness graced my house in Tirunelveli. Compassionately addressing her, He said, 'Chant the name of Rāma continuously.' My grandmother replied that she would do so. His Holiness did not leave the matter at that. 'Saying that you will do it is insufficient. You must actually do it. Now repeat after me.' He then chanted the sacred *Rāma-nāma* and she chanted after Him. How fortunate she was to have received initiation at that age and that too unasked and further, with the *Guru* Himself coming to her! She proceeded to chant the *Rāma-nāma* continuously. Some months passed. Her condition became critical. Under these conditions there was every chance that her mental chanting would get interrupted. Strange are the ways in which the grace of His Holiness acts. Unexpectedly, a group arranged for *akhaṇḍa* (unbroken) chanting of *Rāma-nāma*. The place of chant being nearby, the divine name reverberated in my home day and night. Shortly thereafter, my grandmother breathed her last. Thus till her last days, an opportunity had been provided for her to be sanctified by the holy name of Lord Rāma.

During His visit to Thenkarai in December, 1981, His Holiness was returning after His *Candramaulīśvara-pūjā* at night to His room, which was on the first floor of the



"Then go and look at the blue skies when there are no clouds. And then look and look and look and that would be the *sāadhanā* for you."

-His Holiness





building. Upon His climbing a few steps, He experienced breathlessness and sat down on a step for a while. A devotee remarked, “The steps are steep.” “The steps are the same as they were in 1958 when I came here. It is just that I have become old,” smilingly retorted His Holiness, much to the amusement of all present there.

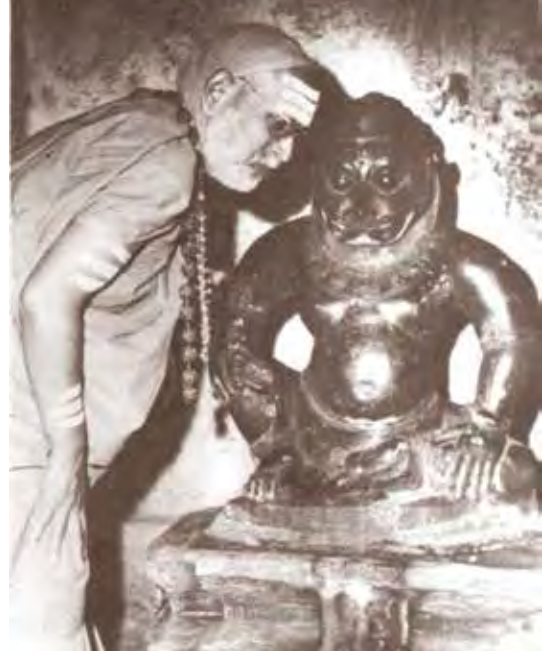
One day when His Holiness was camping at Rameshwaram in 1980 and was in His room with Vaidyasubramanya Iyer, He could hear, from a loud speaker outside, a *Harikathā* (discourse on God, with singing) on the greatness of Rameshwaram being delivered by Krishna Premi, an eminent *Harikathā* exponent. Even as His Holiness was listening to the glories of the Lord, He closed His eyes and remained motionless for long. Thereafter, He slowly opened His eyes and said to Vaidyasubramanya Iyer, “I had gone into *Samādhi*.” Such was the His devotion to God that on hearing an exposition of the Lord’s glories, He spontaneously

became fully focused on the Lord. {This is based on an article in Tamil published in the magazine *Bhagavata Dharma* in July 2012.}

When His Holiness camped in Dewas in Madhya Pradesh in January 1983, as He was seated giving *darśana* to the public in the morning, some started to sing a Hindi *bhajan*. Soon, numerous others joined in. As He heard the words to the effect, “This is my prayer that my mind should remain centred every moment on Your feet; on Your feet, O Bhagavān,” tears of joy began to well up in His eyes. As the singing progressed, He became increasingly moved and soon plunged into meditation. He opened His eyes only sometime after the singing was complete. He then appreciated the crowd and blessed that their hearts be ever full of devotion.



Such was the His devotion to God that on hearing an exposition of the Lord’s glories, He spontaneously became fully focussed on the Lord.



Many a time, when His Holiness stood next to the sanctum sanctorum of Goddess Śāradāmbā in Sringeri, His lips moved and it was discernible that He was conversing with Her. When He read, in the course of His worship of Lakṣmī-Narasimha every year on *Narasimha-jayantī*, the chapter in the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* about the Lord's manifestation, He invariably became overcome with emotion. On coming across two photographs, one in which His Holiness appeared to be saying something to an idol of Narasimha in a temple and another in which He appeared to be listening to the Lord saying something, I asked His Holiness about this. "That day, I did speak with Narasimha. I asked Him if He was quite comfortable there," He clarified. "The Lord told me that He was."

His Holiness's performance of *pūjā* was, throughout, a feast for the eyes. He performed



"That day, I did speak with Narasimha. I asked Him if He was quite comfortable there. The Lord told me that He was."  
-His Holiness



*arcana* in such an exquisite manner that the flowers that He gently threw up from His seat to the *Candramaulīśvara-liṅga* placed on the top step inside the *pūjā-maṇḍapa* often formed a pretty pattern. When He performed *arcana* with plenty of dark maroon roses one night in Chennai, the flowers offered formed a neat, thick garland around the *liṅga*. The gathering of devotees that witnessed this even forgot the normal decorum and started clapping spontaneously.





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"The *naivedya* was very hot. How could I offer it to the Lord? So, I had to wait for some time for it to cool down before I offered it to Him."

-His Holiness



The following was narrated by A. Ramaswamy, a close disciple of His Holiness.

“Once during a *pūjā* session, I noticed that the curtain that had been drawn to enable His Holiness offer *naivedya* to the Lord in private as per tradition was opened after a longer time than usual. Later, when I had the *darśana* of His Holiness, I was curious to find out what caused the unusual delay. Straightaway, I posed my question to His Holiness. He said, ‘The *naivedya* was very hot. How could I offer it to the Lord? So I had to wait for some time for it to cool down before I offered it to Him.’ His Holiness’s devotion to God was unparalleled. His performance of *pūjā* was bewitching. He never thought of the idols as mere images of God. He always felt the living presence of God in them. Naturally, He did not wish to offer a *naivedya* that was too hot and would hurt the Lord.”

He took personal interest in the welfare and the studies of the students of the *pāṭhaśālā* in Sringeri and spoke to the students now and then. He renovated the *pāṭhaśālā* building and provided them comfortable accommodation and a good atmosphere for studies. At times, he probed the students’ knowledge by gentle questioning. If the student did not know the answer, He never humiliated the boy but merely went on to the next question, often after having given a brief clarification.



He established *Veda-pāṭhaśālās* at numerous places. He started the *Veda-poṣaka-sabhā* for facilitating the teaching, study and propagation of the *Vedas*. Through it, He

encouraged *Vedic* scholars by providing them financial assistance, honouring them and presenting them with cash awards. The *Veda-poṣaka-sabhā* has been unfailingly doing this every year during the five-day *Śaṅkara-jayantī* celebrations. It also conducts *Veda*-examinations in this period; students from *pāṭhaśālās* all over the country have been taking these highly valued examinations. The successful students receive certificates and cash awards. *Vedic* scholars are honoured on other occasions too such as on *āśvayuja-kṛṣṇa-caturdaśī*, His Holiness’s birthday.

He took personal interest in the welfare and the studies of the students of the *pāṭhaśālā* in Sringeri and spoke to the students now and then.

The following was narrated by Venkatappa Yajnanarayana (who became Śrī Jñānānanda-tīrtha after *saṁnyāsa*).



Appreciating the *agnihotrin's* strict adherence to his *dharma* despite his penury, His Holiness instructed the officials of the *Maṭha* to construct a new house at the expense of the *Maṭha* and offer it free of cost to the sincere *agnihotrin*.



“As I was fortunate enough to accompany His Holiness during His tour of Andhra Pradesh, I was able to witness numerous incidents that underscored the faith He had in the *Vedas* and the regard He had for *vaidikas*. Whenever He visited a village or a town in Andhra Pradesh, He posed the question, ‘Is there any *agnihotrin* (a maintainer of the ordained fires and performer of the *agnihotra* rite every day at dawn and dusk) living in this place?’ If the answer was ‘Yes,’ He expressed His wish to pay a visit to the house concerned. Whenever He visited any such house, He praised the *agnihotrin* for his faith in performing such rites and specially blessed him and his family. He also advised the people who accompanied Him to such places to be sincere in the performance of their *nitya-karma*.

“Once during His camp at Tenali, He heard about a sincere *agnihotrin* and decided to visit his house. The person concerned was informed about His Holiness’s proposed visit and he was, naturally, delighted. When His Holiness came to his place, He asked him to take Him to the place of his *agnihotra* worship. The house he lived in as also the shelter where he performed *agnihotra* were in a dilapidated condition. Appreciating his strict adherence to his *dharma* despite his penury, His Holiness instructed the officials of the *Maṭha* to construct a new house at the expense of the *Maṭha* and offer it free of cost to the sincere *agnihotrin*. We were all moved at this compassionate gesture of His Holiness. Within months, the house was ready for the *agnihotrin* to occupy.”

His Holiness presided over the conduct of several *Atirudra-mahāyāgas* (in which the *Vedic Śrīrudra-praśna* is collectively chanted 14,641 times and offerings are made into fire), *Sahasra-cāṇḍī-mahāyāgas* (in which the *Devī-māhātmya* is chanted a thousand times and offerings are made into fire), *koṭi-kuṅkuma-arcana*s (in which *arcana* is done to *śrī-cakras*, chanting the names of the Divine Mother from the *Lalithā-sahasranāma*) and *homas*,



such as the *Ṛgveda-saṁhitā-homa* (in which the hymns of the *Ṛk-saṁhitā* are chanted and offerings made into fire), *Yajurveda-saṁhitā-homa* and *Sāmaveda-saṁhitā-homa*. All these were conducted for the welfare of all.



There is no record in the Sringeri Math of an *Atirudra mahāyāga* or a *sahasra-caṇḍī-mahāyāga* having been performed in the *Maṭha* prior to Tipu Sultan requesting that a *sahasra-caṇḍī-mahāyāga* be done.

Tipu wrote (*Selections from the*

*records of the Sringeri Mutt*, Vol. I, Mysore, 1927. Record 65), “I have written to the Asaf of Nagar to supply you all the materials required for the great *yāga*; Triyambaka Rao of Nagar and the Amildar of Koppa will camp at Sringeri to see to the necessary supplies of vessels, clothes, images, etc. Kindly see that the rituals are performed according to the prescribed rules, giving liberal cash presents to Brāhmaṇas and feed them in thousands every day.” In a subsequent letter, he acknowledged the miraculous effects of the *yāga*; how he was successful in his enterprise, how rains fell and how the land yielded rich harvests. It was only over 150 years later that such a *yāga* was performed in Sringeri. This was organized by His Holiness in connection with the completion of 60 years by His *Guru*.

After becoming the pontiff, the first time His Holiness presided over the performance of an *Atirudra* was at Rudrapatna; this was conducted from 20<sup>th</sup> December, 1961 to 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1962. The first time He presided over a *sahasra-caṇḍī-mahāyāga* during His pontificate was at Sringeri in March, 1963; this was conducted for world-peace. As for the first *koṭi-kuṅkuma-arcana*, it was performed in Sringeri, in January 1964.

The following was narrated by Vaidyasubramanya Iyer.

“In 1965, at my request, His Holiness was pleased to come to Madras (Chennai) and bless the *Atirudra-mahāyāga* and *sahasra-caṇḍī-mahāyāga* celebrated at a site, then belonging to me, opposite my house. A few years earlier, in 1960, when His Holiness had been walking on that very site, I told Him that it was an unclean place; I did not



know beforehand that He would come there. He remarked, standing near some plantain trees, ‘Why do you say so? It seems to me to be a sacred place.’ In 1965, the two *yāgas* were performed at that place. The *pūrṇāhuti* (performed at end of the rite) was over by noon. That evening, at the close of my speech in the public function presided over by His Holiness, without any premeditation, I dedicated the site for temples to be constructed for Vināyaka, Śāradāmbā and Śāṅkara-Bhagavatpāda and for a ‘Pravachana Mandiram (Hall for discourses)’ to be built behind them. I did not know why I suddenly took that decision. After the function was over, His Holiness told me that that afternoon, He had discussed with His Personal Assistant, Padmanabha Upadhyaya, as to whether I would be willing to give that site for the purpose of putting up temples there as it had become sanctified by the *Atirudra* and *Sahasra-caṇḍī*. Upadhyaya had told Him that the plot would be very expensive to purchase and so they should not mention the idea to me. His Holiness had then dropped the matter. I explained to His Holiness that the thought of making the announcement had arisen suddenly in my mind. It had arisen only because the same thought had occurred to His Holiness earlier and my mind had become sanctified with the reflection of His Holiness’s thought. This is now the site of the Pravacana Mandiram and the three shrines and the road in front has been named ‘Sringeri Math Road’.”

The following was narrated by S. Ramakrishnan.

“In 1977, during His stay at Chennai, in response to the request of myself and the other committee members, His Holiness came to a vacant plot in the street where I reside, graced the assembled devotees and also performed *pūjā* there. Later, I spontaneously experienced an intense desire to construct a temple for Goddess Śāradā at this place. My associates and I managed to purchase the plot and had it registered in the name of the Sringeri Math. Vadiyasubramanya Iyer laid the foundation stone for the construction and it was in his speech that he disclosed for the first time that after His visit to this place in 1977, His Holiness had expressed to him that it would be good if a temple were to be constructed here. His words cannot be in vain. Purely by His grace, we were able to surmount every problem, such as paucity of funds, and successfully build a temple housing the idols of Śāradāmbā, Vināyaka and Kṛṣṇa. His Holiness camped here for two days each during His visits to Chennai in 1982 and 1986; Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī-



tīrtha Mahasvāmin, the present pontiff, performed the *kumbhābhiṣeka* of the temple in 1982.”



His Holiness invited those knowledgeable in the *śāstras*, such as *Vedānta*, *Tarka*, *Mīmāṃsā* and *Vyākaraṇa*, from all over the country to participate in the *Vidvat-sadas* (assembly of scholars commencing every year on *Vināyaka-*

*caturthī* and ending on the subsequent *paurṇamī*. A scholar par excellence, He presided over and personally participated in the annual *Vidvat-sadas*. He ensured that humiliation of others, particularly budding scholars, was not indulged in and if any such attempt were made by a *paṇḍita*, He gently intervened. When students spoke, He encouraged them by posing simple questions that they could have the pleasure of successfully answering.

The following was narrated by A. Ramaswamy.

“I was in my teens when I chanced to attend a *vidvat-sadas* at Sringeri. Realising that I could not make out anything from the scholarly debates of the assembled *paṇḍitas*, I left the *sadas*. After the night *Candramaulīśvara-pūjā*, His Holiness sent for me and enquired why I did not sit through the *sadas*. I replied that it did not make sense to me to sit in the *sadas*, pretending as if I was able to grasp the import of the scholarly discussions, when, in reality, I did not comprehend anything whatsoever.

“No, that’s not the right attitude,’ His Holiness corrected me. ‘It is not necessary that you should be able to grasp everything that is discussed in the *sadas*. Even the mere hearing of the *śāstras* will fetch you *puṇya*. So it is sufficient if you sit in a *sadas* and listen to the scriptural discussions. From now on, make it a point to attend *vidvat-sadas* whenever you get an opportunity. Sometime or the other, you will

“It is not necessary that you should be able to grasp everything that is discussed in the *sadas*. Even mere hearing of *śāstras* will fetch you *puṇya*.

- His Holiness



start comprehending the import of these scriptural discussions.' I followed His Holiness's advice, and, needless to mention, I immensely benefited from it."

For the propagation of Sanskrit, His Holiness started the *Sura-sarasvatī-sabhā*. This *sabhā* has a graded sequence of courses, with books for each level and teachers to train students. Those passing the examinations are awarded certificates. For spreading *sanātana-dharma* and facilitating connection with the Sringeri Math, He started magazines called *Śaṅkara-kṛpā* in Tamil, Kannada and Telugu and *Tattvāloka* in English. The Abhinava Vidyatheertha Mahaswamigal Education Trust was started with the blessings of His Holiness and caters to the publication of books; *Tattvāloka* is published under its aegis.



Śaṅkara-bhagavadpāda established this *pīṭha* for *dharma-pracāra* (propagating *dharma*) and not for the *pracāra* (broadcasting) of its own good deeds (*dharma*)!



Besides giving a fillip to the learning of the *Vedas* and the *Śāstras*, He also encouraged secular education. Apart from the girls' school that He started in Sringeri in 1972, He founded the Jnanodaya School in Bengaluru in April 1988. As intended by Him, this has developed into a big institution. He was the patron of the Sree Shankara College at Kalady since 1960; this institution provides education leading to university degrees in Science and Arts.

T. S. Nagarajan narrated the following conversation that he had had with His Holiness.

I: Even those who hardly do a good deed take to boisterous propaganda. The Sringeri Sharada Peetham is involved in initiating and executing so many *dhārmika* activities for the welfare of people but does not publicise such good deeds. Many people are not even aware of the good work of the *pīṭha*. I am agonised at this state of affairs.

His Holiness: Śaṅkara-bhagavadpāda established this *pīṭha* for *dharma-pracāra* (propagating *dharma*) and not for the *pracāra* (broadcasting) of its own good deeds (*dharma*)!

The following is excerpted from an article by S. Y. Krishnaswamy published in a souvenir in 1983.

“His discourses are always tempered to the occasion and by logic and analogy and often by illustrative anecdotes, He makes what is difficult look easy.

“Once, when I ventured to ask Him about a concept of salvation in which God and the individual continued to remain separate, He said, ‘What kind of salvation is this? Even after obtaining *mokṣa*, you are Krishnaswamy and I am a pontiff and I must keep wondering if you are going to do *namaskāra* to me!’

“Once, in order to expound the variety in God’s creation and God’s endowment to each of a particular skill for survival, His Holiness said, ‘Take the bees. They fabricate a hive consisting of many apertures. There is a uniformity and perfection about the honeycombs which are remarkable. Birds make nests. One is surprised at the intricacy displayed in joining the little twigs together so as to make the nests stable. The mosquitoes sit on our skin to drink our blood. They do not take as much time as a doctor does to take blood specimen from our body.’

“He could go on and on with hundreds of such examples. Only the great can simplify the non-simple.”

On His tours, it was customary for Him to give at least one *anugraha-bhāṣaṇa* (benedictory address) at every city, town or village that He visited. Though He delivered thousands of discourses, not one of them was discordant with another, even when the verses taken up by Him for exposition had dissimilar meanings. This was because He put things in the proper perspective. For example, in a speech delivered in Chennai, in Tamil, in January 1982, on the topic of *karma*, He cited a verse of Bhartṛhari’s *Nīti-śataka* to the effect, “Salutations to that *karma* on account of which Brahmā, like a potter, is constantly engaged in



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the task of creation; Viṣṇu was hurled into the problem-maze of ten incarnations; Śiva was forced to wander for alms with a skull in His hands and the Sun is compelled to daily course through the skies.” However, He put it into proper perspective by saying, “The poet has said so. He has given an exaggerated account in order to highlight the power of fate. Actually, free will does play a major role and Īśvara is not bound by *karma*.”



Another aspect of His benedictory addresses was His practical approach. For instance, speaking on the study of the *Vedas*, He said, “A parrot and a man may utter the same words. A person goes to another in response to the latter’s call but does not give the same weightage to the same words

uttered by a parrot. The chanting of a *Veda-panḍita* and that being played back by a tape recorder may sound similar. However, the former is chanting the *Veda*, while the latter is not. The scriptures specify that the *Veda* must be learnt only from a *Guru* if it is to be efficacious. It may be possible to learn by rote *Vedic* passages by employing a recorder. However, this will not confer the *puṇya* that learning from a *Guru* would. Nowadays, however, some have difficulty in finding a good *Vedic* scholar to teach them regularly and for long; also, because of their hectic work schedules, they seem to find it difficult to go to a *Veda-vidvān*’s place every day for long. Even such persons will do well to learn at least a few times from a teacher and get the words and intonations right. Thereafter, it does not matter if they employ recordings to strengthen and refresh their memories.”



“A parrot and a man may utter the same words. A person goes to another in response to the latter’s call but does not give the same weightage to the same words uttered by a parrot. The chanting of a *Veda-panḍita* and that being played back by a tape recorder may sound similar. However, the former is chanting the *Veda*, while the latter is not.”

- His Holiness



His Holiness commenced His discourses with an invocatory verse about God and ended them by

chanting, in effect, “Victory to the Lord” and getting His audience too to do so; the exact words that He normally chanted were, “*hara namaḥ pārvatī-pataye hara hara mahādeva. jānakī-kānta-smaraṇam jaya jaya rāma rāma.*” He thereby indicated that one should constantly think of God or do so at least at the start and end of every activity.

As was apparent to anyone who listened to them attentively and with devotion, His Holiness’s talks were beneficial, pregnant with import, lucid, practical, punctuated with rib-tickling humour, cogent and smooth-flowing, with not a single sentence or phrase out of place or superfluous. They also bore, when relevant, the unmistakable stamp of His own direct experience. The following comprises extracts from a benedictory address of His Holiness at Chennai in 1982; that He was speaking on the basis of the scripture as also His own experience is patent.



“Practice meditation, commenced in the aforesaid manner, with just a form of God as the object of focus and with the eyes kept closed.

Some day that divine form will be apprehended even when the eyes are opened, as though it has manifested itself in front of you.”

-His Holiness



“Practice meditation, commenced in the aforesaid manner, with just a form of God as the object of focus and with the eyes kept closed. Some day that divine form will be apprehended even when the eyes are opened, as though it has manifested itself in front of you. For this, what is needed is perseverance for a time with the practice of meditation. As one persists with the practice, there finally occurs the direct perception of the divinity that was meditated upon. When this stage is reached, if one were to have something in mind at that time, one would even receive clarification regarding it. That response would characterise the word of God. The person concerned can uplift himself as also those around him. You can personally experience all this, subject to your assiduously striving for a time towards that end.

“Can meditation be done on the Supreme as devoid of attributes? Yes, it can. You may ask, ‘How should I do it?’ Behold an external light briefly. Forget the world while doing so. While you take no notice of the world, close your eyes. Conceive that both your eyes are proceeding to look within. As you conceive thus, a light shall be seen on its own. What kind of light? What usually shows up is a spontaneous glow that is bluish or one that bears semblance to moonlight. When the light manifests, promptly think, ‘I am of the very nature of pure consciousness. Consciousness is all-pervasive,’ and retain just this thought. If you practice maintaining this thought, you shall progress all the way up to *asamprajñāta-samādhi*. With progression in practice, your meditation shall ripen into *asamprajñāta-samādhi* proper that results in the dawn of enlightenment.

“Due to the excellence of meditation, there arises in the mind the realization of the Supreme Brahman. There occurs Brahman’s *sphuraṇa*, manifestation. What is this manifestation like? It is like when we sometimes aver, ‘Aha! This is now so obvious.’ After such manifestation of the Supreme Brahman, there is no further requirement to meditate. The Supreme Brahman, which manifested, continues to remain unveiled.”

The *Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad* describes the *Guru* whom a disciple desirous of enlightenment should approach, as versed in the scripture and established in the Supreme Brahman; it goes on to teach that those who approach such an enlightened *Guru* with some desire obtain the consummation of that desire, while those who are dispassionate and serve him are freed from rebirth. The *Kaṭha-upaniṣad* points out that one does not become enlightened when taught the Truth by one who is unenlightened. Bhagavatpāda has described the *Guru* to be sought as one who has realized the Truth and is ever intent on what is good for his disciple. Vedānta-deśika, the eminent *Viśiṣṭādvaitin* philosopher and preceptor who lived in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, has described an ideal *Guru* in the first verse of his *Nyāsa-vimśati*. In a talk delivered by His Holiness in the Meenakshi Amman Temple in Madurai in 1958 and attended by thousands, His Holiness took up this verse and, elaborating on it, spoke



of the characteristics of a *Guru*. Such was His broadmindedness and readiness to accept whatever was good that it did not even strike Him as unusual that He, an *Advaitin* and the pontiff of a *Maṭha* founded by Śāṅkara-bhagavatpāda, was taking up, and that too, in a *Śaiva* temple, a verse of a *Viśiṣṭādvaitin* who had attacked *advaita* in his works such as *Śata-dūṣaṇī*. That verse conveys, “One who is desirous of liberation should seek a preceptor who is (a) grounded in a good tradition, (b) a person of steady knowledge (of the Truth), (c) sinless, (d) versed in the scripture, (e) established in *Brahman*, (f) replete with the *sattva-guṇa*, (g) a speaker of what is true (or the Truth), (h) with conduct that is in accordance with the prescribed codes, (i) free from showing off, jealousy and other such negative traits, (j) unmoved by sense-objects, (k) an enduring friend (=not one who abandons a disciple), (l) compassionate and (m) corrector of disciples when they err.” His Holiness had in full measure each and every characteristic of an ideal *Guru* spoken of in the *Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad*, by Bhagavatpāda and in this verse.







## CHAPTER 17

# At Home With the Young



Though children and great sages are poles apart since the former are devoid of knowledge while the latter have reached the acme of insight, sages seem to be often attracted towards children, perhaps because of the latter's innocence. His Holiness was no exception. He readily extended His affection and kindness to them.

On an occasion, His Holiness was seated in the front veranda of Sacchidananda Vilas in Narasimhavana giving *darśana* to the assembled devotees. At the rear end of the gathering stood a young boy and his sister. His Holiness noticed them as they were straining to get a clear view of Him. He quickly beckoned to them to come near Him. Eagerly, the boy and the girl approached Him. His Holiness tenderly enquired their names. The children were thrilled to hear His Holiness speak to them and joyfully gave their names. "Where are your parents?," His Holiness then asked. "As we wished to

Sages seem to be often attracted towards children, perhaps because of the latter's innocence. His Holiness was no exception. He readily extended His affection and kindness to them.

see Your Holiness, we crossed the Tuṅgā and came here," replied the boy. "Our parents have gone to see some of the places on the other side of the river." His Holiness was pleased with the faith of the children and graciously asked, "What do you wish?" The children sought to be blessed that they progress in their studies. His Holiness readily gave His benediction and prophesied, "You will turn out

to be good graduates.” He blessed the children with silver coins of Śāradāmbā, which are normally given only to those who perform *pādapūjā*. If He found young ones to be sincere enough, He did not even hesitate to bless them with *mantropadeśa* and initiate them into the spiritual path at a young age itself.

He had, on more than one occasion, given students private interviews, clarified their doubts – material and spiritual – and also solved their problems. His smiling countenance and easy approachability generally put the young questioners totally at ease so that the boys and girls felt at home with Him.

He had, on more than one occasion, given students private interviews, clarified their doubts – material and spiritual – and also solved their problems. His smiling countenance and easy approachability generally put the young questioners totally at ease so that the boys and girls felt at home with Him. In spite of His tight schedule, He normally did not turn down requests from schools for addressing students. In His message to them, He stressed the importance of their duties – sincerity towards studies and inculcating good traits. He exhorted them to cultivate the eight *ātmaguṇas* listed by sage Gautama. These eight qualities are: Compassion towards all beings, forbearance, freedom from jealousy, purity (physical and mental), freedom from laziness, auspiciousness,

absence of stinginess and freedom from attachment. His Holiness’s exposition of these may be seen later in this book in the chapter titled *Cogent Elucidations*.

His Holiness taught the young that it was important that they should be grateful, respectful and obedient to their parents, elders and teachers. He pointed out that ingratitude was, according to the scripture, unpardonable. Since parents normally accompanied their young wards when the latter were addressed by His Holiness, He reserved some advice for them as well. He said that narrating to their wards good stories from the *purāṇas* served to strengthen their moral values. For instance, on hearing the story of Hariścandra and of the success he attained in the end, one may feel inclined to speak the truth. His Holiness told the parents that loving their wards and paying suitable attention to them is necessary and they should do what they can to ensure that their children do not go astray.

A certain devotee's son had no inclination towards religion. Much as the father tried to goad him and put him in the theistic path, he could not succeed. He submitted his

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His Holiness taught the young that it was important that they should be grateful, respectful and obedient to their parents, elders and teachers.

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“Despite the sincere and repeated efforts of the parents, if a child does not assimilate good values owing to strong adverse tendencies of the past, parents have little choice but to remain calm and unperturbed.”

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- His Holiness

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plight to His Holiness. His Holiness told him, “While you are the cause of your offspring's birth, like every child, he has brought with him *saṁskāras* (impressions and tendencies) from his previous lives. Those tendencies do have an influence on the way he thinks and behaves. For your part, you should persuasively tell him what is good for him and set an example by the way you conduct yourself. That will suffice. Do not be unduly perturbed over this.” It dawned on the devotee that parents have the responsibility to see that their children imbibe good values. However, despite their sincere and repeated efforts, if a child does not assimilate those values owing to strong adverse tendencies of the past, parents have little choice but to remain calm and unperturbed.

When His Holiness was camping at Dharwad, at the request of the Headmistress of an orphanage, He readily consented to visit the school. The Headmistress showed His Holiness around the place. She then introduced her wards to Him one by one, saying, ‘I found this one abandoned in a railway station at the age of three. This one was picked up from a dustbin...’ As He listened to her and saw the orphans, his heart melted and He was visibly moved.

He was at the Shankara Math, Shankarapura, Bengaluru, for His *Cāturmāsya* in 1987. One morning, students of Shree Ramana Maharshi Academy for the Blind were brought there; they wanted to sing *bhajans* in His presence. To fulfil their wish, He, who had finished giving *tīrtha-prasāda*, continued to sit in the hall. The *bhajans* commenced. The sheer impact of the chorus was such that in less than a minute, tears swelled in His eyes. He made no attempt to contain them for almost the entire duration of about thirty minutes. After they were done, the children were lined up in a queue to receive His blessings. He blessed them by firmly placing a fruit in the outstretched palms of each and every one of them. He also gave away gifts of clothes to them.



Usha Venkatachalam recalled: “I was a kid of four when in 1964, His Holiness graced our house during His visit to Tirunelveli. He blessed us all with *prasāda* and got into His car, about to leave. I was happily engrossed in some play inside the house and did not realize that His Holiness was leaving. That was when, from deep inside the lengthy passage of our village house where I was at play, I heard the sound of His car start. I darted from inside screaming, ‘*Guru-svāmi* is leaving.’ Hearing my shrill shout, His Holiness instructed His driver to stop. It took me a while to cover the long distance to the veranda. He waited for

me despite His tight schedule. Once I approached the car, He gave me a fruit and most lovingly blessed me placing His lotus hand on my head.”

B. R. Vidyashankar was eleven when he had this memorable encounter with Him: “In December 1976, I tagged along with my grandparents to Panaji where His Holiness was then camping. It was about six in the morning. While all others were up and about by then, I was still fast asleep. His Holiness came out to behold the *ārati* of the *dhanur-māsa-pūjā* to *Candramaulīśvara*. I was then woken up by my grandparents; I later learnt that He had indicated to my grandparents to let me be. Still sleepy, I stood there rubbing my eyes as He was on His way inside. Prodded by my grandmother, I prostrated before Him. I was unmindful of having been in my shorts and shirt. He beckoned me to follow Him and led me to His room on the fourth floor. ‘How do you

find Goa? Are you having a nice time?’ He asked me. I was fully awake by then, thanks to the little walk. ‘Yes, having a good time,’ I replied. He stood at the big open window that overlooked the harbour and asked me to come near. It was dark outside on that winter morning.



In the lights of the ships and boats there, I could see the harbour and the Mandovi River. What a beautiful sight it was! He made it all the more memorable for me as He pointed out, 'Look at that large ship over there at a distance. Do you also see the Mandovi River that is meeting the sea? See how beautiful the scene is!' After that, He did not send me empty-handed. He blessed me with a pack of dates. What a way to be woken up at the start of a day! By His grace, I can relive every bit of that fascinating experience to this day."

The following was recalled by Ramanatha Sastry: "I went with Vaarini, my two-year old daughter to His Holiness's Coimbatore camp for His *darśana*. As we were about to take leave, He pointed to the tray of fruits in front of Him to Vaarini and asked her to indicate her favourite one. She looked at the collection for a while and refused to choose any. She mumbled something; I clarified that she liked biscuits and that was what she did not find there. He promptly despatched one of His attendants to get a packet of biscuits. On seeing the packet brought, her face lit in delight. But not all was so smooth. He handed to her two biscuits from the packet. Vaarini refused to take the bait. She wanted all of the packet and remonstrated right there. After a few moments of harmless teasing, seeing her unrelenting, He put those couple of biscuits back in the packet and now held it forth for her. Her anger turned to glee in a trice and she snatched the pack from His hands. With a smile, He remarked, 'Look at her self-esteem at this tender age. She is just about two and is so assertive and demanding!'"

His Holiness knew of seven-year-old Rajalakshmi's fondness for pomegranates. He asked her to pick her choice from the tray of fruits in front of Him. Unable to find any pomegranates there, she settled for an apple and picked it. He then pulled out a large



bright red pomegranate that He had concealed behind Him. She wanted that. "You have made your choice already. Why ask for this now?" He teased. After some pleading, she had both from Him.

His Holiness was in Kalady in 1980 for *Śaṅkara-jayantī* and an *Atirudra-mahāyajña*. Young Viswanath went there with his grandparents. Having helped himself to a sumptuous lunch at Thekke Madom, he went to sleep in the shade of a tree in the garden. By about 3 p.m.,



His Holiness came to Thekke Madom on His rounds. He was accompanied by Ramaswamy and Mahabala, His personal attendants. Seeing Viswanath sleeping there, Ramaswamy tried to shake him out of his slumber, saying, “Get up, get up! His Holiness is on His way here.” With his eyes still shut, Viswanath summarily dismissed the intrusion. “Don’t lie! His Holiness is in Kalady; I am in Bangalore (Bengaluru),” He muttered and quietly went back to sleep. Watching all this from a distance, His Holiness was amused. He instructed that the boy not be disturbed and walked on. Around 5 p.m., Ramaswamy informed Viswanath of what had transpired a couple of hours back. The next morning, when His Holiness was blessing the devotees with

*tīrtha-prasāda* at the usual hour, guilt and shame tormented Viswanath, holding him back from approaching His Holiness. Eventually, he joined the queue. When his turn came, he extended his hand in front of His Holiness, taking care to avoid eye contact. Slowly pouring *tīrtha* into his cupped palm, His Holiness queried, “Oh! When did you arrive from Bengaluru? Who all have come with you?” His Holiness knew very well that he had been there for a few days by then. Viswanath silently scampered away and sipped the *tīrtha*. Fully eased out of his shame and tension by His Holiness’s gentle teasing, he grinned sheepishly to himself. He even relished reliving the event again and again.





A child asked His Holiness, “Did a crocodile grasp Your foot when You were young?” “No,” He responded, “that happened in the case of Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda.” The child asked, “Then who are You?” “Oh, I am just someone who is getting along because of Him,” responded His Holiness, to the amusement of all present there.

Almost every child who had the good fortune of beholding His Holiness would have one or the other cherished memory associated with Him. He had a knack of making every child feel that He singled him or her out to shower His singular love. Invariably, all of them felt dearest to Him.

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## CHAPTER 18

# Love for Animals



His Holiness was a lover of animals. In the late 1970s, an *Āyurveda-vaidya* (physician qualified in *Āyurveda*) gave His Holiness a rare preparation, the composition of which was his guarded secret. The physician said that his preparation would heal any wound. The quantity supplied was small and so it was precious. One day, His Holiness beheld a dog that whimpered in agony due to a deep knife wound. Moved as He was, He immediately ordered for that rare medication be applied to the dog. Whoever would have thought that such a rare medicine, possibly meant for some future use of His Holiness, would be parted with for healing a dog? The application was continued for a couple of days. The wound healed well and quickly too. The dog returned to its normalcy.

Hurting dogs with stones is a pastime of many sadists. His Holiness vehemently opposed and prevented such unwarranted cruelty. When He was once addressing a group of school students in Bengaluru, the howl of a dog was heard. It prompted Him to promptly remark, “Someone had pelted a dog with a stone. It is improper and indeed



sinful.” The spontaneity of His reaction bore testimony to His concern for animals and disapproval of people sadistically causing injury to them.

The following was narrated by Rajam Nagarajan: “Once His Holiness entrusted me with the task of cleaning and repairing some ornaments of the Śāradā Temple. Something interesting transpired around that time.

“There was this dog Kariya (the black one), wandering about in the *maṭha* premises. He used to howl during *ārati* at the end of the night *pūjā* to Lord *Candramaulīśvara*, adding to the peal of bells and blowing of conches. While some found this a disturbance, His Holiness did not mind it in the least. Some mischievous boys tried leaving the dog far away from the *maṭha* premises, only to find Kariya navigate his way back soon thereafter. Once Kariya even swam across Tuṅgā in spite to make his way to Narasimhavana. He was so strongly wedded to those precincts that in a lighter vein, His Holiness once even remarked that Kariya must have had some connection with the *maṭha* in his previous birth!

“One day, as His Holiness was returning after *darśana* at the *samādhi* of His Guru, He told Kariya, who was following Him at a distance, ‘Come here.’ The dog immediately obeyed. Pointing towards me, His Holiness said, ‘Look, this Mami is working on some important assignment for the *Maṭha*. She needs security. Be with her and guard her.’



From then on, Kariya started living by my house, eating whatever I served. He followed me wherever I went. Even others were able to notice the metamorphosis in the dog's behaviour. Vaikuntam Anantarama Seshan told me, 'Rajam, Kariya has been with you ever since His Holiness had instructed him to guard you. This dog that roamed about aimlessly in these surroundings is now fully alert and guarding your place. I have not seen such a disciplined dog before.' His Holiness seemed to have a two-way love and communication with animals."

In the 1940s, His Holiness began to rear a deer named Hari. Hari was extremely fond of Him; he was domesticated and docile. After the deer's demise, He had with Him a spotted antelope, which too, He named Hari. Knowing the ways of Hari, His Holiness said, "Sometimes Hari would jump at someone. It is incumbent on the person concerned to remain motionless. Hari's wont is to just stand up on his rear feet and

rest against the person; he then returns to his normal posture." For his part, Hari was extremely fond of His Holiness and followed Him wherever He went. He used to be present beside Him even when He conducted His classes, resting on a seat specially provided for him and feeding on some green grass.

Hari kept the company of His Holiness whenever He gave *darśana*. His Holiness told me humorously, "Hari seemed to be a great *advaitin*; he made no distinction between

“Hari seemed to be a great *advaitin*; he made no distinction between me and himself. Even as people placed fruits before me, he had no compunction in devouring them then and there.”

- His Holiness

me and himself. Even as people placed fruits before me, he had no compunction in devouring them then and there.” Being extremely swift, Hari would sprint across the entire Narasimhavana and return in minutes, much to His Holiness’s delight.

His Holiness fed and sported with some peacocks that were in Narasimhavana. Of course, they were not trained by Him and He never regarded them as pets in the true

sense of the term. However, He did spend time with them and delighted in watching them spread out their colourful feathers and dance. He once reared two rabbits.

Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin, the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff, reared a monkey which He had found during one of His tours. He liked it to the extent that He did not hesitate to cuddle it. His Holiness too appreciated monkeys and was charmed by their pranks. On an occasion, He saw a huge monkey which, to others, appeared





fearsome. He did not fear it in the least and held a fruit for it in His out-stretched palm. The simian took it and began to eat it. His Holiness was overwhelmed by love for the monkey and immediately put His arm around its shoulders. The monkey was surprised but seemed to relish the embrace. It stood still, as if posing for a photograph, which indeed was taken, and then continued to enjoy the fruit.

In 1977, His Holiness had been to Brindavan, where Śrī Kṛṣṇa had sported in His childhood. He camped for the night at a building housing a shrine and belonging to the Rajmata of Gwalior. As it was warm and stuffy, He chose to sleep in the open. Some advised Him that it might be a tad dangerous as several monkeys were around there. He, however, felt no trepidation and rested for the night with the starlit sky for His roof. Many monkeys were, in fact, moving about nearby but none monkeyed with Him in the least.

Rama Sastry, His Holiness's *pūrvāśrama* farther, once chanced upon a forlorn tiger cub in a forest near Sringeri. He fancied rearing it. When His Holiness saw the little one, He fondled it. Rama Sastry took it to his home in Bengaluru, but as his neighbours grew apprehensive, he had to give it away to a zoo.

There was in Narasimhavana a pretty cat of golden hue. His Holiness addressed it as 'Bekku.' It would, like a dog, respond to His call. His Holiness played with it, teasingly waving a cloth in front of it as it jumped to catch the cloth.

While His love for animals was great, He was unfettered by attachment towards them.

After His Holiness had finished His *Candramaulīśvara-pūjā* at night, when He went to the *samādhi* of His *Guru*, the cat would be waiting for Him. It followed Him when He returned to Sacchidananda Vilas and received milk there. When the news of the cat having disappeared reached

Him, He heard it with equanimity. He discerned that it had died and so any attempt to find it would be futile. While His love for animals was great, He was unfettered by attachment towards them.

His Holiness was knowledgeable about birds and could comfortably describe the ways of the birds in and around Sringeri. In 1989, when a person, who had come to Sringeri for *darśana* with His wife and son, told His Holiness that his son loved birds and wanted to become an ornithologist, He told the boy that near Sringeri there was a *pakṣi-dhāma* (the Uluve Bird Sanctuary) and asked him to visit it. He then described the migratory birds that came there for nesting. Expressing His sympathy for the plight of the local birds during the rainy season, He once said, “The small birds can hardly fly out during the heavy rains that continue non-stop for days on end. Their store of energy is small and they cannot be without food for long. So they have to put up with the ordeal of coming out of their shelters to feed. They can become fully wet even under their feathers. This makes them more susceptible than otherwise to feeling cold.

He strictly prohibited fishing in the *Tuṅgā* from *Maṭha*’s premises. He once humorously remarked, “Human urine is regarded as impure. Fish urine is not spoken about. The fishes in the *Tuṅgā*, unlike the fishes in the sea, do not drink water. They, however, urinate much to pass out the water entering their body, which has a much greater concentration of salt than the fresh water of the river. Their urine obviously mixes with the surrounding water. Nonetheless, even the most orthodox do bathe in the river in the vicinity of the fish in the *Maṭha* and do become purified. The flowing water of a river is, according to the scripture, *śuci* (pure).” To two fishermen who came to Sringeri from coastal Kerala and asked Him to advise them what they could do in Sringeri that would please Him, He said, “You fish there. Feed the fishes here.”

There were two elephants – Shankara and Sharada – in the *Maṭha*. During His first tour of South India, they were young and small enough to be transported in the *Maṭha* vehicles. They accompanied Him on that tour. He had a special connect with

and affinity for them. He had a spacious *gaja-śālā* (elephant-shed) built at Sringeri. Every day, after having a meal near the Office of His Private Secretary in Narasimhavana, the elephants halted opposite Sacchidananda Vilas in the road below to receive fruits. Often, His Holiness personally fed the elephants, placing the fruits directly into their mouths. They consumed them with gusto. He even spoke to them lovingly and they seemed to have a way of understanding Him to an extent. After enjoying His caressing, they moved on, led by the mahout. His Holiness also performed the traditional *gaja-pūjā* on the appropriate occasions.

It was once reported to Him that one of the pachyderms was unwell. When the elephants arrived at the steps opposite Sacchidananda Vilas that afternoon for their routine feed of fruits, He enquired about the symptoms in detail from the mahout and the supervisor. He quickly diagnosed the cause and decided on the requisite medication. He directed His attendant to fetch a handful of a certain herb from the coconut grove behind Sacchidananda Vilas. Before proceeding to fetch it, the attendant gave Him his description of the herb to ascertain that he had the right one in mind. His Holiness corrected his misidentification and ensured

*Elephant-shed built by His Holiness*

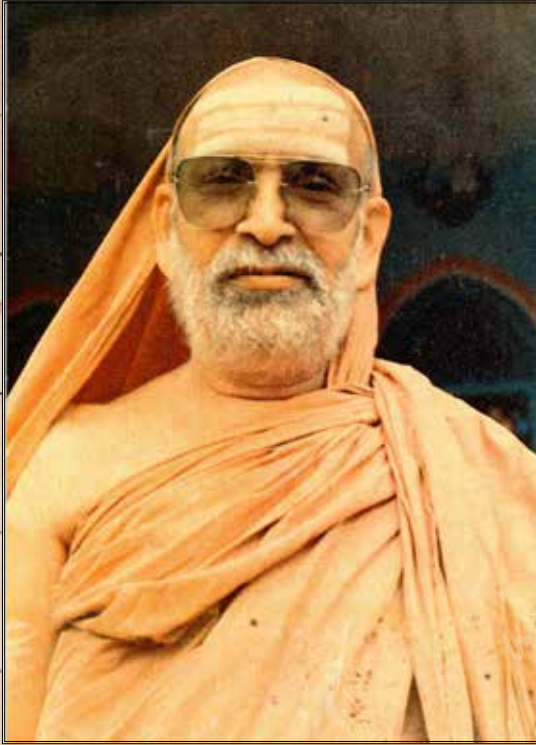


Often, His Holiness personally fed the elephants, placing the fruits directly into their mouths. They consumed them with gusto. He even spoke to them lovingly and they seemed to have a way of understanding Him to an extent.

that he brought the right one. His Holiness then personally supervised administering that medication.

Once, around 2 o'clock in the night, one of the elephants had been trumpeting for a while. His Holiness awakened, walked up to





The cows seemed to love Him and on sensing that His attention was on them, they gently nudged Him; that was their way of seeking two rewards – some fruits and a gentle stroke or two of His hands. His performance of the customary ‘*go-pūjā* (cow-worship)’ with great interest was a delight to watch.



*Cowshed complex built by His Holiness*

the *gaja-śālā* to investigate for Himself and directed the necessary follow up action.

Cows were part dear to His Holiness. He took good care of many of them. Hot summer, long-drawn wet rains and cold winters witnessed in Sringeri (being in the Malanad region) do not constitute the most conducive climate for cows. Especially during winter and rains, they need special care. For their comfortable stay, He built a spacious *gośālā* (cowshed) to house over sixty cows in Narasimhavana. He planned and set up specially earmarked grass fields to supply fresh feed for the cattle. During His evening strolls and sometimes even otherwise, He visited them in their shed. He lovingly patted the cows and fed them personally; He also played with the calves. The cows seemed to love Him and on sensing that His attention was on them, they gently nudged Him; that was their way of seeking two rewards – some fruits and a gentle stroke or two of His hands. His performance of the customary ‘*go-pūjā* (cow-worship)’ with great interest was a delight to watch.

In addition to cows, the *gośālā* housed an impressive and sweet bull in the early 1980s. This bull won awards in many bovine shows. The earlier one was quite violent. On one occasion, that bull broke loose and threatened to wreak havoc. His Holiness was present on the scene. It was suggested that He move away to safety



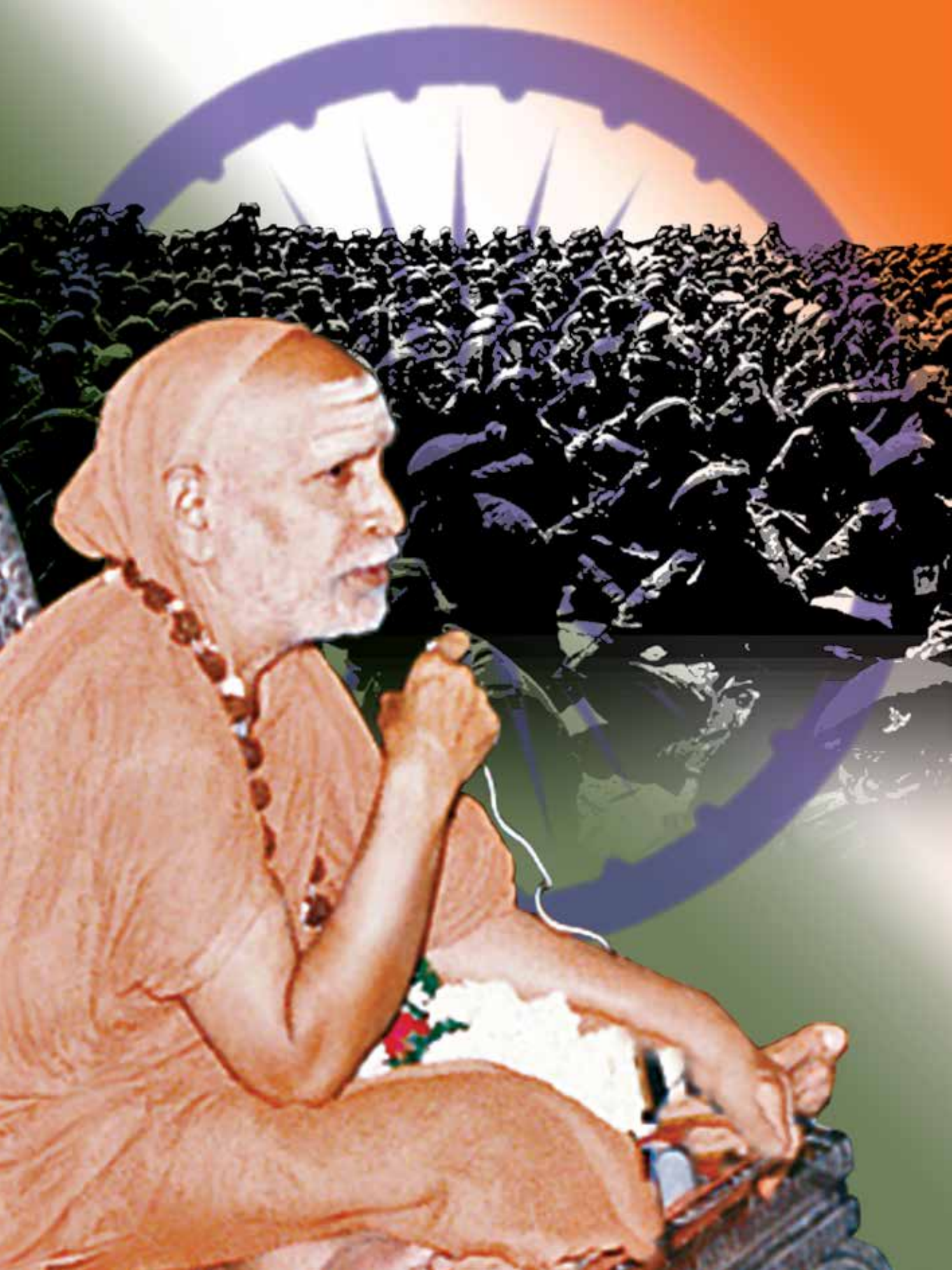
“If every man decides to protect his own cows, then cow-slaughter will come to an end. People must bear in mind that cows are sacred animals and they nourish us with their milk. Even cows that do not yield milk are useful for the manure that they produce. Hence, at least a sense of gratitude should cause us to attend to the plight of aged cows, oxen and bulls.”

- His Holiness

but He was more concerned with the safety of others; He stayed put and personally directed the operations to bring the bull under control and left only then. When I went for His *darśana* a little later, He recounted what had transpired near the *gośālā*, making animated imitations of the facial expressions and the violent movements of the bull, thus adding a humorous touch to the narrative.

Many people vociferously protest against cow slaughter and swear by cow protection. His Holiness believed more in practice than in sloganeering; He took great care of cows. He opined that cow-slaughter cannot be eradicated completely unless every master of a cow resolved to take care of his animal even after it has stopped yielding milk. His Holiness’s message was, “If every man decides to protect his own cows, then cow-slaughter will come to an end. People must bear in mind that cows are sacred animals and they nourish us with their milk. Even cows that do not yield milk are useful for the manure that they produce. Hence, at least a sense of gratitude should cause us to attend to the plight of aged cows, oxen and bulls.”





## CHAPTER 19

# Nation First

As per the Rāmāyaṇa, Lord Rāma said, “The mother and the motherland are superior even to heaven.” While having transcended the limiting senses of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ by virtue of His realization of and firm abidance in the non-dual Reality, His Holiness manifested intense patriotism.

He greatly valued the freedom movement. Having a keen sense of history, He was quite conversant with the lives of great freedom fighters and spoke admiringly and movingly of those who unhesitatingly sacrificed their lives for Indian independence. He



was steadfast in His commitment to the sovereignty of our country. He firmly maintained

that while we may have some differences of opinion on matters internal to us, as a nation, we must have a single voice in our dealings with external entities.

When the nation’s sovereignty came under the threat of foreign aggression, He offered prayers to the Lord for the nation’s welfare and also contributed

Having a keen sense of history, His Holiness was quite conversant with the lives of great freedom fighters and spoke admiringly and movingly of those who unhesitatingly sacrificed their lives for Indian independence. He was steadfast in His commitment to the sovereignty of our country.

“In ancient times, the task of protecting the nation and its people was enjoined on the *Kṣatriyas*. That duty has now been entrusted to you. Whatever subgroup you may belong to, all of you of the armed forces have a paramount duty and that is to guard the nation.”

- His Holiness

significantly to the National Defence Fund. It may be recalled that in the wake of the Indo-Pakistan war, the Prime Minister of India, Lal Bahadur Sastry, gave the slogan, ‘Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan’ in 1965 and appealed for generous contributions.

In 1965, to mark the 49<sup>th</sup> *Vardhantī* of His Holiness, grand celebrations were organized in Chennai. With offerings from devotees, His Holiness performed *kanakābhiṣeka* (worship with gold coins) to Goddess Śāradāmbā. Stirred by the call of the nation, during the felicitation functions at the conclusion of the celebrations, His Holiness spontaneously donated those gold coins along with a monetary contribution to the National Defence Fund. These were received

in person by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M. Bhaktavatsalam. His Holiness made generous donations even during the Indo-Pak war of 1971.



He addressed the members of the armed forces in numerous places, often exhorting them to diligently discharge their duties. For instance, addressing the armed forces at Hyderabad in 1967, He said, “I am pleased to see you all here to receive me in your midst. The purpose of life must be clear in your perspective. Man is bound by his duty. What is your duty? In ancient times, the task of protecting the nation and its people was enjoined on the *Kṣatriyas*. That duty has now been entrusted to you. Whatever subgroup you may belong to, all of you of the armed forces have a paramount duty and that is to guard the nation. In this, you should not be half-hearted, come what may. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said in the *Bhagavadgītā* that fortunate is the warrior who gets an opportunity to wage a war against evil and for righteousness, and that the doors of heaven

are thrown open to him. Do keep this in mind and execute the tasks assigned to you, diligently and to the best of your ability. To attain the objective of life, salvation, one should cultivate qualities such as compassion to all beings. You should practise them to the extent possible, with a clear understanding of their essence, taking into consideration the context. There is a teaching that is pertinent to all of you who have chosen to render the yeomen service of protecting the nation. Śrī Kṛṣṇa advised Arjuna on the battlefield, 'Think of Me and fight.' You too should do so.

“Pray to God before you set out to do anything and then perform your duty. That is enough for you and will fetch you great good. By your very performance of your duty duly accompanied by the thought of God and acting with sincerity and whole-heartedness, you will have served God well.” The members of the armed forces enthusiastically extended their support to His Holiness in the course of His tours, especially in the Himalayan region. They also thronged in large numbers to listen to Him discourse.

The following is an English translation of His Holiness’s message issued from Shivamogga on 27<sup>th</sup> October, 1962, at the time when the Chinese had attacked India:

“Non-injury is a *daivī-sampat* (godly attribute) in man and is opposed to causing injury, an *āsuri-sampat* (demonical attribute). Non-injury is a meansto the realisation of the Absolute. In keeping with the averment, ‘*ahimsā paramo dharmah*,’ it is reckoned as the highest *dharma*. There is another injunction, ‘Put down without hesitation.’ The two teachings should be reconciled. To the good, cause no violence; take all precautions not to hurt their feelings. Offend not the non-offending, overlook



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- His Holiness

trifles and correct them with love. But desperadoes who commit arson, homicide, outrage the modesty of women and attack without provocation deserve to be punished.

“When the mighty Bhīmasena was a lad, his mother Kuntī, out of desire to curb the exuberance of his spirit, softly said, ‘Bhīma, my child! Do not interfere in the affairs of others.’ ‘Yes, mother,’ replied Bhīma. Out of boyish curiosity, Arjuna accosted Bhīma and asked, ‘Brother dear, what will you do if others mischievously meddle in your affairs?’ ‘I will not spare them,’ came the prompt reply.

“Our land is wedded to peace, but a neighbour of ours mistakes it for our weakness. China has demonically attacked us and its forces have set foot on our sacred soil. ‘Fight,’ was Kṛṣṇa’s message to Arjuna. Our people, as one united force, must fight to put down that aggression and establish peace.

“What can I give - I, who have renounced all? I may not be useful in the battlefield. But this *pīṭha* established by Śrī Ādi-Śaṅkara is replete

with the power of the *tapas* of sages, and from that treasure,

I whole-heartedly give to our *Jawans*, my blessings. May the treasure of *tapas* contribute to victory. The able-bodied ones amongst you may serve in the defence forces; the affluent should part with their wealth to enrich the defence fund. All should stand by our leaders and obey their behest. My prayers are with you.”

On hearing of natural calamities, His Holiness’s heart melted. He was generous in parting with whatever aid the *Maṭha* could afford to the afflicted ones. For instance, when He was camping in Chennai in 1977, a cyclone



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- His Holiness



His Holiness said that in response to the question “Who are you?” the first thought that arises in many is of the form, “I am a Keralite,” “I am a Punjabi,” etc. This is not how it should be. One’s first response should be, “I am an Indian.”

caused devastation in Andhra Pradesh and, to a lesser extent, in Tamil Nadu. His Holiness contributed generously to both the states. He was not for publicising such acts, which in any case, He considered as His duty, not favour, to the nation and its people.

In His speeches at various places, He said that in response to the question “Who are you?” the first thought that arises in many is of the form, “I am a Keralite,” “I am a Punjabi,” etc. This is not how it should be. One’s first response should be, “I am an Indian.” He said, “If all people feel they are Indians first and only then think of any other divisions, the nation will have great prosperity and the divisive forces

will not be operative as they are today.”

He pointed out, “Since time immemorial, we have been one as a nation, despite the fact that there were many kingdoms ruled by many monarchs of varied dispositions. The oneness of the nation was never lost on us. What was the spirit that held us together? It was the underlying *dharma* practised by the vast majority that unified us. Thus, though divided by kingdoms, we were united by the spirit of *dharma*. A glorious demonstration of that spirit can be seen in the life of Śrī Ādi-Śaṅkara Himself, centuries ago. He established four monasteries to sustain, uphold and propagate *sanātana-dharma*. He was born in Kalady in Kerala. However, He chose to establish His monasteries in the four corners of India – Sringeri in the south, Dwaraka in the west, Puri in the east and Badri in the north. Moreover, He had no petty concerns such as regionalism. His actions are an illustration of this. Look at His choice of His principal



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disciples as the first pontiffs of those *Maṭhas*. He appointed Sureśvarācārya who was from the current Bihar to head the southern *Maṭha* at Sringeri; Padmapādācārya, a southerner, was appointed to head the western *Maṭha* at Dwaraka.

“The famous temple of Lord Viśvanātha is in Varanasi in the north; in the south, we have the celebrated temple for Lord Rāmanātha at Rameswaram. Yet, what was the ethos induced in us by our ancients? One from the northern belt cherished as a lifetime ambition a pilgrimage to Rameswaram and bathing Lord Rāmanātha with the waters of the holy Gaṅgā. Likewise, for the southerner, a pilgrimage to Kashi and *darśana* of Lord Viśvanātha there were lifetime goals. Besides, even something so seemingly commonplace as the custom of naming our children has a definite stamp of the oneness of our nation. While names such as Ramnath and Sharada are seen in the north, Viswanatha and Dwarakanatha are common in the south. How could all this have been if the great had not seen our nation as an integral entity?”

His Holiness could linguistically interact with people of the south and the north with equal ease. He was at home with Kannada, Telugu and Tamil, the languages of the south. To connect readily with a majority of the population to the north of the Vindhya, He

His Holiness was consistently apolitical. He held and expressed the view that whoever was genuinely committed to the welfare of the nation deserved the support of the people. In the course of a discourse in Kannada in Bengaluru, He stated, “People ask me to which *pakṣa* (party) I belong. I am *niṣpakṣa* (neutral). Whoever works for the welfare of the people at large deserves our support.”

mastered Hindi, on His own, to the extent that even native Hindi litterateurs were charmed by the chastity of His Hindi in His discourses and interactions with Him. Consequently, some of them even refused to believe that Hindi was not His mother tongue and insisted, ‘*ye hamare swamiji hain* (He is our own Swamiji).’ He communicated freely in Sanskrit with traditional scholars from every part of the country.

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Violent agitations and repeated moves to disrupt the proper functioning of a duly elected Government must be eschewed.” Various leaders from within and outside the political establishment called on Him. Various Presidents of India, such as Rajendra Prasad, S. Radhakrishnan, Zakir Hussain and Giani Zail Singh came to Him for blessings. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi met Him on several occasions and sought His benediction. Likewise, Chief Ministers, Governors and other dignitaries all came to have His *darśana*.





With S. Radhakrishnan



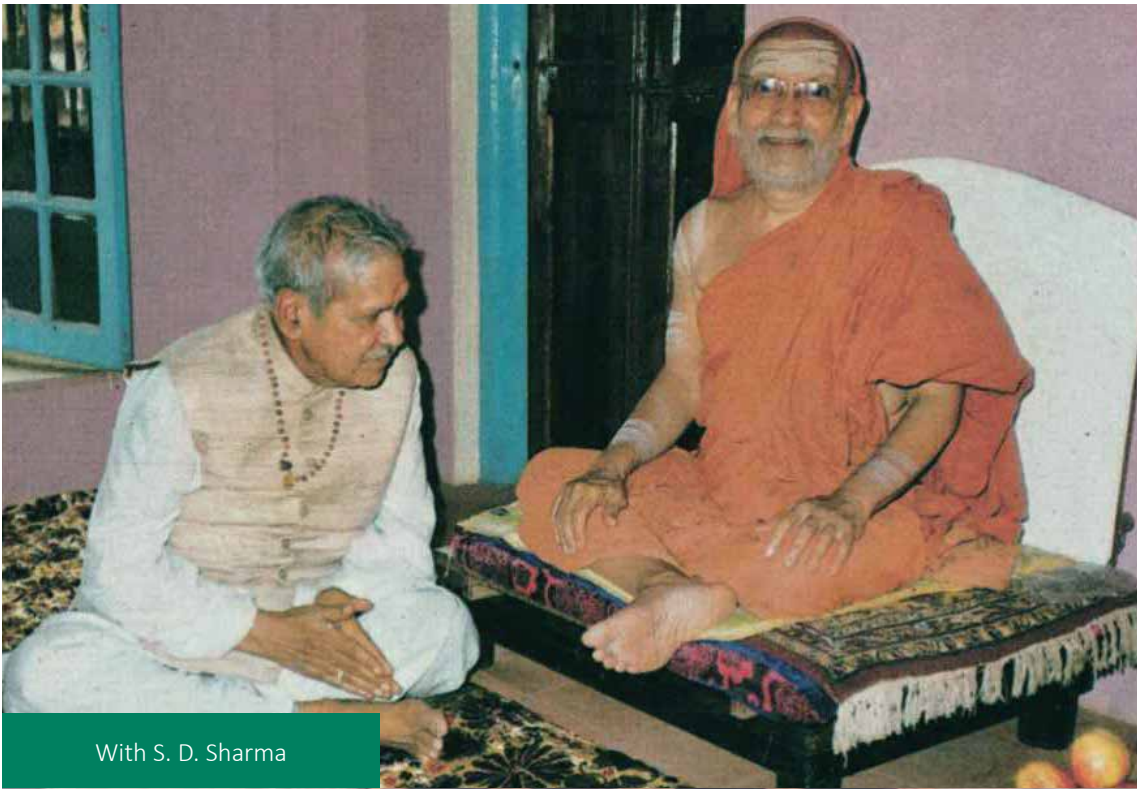
With Zakir Hussain

With Giani Zail Singh



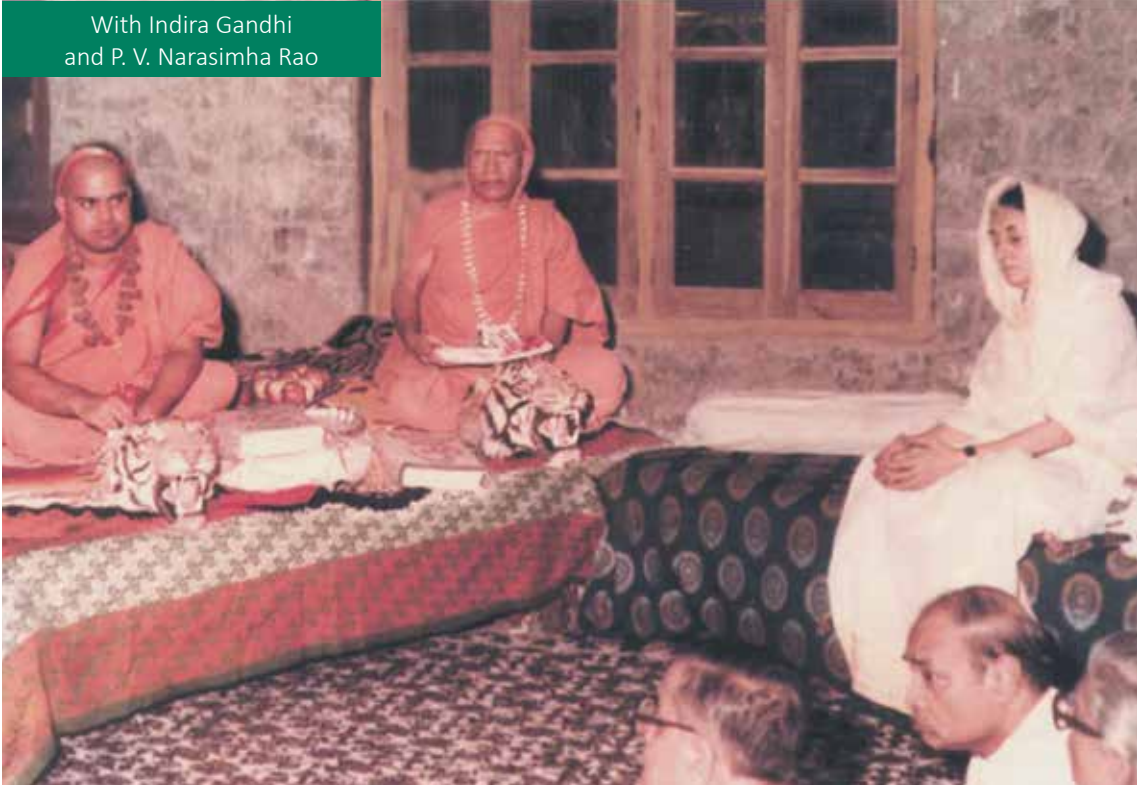
With R. Venkatraman

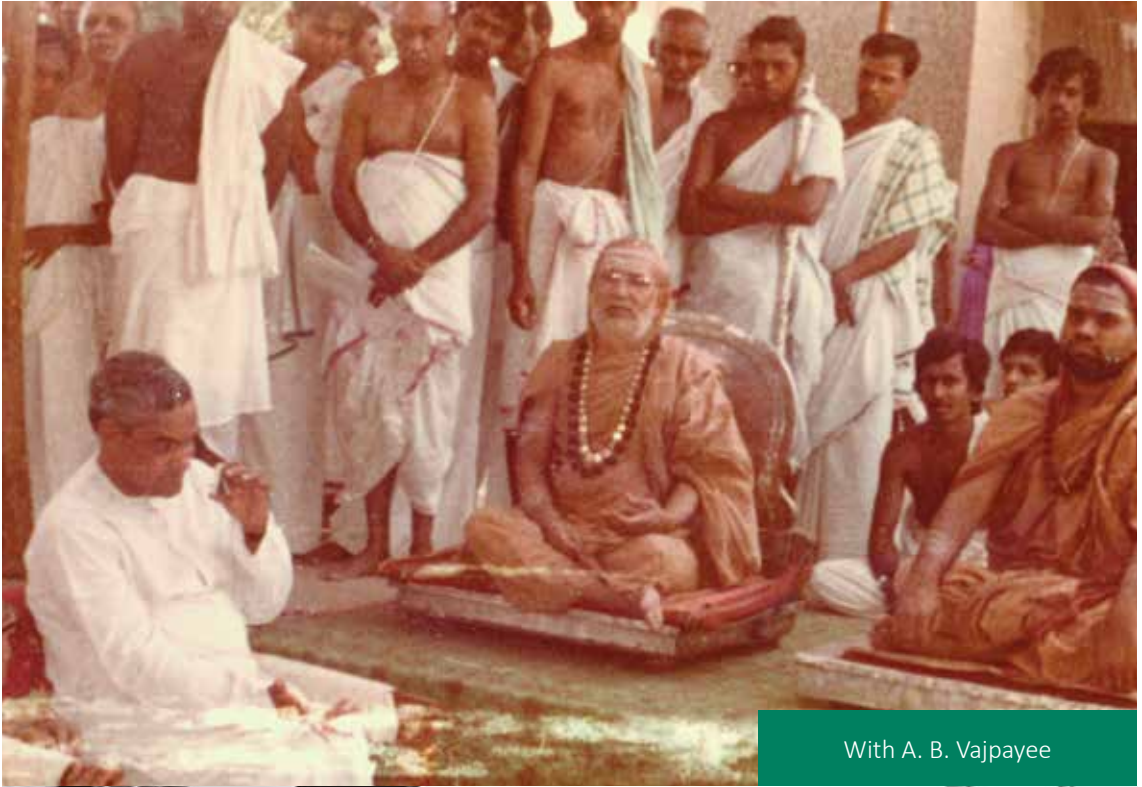




With S. D. Sharma

With Indira Gandhi  
and P. V. Narasimha Rao





With A. B. Vajpayee



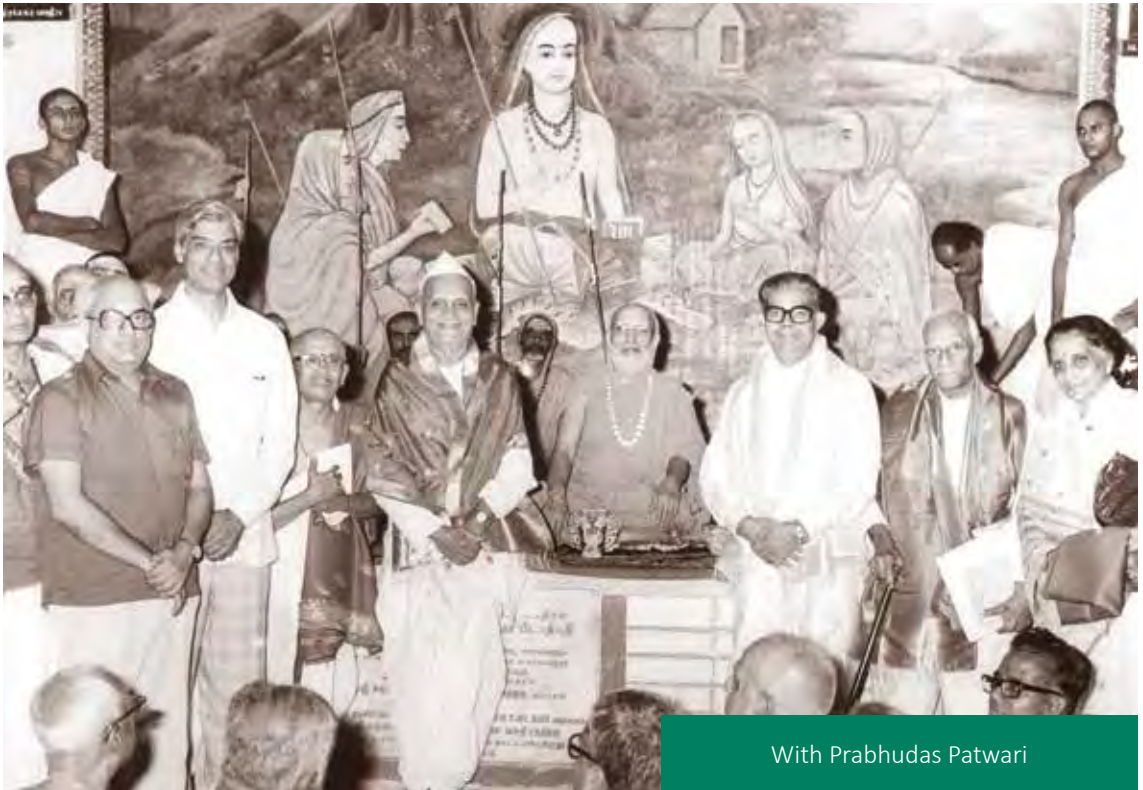
With L. K. Advani



With G. S. Pathak



With B. D. Jatti



With Prabhudas Patwari



With the king of Nepal





With M. Channa Reddy



With Ashok Nath Banarjee



With Mohanlal Sukhadia



With C. Subramanian



With Buta Singh



With M. Bhaktavatsalam



With Ramakrishna Hegde



With K. Karunakaran



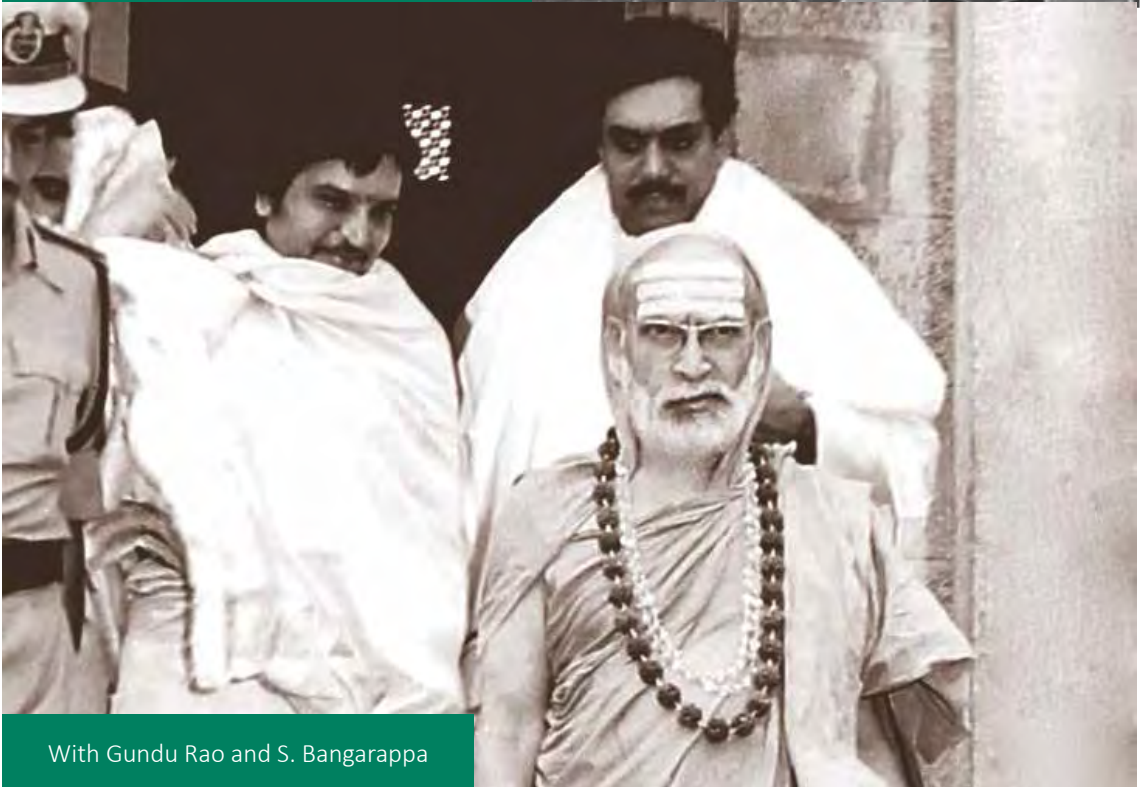
With Dayanand Bandodkar



With Shashikala Kakodkar



With Vengal Rao



With Gundu Rao and S. Bangarappa



With R. M. Veerappan



With the Maharaja of Mysore,  
Jayachamraja Wodeyar



With Vaidyasubramania Iyer and  
Muthiah Chettiar



With the Maharaja of Gwalior,  
Madhav Rao Scindia





With the Maharaja of Ramnad

With the Maharaja of Travancore





With the Rajaguru of Nepal



With T. S. Bharde



With Justice Somanatha Iyer

He said, “By their deeds, leaders should set examples for others to emulate. If they do not abide by the principles they propagate, they cannot expect others to have faith in them and act in a manner conducive to national welfare. Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s teaching that is pertinent here is, ‘Whatever a great one does, that do the others follow.’”

At a time when communal harmony was challenged over reports of conversions in southern Tamil Nadu, His Holiness issued a message to the following effect:

1. No one must act in such a way as to harm another.
2. The *śāstras* do not recognise conversion of a Hindu to another religion. As such, those who have ‘changed’ their religion, if they are remorseful, may be treated as if no change has occurred.
3. None should impose restrictions on the use of wells, places of prayer etc., that are meant for the use of common people. People imposing restrictions as to who should use these may be penalised.
4. The *Śāstra* says: “*Dharma* protects one who protects it,” and “There is higher good in performing one’s own *dharma*.” These precepts should be borne in mind and acted upon accordingly.

When His message to the nation was sought during another outbreak of communal disharmony, He said, “All Indians must owe allegiance to the Constitution of India, which we have given ourselves. We have set procedures to legislate through our elected representatives. We have the judiciary to adjudicate as per the law of the land. Attempts at settling disputes between communities, sects or regions by taking recourse to unlawful means are totally unacceptable.”

With regard to the diversity in religious and social practices, He said, “Whatever practices one may wish to have in private is left to the individual, so long as they do not infringe on the others. One must abstain from fermenting quarrels with and creating trouble for other individuals or communities. Verily, everybody has a right to happiness. The prayer our ancients have taught us is: ‘May all beings be happy.’

His Holiness spoke with such frankness, love and purity of heart that wherever He went, He found a place in the hearts of the people regardless of whichever part of India they were from.

“Our nation and its culture have a hoary past and we should all be proud of it. Blindly following the west is not conducive to our benefit. For instance, caring for aged parents has come down to us traditionally; we must never neglect this duty by indiscriminately aping the so-called liberal societies, wherein concern for one’s own progenitors is at a low ebb.”

His Holiness spoke with such frankness, love and purity of heart that wherever He went, He found a place in the hearts of the people, regardless of whichever part of India they were from. Every night, at the commencement of His *Candramaulīśvara-pūjā*, as part of the *saṅkalpa*, His Holiness supplicated the Lord for the welfare of all beings.

“By their deeds, leaders should set examples for others to emulate. If they do not abide by the principles they propagate, then they cannot expect others to have faith in them and act in a manner conducive to national welfare.”

-His Holiness





## CHAPTER 20

# Admired Personage

His Holiness's position as a pontiff of the Sringeri Sharada Peetham as also His own marvellous personality led to His closeness with many a religious leader. The important religious personages who were drawn to Him were not only *advaitins* by tradition but also those belonging to other philosophical sects and religions. The *Jagadgurus* of Puri, Dwaraka and Badri were closely linked with His Holiness.

### Meeting of the *Jagadguru Śaṅkarācāryas* of Sringeri and Dwaraka at Bengaluru

In April 1964, His Holiness set out from Sringeri on His first all-India tour. At Bengaluru, the *Śaṅkarācārya* of Dwaraka, Śrī Abhinava Saccidānanda Tīrtha, met His Holiness. The meeting of the *Jagadgurus* was an event of significance and was hailed as such by the press and the public alike. Addresses were presented to both the *Jagadgurus* before a vast concourse of people. Two books – ‘*The Great Equation*’ by R. Krishnaswamy Iyer and ‘*Gītā-Vijñāna*’ by Lakshminarayana Sastry – were released on the occasion.

The *Śaṅkarācārya* of Dwaraka, in his address, referred to the troubles that had overtaken India in its northern border and added that the path of *dharma* and the inner strength of character of the people were necessary to overcome such national calamities. He advised,

His Holiness's position as a pontiff of the Sringeri Sharada Peetham as also His own marvellous personality led to His closeness with many a religious leader.

“Those fortunate to be born as humans are endowed with the faculty of reasoning; this should be used to distinguish between the eternal and the transitory. Further, it should be used to realise the imperishable Truth.”

His Holiness then blessed the devotees with His address, laying emphasis on the need to

control and focus one's mind. He said, "Some people feel that it would be sufficient to close the eyes and think of God for a few moments. Let them do so and find out if even during these few moments the mind is under their control. They may find the mind fickle and wandering. In fact, many disciplines ordained by the scriptures are primarily intended for taming the mind so that it can be rendered fit for comprehending the Supreme."

### **Jagadguru Śaṅkarācāryas of Sringeri and Puri meet at Madurai**

In the course of His first all-India tour, His Holiness reached Madurai on 18<sup>th</sup> February, 1965, and camped there for a little over a month. A *Sahasraçaṇḍī-mahāyāga* was conducted there. A major event was the visit of Śrī Nirañjana Deva Tīrtha, the pontiff of the Govardhana Peetham of Puri. It was an uncommon sight to witness the two *Jagadgurus* seated side-by-side on the same platform and deliver their discourses.



With Śrī Nirañjana Deva Tīrtha

The *Śaṅkarācārya* of Puri spoke fluently in Sanskrit. One of the *paṇḍitas* who was present was asked to render the speech in Tamil. He, however, began to meander and the rigmarole was not faithful to the thoughts of the *Ācārya*. His Holiness relieved the *paṇḍita* by saying, "I shall translate the speech myself." He gave a precise and clear rendering of the Puri *Ācārya's* discourse. Those familiar with Sanskrit enough to follow the original discourse were surprised to note that His Holiness had made a sentence-by-sentence translation, despite the speech having been long. The next day, both the

*Jagadgurus* delivered their discourses in the famed Meenakshi Amman Temple. On this occasion, His Holiness straightaway volunteered to translate the Puri *Ācārya's* speech so as to avoid any confusion. This time too His translation was accurate.

### **The Meeting of the Jagadgurus of Sringeri, Dwaraka and Puri at Kalady**

His Holiness proceeded from Madurai towards Kalady and reached there on the 26<sup>th</sup> March, 1965. The confluence of the three *Śaṅkarācāryas* of Sringeri, Dwaraka and Puri on *Śaṅkara-jayantī (vaiśākha-śukla-pañcamī)*, which was on 6<sup>th</sup> May that year,



With the Śaṅkarācāryas of Puri and Dwaraka

was special. *Caṇḍī-yāga* for universal peace and happiness, and the *Vidvat-sadas* were the other highlights there. The three *Jagadgurus* offered worship at the temples of Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda and Goddess Śārādā. The Akhila Bharata Shankara Seva Samiti accorded a special reception to the *Jagadgurus*.

In their joint message to the people, the *Jagadgurus* said, “The Lord chose this extremely charming, tranquil, inspiring and holy place, Kalady, for His incarnation. We, the representatives of Sringeri, Dwaraka and Puri *pīṭhas*, have, with reverence, assembled here to worship our common master, Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarācārya, on this *Śaṅkara-jayantī*. It is our desire that the government officials and the lawmakers realise the paramount importance of the honoured *Sanātana-dharma*. We pray to Śrī Śaṅkara for the peace and happiness of all beings.”

Speaking first, Śrī Abhinava Saccidānanda Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin of Dwaraka said, “In His short life span of thirty two years, Śrī Śaṅkara expounded *advaita*, wrote many monumental works and established *Maṭhas*. His works are in Sanskrit. Everyone should learn Sanskrit and derive benefit from His works. I welcome a periodical bulletin in Sanskrit containing Śrī Śaṅkara’s teachings.”

Śrī Nirañjana Deva Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin of Puri pointed out, “Śrī Śaṅkara saw and preached the oneness in the different forms of the Almighty. Practising and safeguarding *dharma* is the duty of each one of us. He who fails in this duty succeeds not. This human birth, invaluable as it is, is best suited for the attainment of salvation.”



With the Śaṅkarācāryas of Puri and Dwaraka

The grand finale for the absorbing function was the benedictory address of His Holiness. The import of His





With Śrī Abhinava Saccidānanda Tīrtha of Dwaraka Math



With the Śaṅkarācārya of Puri and G. S. Pathak, former Vice President of India

discourse was, “This auspicious occasion has created an opportunity for devotees to have the *darśana* of Śrī Śaṅkara at Kalady. His contribution to the intellectual and spiritual treasure house is beyond limits. For all this, He was a youth, thirty-two years of age, when He transcended the reach of the vision of mortals. ‘All this is *Brahman*’ and, ‘The Self is *Brahman*’ were the *Upaniṣadic* truths forming the crux of the *Advaita* philosophy that He propounded. He ironed out the feelings of regionalism in India and went a long way in establishing national unity. He harmonised the different schools of thought and modes of worship. Though a Keralite by birth, He did not set up a *Maṭha* in Kerala. He did not choose Malayalam for His works. The then common language of the traditional scholars of India, Sanskrit, was His choice. He met and demolished the challenge of materialists.” His Holiness then blessed the audience and called upon them to launch a ‘Śaṅkara Movement’ encompassing not only India but the entire world.

### **Caturāmnāya-sammelana at Sringeri in May 1979**

There being no available record of a meeting of the heads of the four *Āmnāya-pīṭhas* (of Sringeri, Dwaraka, Badrinath and Puri) ever since the days of Bhagavatpāda, disciples were eager that such a meeting should take place. The *Jagadgurus* of the four *Āmnāya-pīṭhas* gave Their consent. It was decided, as per His Holiness’s suggestion, that the most

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A summit meeting of the four Jagadguru Śaṅkarācāryas took place at Sringeri on 1<sup>st</sup> May, 1979.

appropriate time for the meeting would be on *Śaṅkara-jayantī* (*vaiśākha-śukla-pañcamī*). Thus, a summit meeting of the *Jagadguru Śaṅkarācāryas* of Sringeri, Dwaraka, Badri and Puri took place at Sringeri on 1<sup>st</sup> May, 1979, on the auspicious occasion of the *Jayantī* of Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda. Elaborate arrangements were made at Sringeri. The visiting *Jagadgurus* arrived on the 30<sup>th</sup> April to a rousing reception by the disciples, residents of the town and organisers and were escorted to their respective abodes.

The next morning, the *Jagadgurus* Śrī Abhinava Saccidānanda Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin of Dwaraka, Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī Mahāsvāmin of Badri and Śrī Nirañjana Deva Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin of Puri performed their usual morning *anuṣṭhānas*, after which



The four Jagadgurus were seated together, along with His Holiness's successor-designate and present pontiff, H.H. Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin.

they were taken in a procession to Goddess Śāradāmbā's temple around 10.30 a.m. They were welcomed there by His Holiness. After beholding Goddess Śāradāmbā, the *Jagadgurus* were closeted in-camera in the *pāṭhasālā* of the *Maṭha*, then adjoining Śrī Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda's temple. After their private session, the *Jagadgurus* witnessed the *pūjā* at the shrine of Śrī Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda and dispersed for the afternoon.

That evening, a public function was organised in the foyer of the Pravachana Mandiram. Large *pandals* had been put up in a short time to accommodate the devotees who had thronged in large numbers from all parts of the country. A beautifully decorated idol of Bhagavatpāda adorned the centre of the dais. The four *Jagadgurus* were seated together, along with His Holiness's successor-designate and present pontiff, H.H. Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin.

Govind Narain, the Governor of Karnataka, and Sasikala Kakodkar, the former Chief Minister of Goa, were among the important dignitaries present on the occasion. The



*The four Śaṅkarācāryas*

chairman of the reception committee, Vaidyasubramaniya Iyer, delivered the welcome address. The eagerly awaited discourses of the *Jagadgurus* constituted the climax.

Śrī Abhinava Saccidānanda Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin of Dwaraka spoke first. He discoursed freely, in a mix of Sanskrit, Hindi and English. The gist of the speech is as follows: “After the time of Bhagavatpāda, this is the first time that the pontiffs of all the four *Āmnāya-pīṭhas* are meeting. All of you have assembled here, demonstrating your devotion and fervour. Bhagavatpāda’s name has an inherent greatness of its own. Lord Paramaśiva is the fountainhead of all knowledge. He, the Lord of Kailāsa, was the one who incarnated as Bhagavatpāda at Kalady and, very early in His life, became a disciple of Śrī Govinda Bhagavatpāda and obtained *samnyāsa* from Him. Bhagavatpāda penned commentaries on the *Gītā*, *Upaniṣads* and *Brahma-sūtras* and also composed works which go by the name *Prakaraṇas*. He thoroughly uplifted *vaidika-dharma*. Even in those regions where Buddhism was deep rooted, He was able to glean the people back to the fold of the *Sanātana-dharma*. We should follow the path taught by Him.” He proceeded to give details of how He had established a shrine at Kedarnath, where Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda disappeared at the end of His mission, and the objectives of the organisation connected with the *Kaivalya-dhāma* (Place of absolute emancipation). He was eager that the meeting of the four *Jagadgurus* should lead to constructive work in the future through the formation of an All-India committee of disciples entrusted with the task of implementing the numerous resolutions passed that day. He concluded by saying that the important tenets of *Hindu-dharma* were not narrow in conception but broad-based so as to include everyone in its fold. The crux of our *dharma* is that everyone in this world should be happy and should secure auspiciousness.

Next, Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī Mahāsvāmin spoke in chaste Hindi to the following effect: “Sringeri is a place of great spiritual importance. It was here that

“Sringeri is a place of great spiritual importance. It was here that Bhagavatpāda gathered unto Himself His leading disciples. It was here that a cobra raised its hood and gave shade to a frog, its natural prey. Bhagavatpāda stayed in Sringeri for many years and taught *Vedānta* to His disciples. Hence, this is the appropriate place for the present meeting, which may augur well for universal peace and happiness that were indeed dear to Bhagavatpāda.”

- Śrī Svarūpānanda  
Sarasvatī Mahāsvāmin

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“There was a time when Buddhism was predominant and people attached importance only to their own intellects and not to the scriptures. While some opine that the intellect is superior to scripture in ascertaining the nature of things, this is a false view. Just as for sensing various objects such as form, the appropriate organ, such as of vision, is very much essential, likewise to determine *dharma*, one must necessarily take recourse to the *Veda*, which is not a composition of mortals and is without a beginning. Were man’s life to be guided merely by impulse, it will be no better than that of animals. Bhagavatpāda taught us the true import of the scriptures; that it is only through knowledge of the Supreme *Brahman* that one can get liberated. The scripture has also declared that to the great one endowed with supreme devotion to Īśvara and the same degree of devotion to one’s *Guru*, not merely what is expounded but even that not spoken of shines forth.”

The *Jagadguru* proceeded to say that it was sad that cows were not being adequately taken care of; He exhorted people to remedy this fault. With regard to marriages, he advised people to shun dowry, an evil which brings great hardships to many in the society.

Śrī Nirañjana Deva Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin, the next speaker, spoke forcefully in Hindi. He emphasized on the following:

1. Today, the world is unhappy due to proliferation of bad conduct, cruelty, dacoity, blackmailing and so on. This is because of people harbouring excessive desires for material pleasures and objects. Bhagavatpāda has unequivocally declared that *Brahman* is real, the world is illusory and the individual soul is not different from *Brahman*. If people realise that the world is unreal, their cravings will cease. They should understand that only the Supreme appears in the form of the world. All problems will cease on the dawn of such realization.

2. I appeal to the Governments of the world in general and the Government of India in particular that nothing should be done to harm any community. There is no objection to giving much to the minority, but on that account, privileges must not be denied to the Hindu majority.

Thereafter, His Holiness addressed the vast gathering. He chose to speak first in Kannada, the language of the land, and followed it up with His message in chaste Hindi. His Holiness spoke of the glory of Bhagavatpāda and proceeded to say that just as Brahmā has four faces and the *Vedas* are four in number, so too the primary disciples of Bhagavatpāda numbered four. He was a great incarnation of God who chose to eschew comforts in order to strive for the welfare of the world. A great contribution of His was that He taught mankind the means to liberation. Making reference to cow protection which others had spoken about, His Holiness said that the cow was very sacred and people should try and protect it. After all, it gives man much for his worldly and religious needs.

Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin spoke in Sanskrit with His characteristic mastery over the language. Having highlighted the unsurpassed contribution of Bhagavatpāda through His commentaries and other works, He drove home the point that Bhagavatpāda was the *Jagadguru* in the fullest sense of the term, and that all should seek refuge in Him and follow His teachings.

A joint message of the *Jagadgurus* of the *Caturāmnāya-pīṭhas* was released on this special occasion, and it was read out by Śrī Nirañjana Deva Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin. What follows is a free rendering of that Sanskrit message into English.

“In our pure country, Bhārata, from time immemorial, *Sanātana-vaidika-dharma* has been in existence. Decline of *dharma* has been observed among people, for it is possible for the bad influence of the times to cause even that which is good to decline. The Buddhist school, which originated 2500 years ago, blunted the belief of the people in the *Vedas* and made them disinterested in *Vaidika-dharma*. Years later, Kumārila-bhaṭṭa incarnated to counter that school. After he upheld the path of rituals, Śāṅkara-bhagavatpāda took birth at Kalady in Kerala to establish the path of knowledge. Before His advent, on account of the proliferation of schools opposed to *Sanātana-dharma*, people were in a quandary as to their duties. At the time of the advent of Bhagavatpāda,

His Holiness spoke of the glory of Bhagavatpāda and proceeded to say that just as Brahmā has four faces and the *Vedas* are four in number, so too the primary disciples of Bhagavatpāda numbered four. He was a great incarnation of God who chose to eschew comforts in order to strive for the welfare of the world. A great contribution of His was that He taught mankind the means to liberation.



*Caturāmnāya-sammelana*

Kumārila-bhaṭṭa and the like had induced some faith in the people in the path of rituals. However, because of the commentaries on scriptures by self-styled scholars who were guilty of misunderstanding, laxity, etc., people tended to deviate from the path of higher good.

“At a young age itself, having resolved to become a *saṁnyāsin*, Bhagavatpāda left Kalady, His place of birth and obtained *saṁnyāsa* from Govinda Bhagavatpāda, who dwelt on the banks of the Narmada. Then in deference to His *Guru’s* command, He penned commentaries on the *Brahma-sūtras*, etc., and clearly revealed the path of knowledge. Having travelled throughout Bhārata twice, He uplifted various sacred places. This can be known even now from the utterances of those who dwell at those holy centres. He made appropriate arrangements for securing the paths of *dharma* and knowledge, which had been uplifted by Him, by establishing four *Maṭhas* in the eastern, western, southern and northern directions. In His life span of a mere 32 years, Bhagavatpāda uprooted all the atheistic schools from India and established the path of *dharma* which had not decayed by the passage of over a thousand years. Consequently, the assertion that He was an incarnation of Paramaśiva is not an exaggeration. Having completed well the task of His advent, He discarded His body composed of the five elements, at Kedarnath in the Himalayas and disappeared. This is ascertainable unanimously from the books regarding His life, the traditional lore of the people of Kedarnath and the histories of our *Maṭhas*. However, a certain innate need to be held in regard by others, makes

Having travelled throughout Bhārata twice, He uplifted various sacred places. This can be known even now from the utterances of those who dwell at those holy centres. He made appropriate arrangements for securing the paths of *dharma* and knowledge, which had been uplifted by Him, by establishing four *Maṭhas* in the Eastern, Western, Southern and Northern directions.

- Joint statement of the four  
*Āmnāya Śaṅkarācāryas*

people want to appropriate an association of such a great one with their own places. Consequently, numerous rumours have sprung up with regard to Bhagavatpāda's life. All should realise that while these may serve to induce faith in the people, they should not be regarded as factual. Hence all the four of Us, the pontiffs of the *Maṭhas* established by Bhagavatpāda, assert that Bhagavatpāda dissociated with the body of five elements only at Kedarnath.

“People can attain higher good only by the performance of their own *dharmas* which have existed since time immemorial. They cannot do so otherwise. If people, who are the practitioners of their own respective *dharmas*, are induced by another through inducement of greed or fear or by use of force or gift of wealth to tread another path, then that inducement will not be acceptable

either scripturally or logically. If, by adopting a new life style, some abandon their *dharma*, then they deviate from the practices of their forefathers. On the other hand, if they practise their own *dharma*, they can attain higher good. This is the means for the welfare of our country. Hence, We direct that none should abandon one's own *dharma* and take up the practice of some other *dharma*. In this country of ours protected by many rulers, our practising *dharma* and attaining higher good will be the way to show our gratitude to the great Bhagavatpāda of unfathomable and infinite prowess, who showed the right path to us trapped in the darkness of ignorance. By establishing four *Maṭhas* in the four directions to enlighten the people about the *karma* and *jñāna kāṇḍas* of the *Vedas*, Bhagavatpāda indicated the unity of our nation. We pray that lord Almighty give the strength to all to lead a *dhārmika* life and that the nation shine by the splendour of *dharma*.”

The programme concluded with *maṅgalārati* to Bhagavatpāda's idol, which was then taken in procession through the streets of Sringeri. His Holiness and Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī Mahāsvāmin led the procession.



## His Holiness and Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī Mahāsvāmin

Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī Mahāsvāmin had great regard for His Holiness and met Him on numerous occasions. He took part in the consecration of the shrines at the Shankara Vidya Kendra performed by His Holiness at Delhi in 1977. As described earlier, He also attended the *Caturāmnāya- sammelana* at Sringeri in 1979. Śrī Abhinava Saccidānanda Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin of Dwaraka passed away on 7<sup>th</sup> February, 1982 at Veraval in Junagad district. In His will, He nominated Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī Mahāsvāmin to succeed Him at the Dwaraka Math. On account of His great regard for His Holiness, Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī Mahāsvāmin met Him and requested Him to come to Dwaraka to perform His *paṭṭābhīṣeka* (coronation). Holy waters from all over the world were used for the function, which took place on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1982. His Holiness graced the occasion and Himself performed the coronation. Speaking on the



With Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī

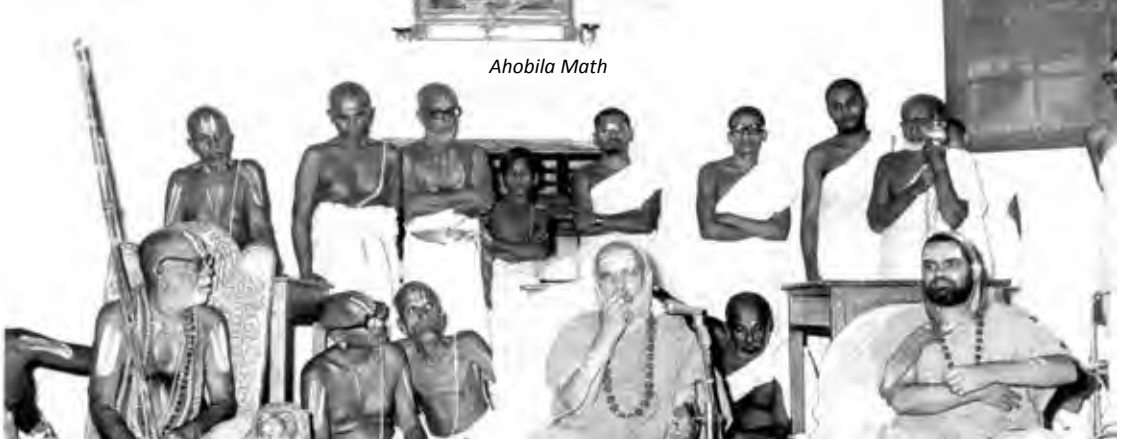


Performing the coronation of Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī

occasion, His Holiness stressed the need for the protection of *Sanātana-dharma* and the maintenance of unity in society.

Svāmi Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī has a vast *āśrama* in Paramahamsi Gangashrama of Madhya Pradesh. He built a big temple there dedicated to Rājarājeśvarī and was rather keen that His Holiness Himself should perform the *kumbhābhīṣeka*. Accordingly, He arranged for His Holiness's camp there. His Holiness graced the place in December 1982. Virtually a sea of humanity heard the daily discourses of the *Jagadgurus*. His Holiness performed the consecration along with Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī Mahāsvāmin. On that holy day, both the *Jagadgurus* addressed a vast concourse of people who had gathered there. The foregoing is a narrative limited in purpose to highlight the proximity between His Holiness and the pontiffs of the other *Āmnāya-pīṭhas*.

Ahobila Math



### His Holiness and *Viśiṣṭādvaitic* Religious Leaders



With the *Jeeyar* of Vanamamalai

His Holiness's relations with *Viśiṣṭādvaitic* religious heads were cordial. To cite an example, He and the *Jeeyar* of Vanamamalai met at Vanamamalai. Likewise, during His 1979-80 tour of South India, when His Holiness was camping at the National High School in Trichy, the *Jeeyar* of the Ahobila *Maṭh* met Him. Both of them addressed a large gathering. In the course of his speech, the *Jeeyar* said that since His Holiness might not be adequately conversant with Tamil, it might be beneficial for the crowd if a translator were arranged. He was, however, in for a pleasant surprise, as His Holiness delivered His benedictory address comfortably in Tamil.

### His Holiness and Mādhva Seers



With Śrī Viśveśa-tīrtha

While the *Advaita* and *Dvaita* philosophies have major differences, His Holiness did not see that as any impediment to cordiality between Him and the pontiffs of Mādhva *Maṭhas* pontiffs, such as Śrī Viśveśa Tīrtha of the Pejavar Math (one of the eight principal *Maṭhas* established by Śrī Madhvācārya at Udupi). Śrī Viśveśa Tīrtha met His Holiness at Shankara Math, Bengaluru, during His Holiness's *cāturmāsya* there. Being a scholar himself, he participated in the *Vidvat-sadas*. Their relationship had consistently been warm and harmonious. He also met His Holiness in Sringeri during the 62<sup>nd</sup> *Vardhantī* (birthday) celebrations of His Holiness. In March 1976, the pontiffs of all the eight eminent

*Maṭhas* of Udipi received His Holiness at the Krishna Temple and escorted Him to the sanctum sanctorum.

### His Holiness and *Maṭhas* associated with the Sringeri Sharada Peetham

Numerous are the *Maṭhas* that have historical links with the Sringeri Sharada Peetham. Some of them are branch *Maṭhas* and some of them are closely affiliated to the Sharada Peetham. The Sivaganga Math is a branch *Maṭha* of Sringeri. During His Holiness's tenure, the closeness between the two grew.

His Holiness had intimate contact with that *Maṭha* even from the times of Śrī Saccidānanda Abhinava Subrahmaṇya Bhāratī Svāmin who, along with his disciple,



With the Pontiff of Sivaganga Math

Śrī Viśveśvarānanda Bhāratī Svāmin, had requested His Holiness to grace Sivaganga. His Holiness paid a visit there on 15<sup>th</sup> February, 1968. A subsequent visit there was on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1971. The pontiff of the Sivaganga Math performed *pādapūjā* to His Holiness. The heads of the Hebsur Math and Machilipatinam *Gāyathrī-pīṭha* were also present on the occasion. His Holiness performed the *Kumbhābhiṣeka* and *pratiṣṭhā* of the new shrines of Dakṣiṇāmūrti, Mahāgaṇapati and Daṇḍapāṇi. He then proceeded to the Shankaracharya Cave in Sivaganga Parvata and witnessed *pūjā* there. After visiting the shrines of Gaṅgādhareśvara and Svarṇāmbikā, He blessed the assembled devotees and left for Bengaluru. Śrī Viśveśvarānanda Bhāratī Svāmin offered his respects on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1977 during

the *Ṣaṣṭyabdapūrti* (completion of 60 years) celebrations of His Holiness in Chennai.

Śrī Saccidānanda Bhāratī Svāmin, the immediate predecessor of the current pontiff of the Sivaganga Math, had, prior to *saṁnyāsa*, been a student of the *pāṭhaśālā* in Sringeri. He visited Sringeri and paid his obeisance to His Holiness on many occasions, besides having been initiated into a *mantra* by Him. In February 1985, he participated in the consecration of the Malahānikareśvara Temple, after its extensive renovation.

The relationship between the Kudali and the Sringeri Math had been a little strained in the past. However, in a break with the past, on being requested to do so, His Holiness graced Kudali in 1972 and anointed Śrī Vidyābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī Svāmin, the successor of Śrī Saccidānanda Śāṅkara Bhāratī Svāmin, as the head of the Kudali Math.

The successor to Śrī Saccidānanda Śāṅkara Bhāratī Svāmin of Kudali was anointed as a pontiff by His Holiness when He graced Kudali in April 1972.



With the Mahant of Tarakeshwar Math

### Other Religious Leaders

The *Mahant* of the Tarakeshwar Math highly revered His Holiness, invited Him and made excellent arrangements for His stay at Tarakeshwar on more than one occasion. He reverentially escorted His Holiness to the famous Taraknath Temple and was present when His Holiness performed *pūjā* to the holy *liṅga* there.



With the Head of Parthagali Math

In December 1963, during His Holiness's tour of Goa, He was received with devotion at Parthagali by Śrī Dvārakānāth Svāmin, the head of the Parthagali Math. When His Holiness was camping at Gudalur in March 1980, Sri Ramanatha Jnana Desikar, the head of the Kovilur Math, the Secretary of that *Maṭha* and two other members met Him and requested Him to visit Kovilur (in Ramnad District). His Holiness acceded to their request. He was received at Kovilur by a mammoth gathering, which included many prominent Nagarathars. He was taken in a procession to the Kovilur Math. In the



Head of Kovilur Math presenting Svāgata-patrikā



Mahesh Yogi

Mahesh Yogi of Transcendental Meditation fame had contacts with His Holiness even from his early days, when he was not famous. He wrote numerous letters to His Holiness and visited Him on several occasions.

public meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, presided over by Dr. Raja Sir Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad, the Kovilur *Maṭhādhipati* presented the welcome address. *Prasādas* were brought from the nine Nagarathar temples and each temple was represented at the meeting. Vaidyasubramania Iyer, in his address, alluded to the continued relationship between the Kovilur Math and Sringeri Math. The Kovilur Math is an *Advaita Maṭha* and is a *Śiṣya-maṭha* of Sringeri. He made reference to the *Maṭhādhipati* of Kovilur, Sri Veerappa Swamigal, who, in 1908, had invited the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff of Sringeri Sharada Peetham, Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahasvāmin, while He was camping at Ramnad, to perform the *kumbhābhiṣeka* of the temple at Kovilur.

Mahesh Yogi of Transcendental Meditation fame had contacts with His Holiness even from his early days, when he was not famous. He wrote numerous letters to His Holiness and visited Him on several occasions. For instance, he called on His Holiness during His 1977 camp at New Delhi. Likewise, Svāmi Cinmayānanda also maintained contacts with His Holiness and visited Him at Shankara Math, Bengaluru, and at other places also. His Holiness's association with the Ramakrishna Math had been rather long-standing and He had been invited to many of its centres. His connection with Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Kalady, merits special mention.

Svāmi Śivānanda, the founder of the Divine Life Society of Rishikesh, was a great admirer of the Sringeri Math. His successor, Svāmi Cidānanda, too held His Holiness in great esteem. When His Holiness toured the Himalayas in May 1967, Svāmi Cidānanda organised a public meeting at Rishikesh. Addressing those present, His Holiness greatly appreciated the socio-religious work

of the Divine Life Society and the part it played in the revival of Hindu *Dharma* in North India. His Holiness then expounded the basic principles of *Sanātana-dharma* and *Advaita*. On 22<sup>nd</sup> May, after His dip in the Holy Ganges, His Holiness was taken around the Sivananda Ashram.

In response to the invitation of Svāmi Satyānanda, the head of the Bihar School of Yoga, His Holiness visited Monghyr on the 17<sup>th</sup> March, 1967 and camped at the Bihar School of Yoga. He was welcomed with all honours by the inmates of the institution. Speaking to a distinguished audience on the next day in the spacious hall of Bajinath Goenka Dharmasala, His Holiness made a fervent appeal to



With Svāmi Cidānanda and other ascetics at Ganga



Svāmi Satyānanda

those present to follow the path of *dharma* as laid down by the *Rṣis* of yore. He quoted verses from the *Gītā* emphasising the impermanence of the body and the eternity of the *Ātman*. He added, “Bhagavatpāda has pointed to the ultimate unity of all faiths. One may follow any path one likes provided one sees the oneness of all religions. There is no fundamental contradiction between the tenets of one religion or cult and another. All spiritual paths ultimately lead to the same goal. This indeed is the universal appeal of the philosophy of *Advaita*.” Subsequently, Svāmi Satyānanda spoke a few words

explaining the various points in His Holiness’s benediction. K. K. Goenka, Honorary Secretary, Bihar School of Yoga, offered his respects and thanked His Holiness for having condescended to uplift the citizens of Monghyr.

In response to a pressing invitation from the late Anandamayi Ma, a very well-known *Tapasvini* with a very large following, His Holiness arrived at Haridwar on the 15<sup>th</sup> June, 1982. A large gathering of devotees and admirers, which included erudite *samnyāsins* and *Mahamandaleshwars*, received His Holiness. He was taken in a colourful procession from Sri Shankaracharya Marg to Kankhal, about five kms from



Anandamayi Ma

In response to a pressing invitation from the late Anandamayi Ma, a very well-known *Tapasvini* with a very large following, His Holiness arrived at Haridwar on the 15<sup>th</sup> June, 1982.

Haridwar, where He camped for three days. On arrival at the *aśrama*, He was received by Anandamayi Ma and the inmates. Anandamayi Ma had meticulously made exquisite arrangements for His Holiness's comfortable stay. In private, she informed Him that she felt that the time had come for her to cast off the body. Though externally His Holiness did not reveal His views, He comprehended that her end was nearing. She sought His blessings which His Holiness conferred on her. After His Holiness returned to Delhi, He indirectly hinted at the impending end of the *Tapasvini's* sojourn on earth by delaying the sending of some materials to Haridwar

through a messenger who had arrived to collect them. A little later, the news arrived that she had expired.

His Holiness is held in high esteem by the heads of many *Adheenams* in Tamil Nadu. Particular mention must be made of the erstwhile head of the Dharmapuri Adheenam who had even helped in making arrangements for His Holiness's tour in Tanjore District. In Karnataka, there are many Lingayat *Maṭhas* whose philosophy is divergent from that of Śāṅkara-bhagavatpāda. Nonetheless, His Holiness's connection with them deserves mention; the head of the Siddhaganga Math visited Sringeri.

Many other connections too were established by His Holiness with religious leaders. What has been described here is just illustrative of His having been a cordial, non-dogmatic, preeminent pontiff with a wide appeal.



The Jagadgurus with the Head of Siddhaganga Math



*Śrī Śantānanda Sarasvatī listening to His Holiness's discourse*



*With Śrī Trivikrama Rāmānanda Bhārati*





*With Śrī Dayānanda Sarasvatī*



*With Śrī Śrīdhara Svāmin*



*With Śrī Jñānānanda Bhārati*



*With Śrī Nārāyaṇānanda Bhāratī*





## CHAPTER 21

# Chosen Successor

Being the pontiff of the hallowed Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham, which has had an '*avicchinna-guru-paramparā* (unbroken line of *Gurus*)' right from Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda, His Holiness recognized the need for Him to nominate a successor-designate. On 26<sup>th</sup> October, 1974, upon emerging from Goddess Śāradāmbā's sanctum sanctorum, He announced to the assembled devotees that, with the concurrence of the Divine Mother, He had decided to nominate Sri Sitarama Anjaneyulu as His successor-designate and that the *śiṣya-svīkāra* (acceptance-of-disciple) ceremony would take place on 11<sup>th</sup> November, 1974.

Sri Sitarama Anjaneyulu was the first son of Ananthalakshamma and Venkateshwara Avadhani, a *Vedic* scholar. The first four children of the couple being daughters, both Avadhani and his spouse had wished and prayed for a son. He observed strict fasts and worshipped Lord Bhavānī-śaṅkara at the local temple near the river Naguleru in Alugamallepadu in Andhra Pradesh. He unfailingly bathed in the river early in the morning and performed *mahānyāsa-purassara-rudra-abhiṣeka* (*abhiṣeka* accompanied by chanting of the *śrī-rudra* and preceded by the chanting of the *mahānyāsa*) to the Lord





every day for a year. He continued his fasts and prayers after he shifted to Machilipatnam. He worshipped Lord Rāma there with great fervour during the *Rāma-navarātri* celebrations and resolved that he would name his child after Sītā and Rāma, if his wish for a male child was fulfilled. For her part, Anantalakshmmamma devoutly worshipped Lord Āñjaneya and prayed that she be blessed with a son. One night, she dreamt that Lord Āñjaneya gave her three mangoes and vanished. She woke up and narrated to her husband, her dream through which, she felt, Lord Āñjaneya had graced her. She decided that if she gave birth to a son, she would name the child after Him. The Lord answered the prayers of the pious couple and a baby boy was born to them, in Machilipatnam, on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1951, corresponding to *caitra-śukla-ṣaṣṭhī* of the cyclical year *Khara*; His birth-star was *mṛgaśīrṣa*. The couple named Him Sitarama Anjaneyulu.

Avadhani settled down with his family in Narasaraopet when Sri Anjaneyulu was a few months old. Even as a toddler, Sri Anjaneyulu showed signs of His future greatness. One day, when Ananthalakshmmamma woke up at 5:00 a.m. as was her wont, she was surprised to see a halo around the face of her darling child who was asleep. Sri Anjaneyulu learned God's name easier than any other word. His first steps were towards the family deity. Once, when Sri Anjaneyulu was three years of age, He started weeping inconsolably. His mother took Him to the local Śiva temple. To everyone's surprise, the little one not only stopped crying but also began to utter repeatedly, 'Śambho, Śiva, Śiva.' Śambhu is a name of Lord Śiva. Śiva later became His *iṣṭa-devatā* (favourite deity).

Sri Anjaneyulu's elder sister, Srilakshmi, started teaching Him Sanskrit before he was five years of age. Pratapagiri Sivarama Sastry, a Sanskrit scholar, took over when Sri Anjaneyulu turned five. By the time He was nine, He attained proficiency in Sanskrit and was able not only to converse in that language, but also to compose verses in it. He bagged several prizes and was invited by All India Radio, Vijayawada, to participate in Sanskrit programmes. In fact, it was His command over Sanskrit that first caught the attention of His Holiness. Sri Anjaneyulu's *upanayana* was performed when He was seven years of age. He learnt the *Yajur-veda* from His father and soon mastered it; He passed with honours the Guntur District Vedapravardhaka Vidwat Pariksha.



He had His first *darśana* of His Holiness when His Holiness visited Narasaraopet. Later, His Sanskrit teacher took Him and some other students to Vijayawada when His Holiness was camping there in 1961 and asked Him to deliver a talk in Sanskrit in the presence of His Holiness. Recalling the impact that His Holiness's *darśana* in Vijayawada had on Him, He said years later, "I had the good fortune of beholding the *Jagadguru* early in life. Once, I was asked to talk in Sanskrit by my teacher before His Holiness, in Vijayawada. I got a special prize from Him. At that time, it struck me that His Holiness was my teacher and my saviour. His beatific smile, I felt, was giving me a message. I felt that I got what I wanted. That day onwards, His benevolent looks were etched in my mind. The affection that He showered on me was more pleasant than the affection of my parents. I decided then that He was my *Guru*. Whenever there was a problem, I felt that I was guided by the *Jagadguru*. My feelings towards Him grew to such an extent that I could no longer stay in my house."

One day, a person came to Avadhani's house looking for the latter, who was to officiate in his son's *upanayana*. Sri Anjaneyulu informed him that His father was not in town, but would return and conduct the ceremony. However, owing to unforeseen circumstances, Avadhani's return was delayed. Sri Anjaneyulu who had, till then, only seen His father perform the *upanayana* rites five times, stepped in for His father. He Himself conducted the ceremony to the satisfaction of all.

Sri Anjaneyulu had His secular education in the local school. Being a bright student, He consistently stood first in his class. However, He did not complete his S.S.L.C., for, His intense dispassion, desire to study the *śāstras* and His regard for His Holiness drew Him away. Without informing His parents, He left Narasaraopet and went to Ujjain in 1966, where His Holiness was observing *cāturmāsya*. After reaching there, He informed His parents about His whereabouts and that they need not be concerned about Him.



His Holiness took Sri Anjaneyulu into His fold and started expounding the *Tarka-saṅgraha*, an introductory *Nyāya* text, to Him. Subsequently, on returning to Sringeri, His Holiness arranged for Gollupudi Gopalakrishna Sastry, a great *Nyāya* scholar, to teach Sri Anjaneyulu the *Nyāya-śāstra*. His Holiness keenly kept track of His disciple's progress. In a short span of time, Sri Anjaneyulu could comfortably participate and hold His own in the annual *Vidvat-sadas*. During His stay in the *Maṭha* as a *brahmacārin*, Sri Anjaneyulu impressed all those who came in contact with Him with His strict regime, burning dispassion, great erudition and unassuming demeanour.

When Sri Padmanabha Upadhyaya, His Holiness's Personal Assistant, died in an accident in 1974, His Holiness asked Sri Anjaneyulu to assist Him in some *Maṭha*-related activities. The transition from the life of a recluse to involvement in the *Maṭha's* activities was tough for Sri Anjaneyulu but He took it in His stride. Shortly thereafter, His Holiness announced His decision to ordain Sri Anjaneyulu as His successor-designate. What Vaidyasubramanya Iyer wrote in this regard (in an article published in 1977) is reproduced verbatim below.

“In 1974, at Sringeri I, with all due apology, asked His Holiness as to whether He was having in mind the appointment as His Sishya, the Brahmachaari who was learning Tarka, etc., at the Math. I conjectured that His Holiness could have such an intention. His Holiness told me that He was contemplating it, but had not reached a decision. While so, He asked me casually to fetch the almanac (Panchangam) and He started discussing an auspicious date for Shishya-Sweekaram, I could not follow the almanac as it was in Kannada script. He indicated a place in an open almirah and asked me to take the Tamil version of the almanac. I located the same and was about to take that out, when a piece of paper fell from the top of the bookshelf. His Holiness noticed this and wanted it to be brought to Him. It happened to be the cyclostyled copy of the brochure in Kannada of the Shishya-Sweekaram program of His Holiness by His Guru Sri Chandrasekhara Bharathi in 1931. His Holiness immediately exclaimed that Goddess had given Him the favourable signal for the Sishya-Sweekaram. We both went through the almanac and the date was fixed for Shishya-Sweekaram, scheduled for November 1974. He made His decision public during Navarathri.”

The religious ceremonies related to Sri Anjaneyulu's *samnyāsa* in November 1974 were similar to those of His Holiness's *samnyāsa* in May 1931 (which were described in an earlier chapter); they are, therefore, not detailed here. On the night prior to His *samnyāsa*, Sri Anjaneyulu was to keep awake beside a sacred fire duly set up in the structure housing the *samādhis* of the 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> pontiffs. Sri Subbaramaiya

was with Him that night. Jagannathan (who was known as Śrī Śāntānanda Bhāratī after he became a monk) came out of Sacchidananda Vilas that night to answer a call of nature and walked past the *samādhis*. As he did so, he perceived Sri Anjaneyulu sitting alone close to the sacred fire, melodiously chanting the name of Lord Rāma and oblivious of His surroundings. This is what he emphatically told me two days later.



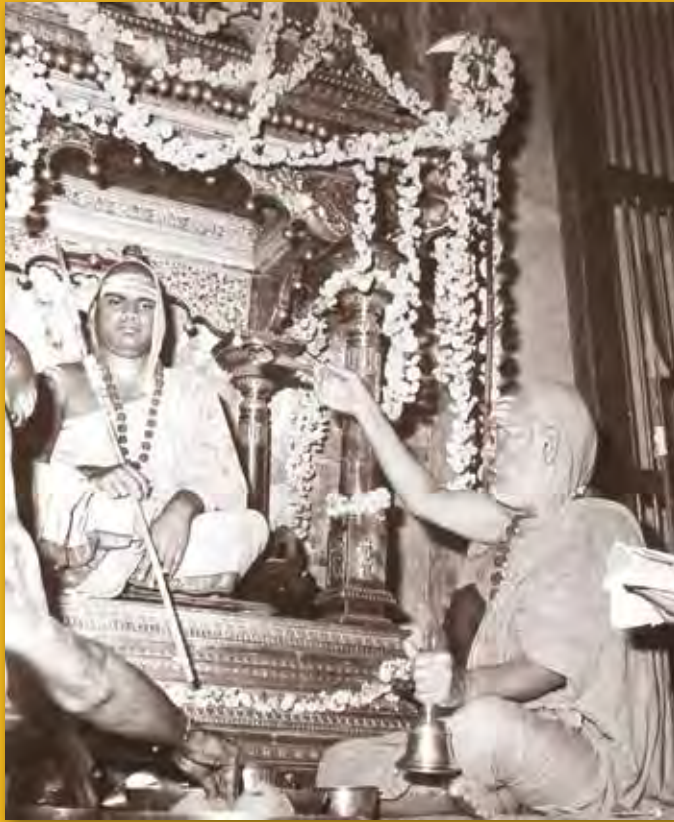
I learnt from Sri Subbaramaiya that he was with Sri Anjaneyulu throughout that night and that they were in the room in front of the 34<sup>th</sup> pontiff's *samādhi*. Hence, if Jagannathan had not been hallucinating, Sri Anjaneyulu should have been in two places at the same time that night.

Sri Anjaneyulu became a *śamnyāsin* on 11<sup>th</sup> November, 1974 and was blessed by His Holiness with the *yoga-paṭṭa* 'Bhāratī-tīrtha'. Devotees thereafter reverentially referred to Him as Śrī 'Sannidhānam (meaning divine Presence)' and to His Holiness as Śrī 'Mahāsannidhānam'. After the functions, His Holiness instructed the devotees that Śrī Sannidhānam should be accorded full respect by them.



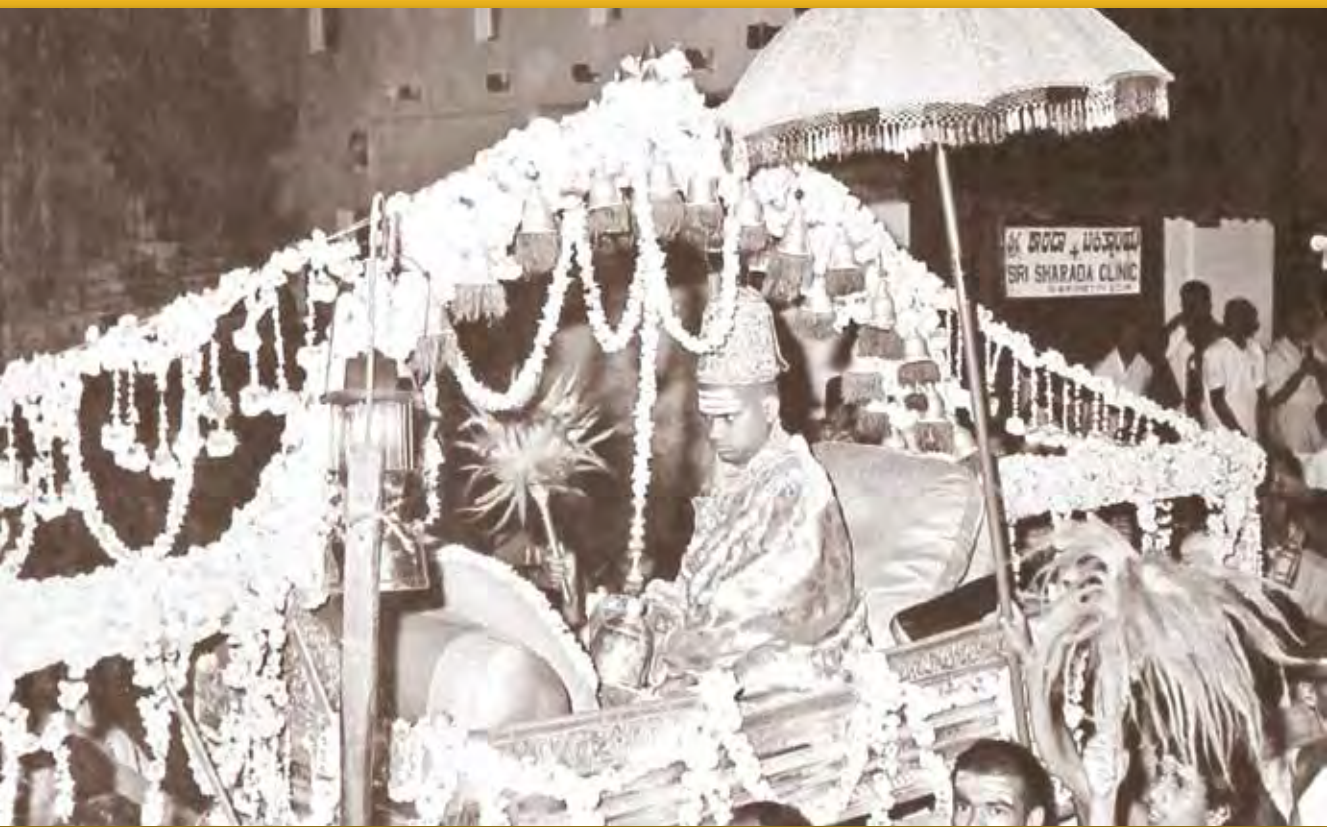












In the next few days, in accordance with the pontifical tradition in the *Maṭha*, His Holiness initiated Śrī Sannidhānam into several *mantras* such as those of *Lakṣmī-narasimha*, *Medhā-dakṣiṇāmūrti*, *Bālā-tripurasundarī* and the *Śrīvidyā*. When initiating Śrī Sannidhānam into the *Śrīvidyā*, as His Holiness was uttering the *dhyāna-śloka* concerned, He abruptly became motionless and unmindful of His body and

surroundings. After some time, He regained normalcy and told Śrī Sannidhānam, “You are fortunate. As I was reciting the *dhyāna-śloka*, I had a fascinating vision of the Goddess and was forcefully drawn into *samādhi*.” This incident was narrated to me by Śrī Sannidhānam.



“His Holiness instructed me, ‘One should ever contemplate, even when moving about, on the Truth expounded by Bhagavatpāda.’”

- Śrī Sannidhānam

When Śrī Sannidhānam was a *brahmacārin* and was staying in the basement in the western wing of Sacchidananda Vilas, His Holiness had sent for Him one morning and told Him (then Sri Anjaneyulu) to observe Him performing *yoga-āsanas* on that and the following days and learn to do them. Śrī Sannidhānam told me about this in 2013.

In a benedictory address in Kannada delivered on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1995, recalling His days with His Holiness, Śrī Sannidhānam said, “He instructed me, ‘One should ever contemplate, even when moving about, on the Truth expounded by Bhagavatpāda. We have just returned from Śāradāmbā’s temple. We prostrated before Her. That is a bodily activity. The inner activity should be the constant contemplation on the Truth taught by Bhagavatpāda. That indeed will make one’s birth fruitful.’ ... Even when I was a *brahmacārin*, He had great affection for me. Once, during the early days of my stay in Sringeri, I went to the other side of the river on a *pradoṣa*. That night, while seated for *pūjā*, He asked me, ‘Did you go to

the other side?’ ‘Yes, I did,’ I answered. He said, ‘It is enough if you stay in Narasimhavana itself. I will be observing you.’ From this, I understood the concern and affection that He had for me. He told me that there must not be any distraction while studying. ‘If you develop distracting habits, your learning will be impeded. Efforts put in by you at a much later stage will not suffice to enable you to become versed in the *śāstras*. If I missed my studies for even a while, my *Guru* would chide me,’ He said. In this fashion, He narrated His experiences and advised me about how I should conduct myself, the traditions of the

*Maṭha* and how to treat devotees. He often said, ‘Whatever be the attitude of the visitor, we, for our part, should show affection to all. We should not forget this. None should feel that his presence is not liked.’”

Śrī Sannidhānam is versed in the *śāstras* such as *Vedānta* and *Nyāya* and an eloquent speaker conversant with Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Hindi. His discourses are lucid and conform to the letter of the *śāstras*. In a benedictory address delivered in Kannada at Bengaluru on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 1987, His Holiness spoke as follows about Śrī Sannidhānam: “When I was in Delhi (in 1982), my disciple (Śrī Sannidhānam) was with me. He conducted himself in the way a disciple should. On the occasion of the *Vidvat-sadas* (held in New Delhi in 1982), he demonstrated that he was more scholarly than the most erudite of the scholars who attended the *sadas*. Wherever I went, he followed me in accordance with the dictum, ‘The disciple should follow his *Guru*.’...Recently when I was in Madras (Chennai, in the last quarter of 1986), several reporters came to me and posed various questions. Prior to coming to me, they had asked him these questions. Subsequent to my answering them, they said, ‘It would have been sufficient if we had met just one of them. Even in their words, there are no differences. We do not know if they had a discussion.’ The reason for the similarity in the replies was his having been with me. He intelligently pondered, ‘How should I conduct myself such that it would be appropriate?’ and acted accordingly. His discourses too are like that. Earlier, whenever he discoursed after me, he used to recite the very verse that I had chanted and spoke on the same



“On the occasion of the *Vidvat-sadas*, he (Śrī Sannidhānam) demonstrated that he was more scholarly than the most erudite of the scholars who attended the *sadas*.

- His Holiness

lines as myself. Frowning upon this, I told him, ‘What is the need for me to seat you next to me to repeat whatever I say?’ He asked, ‘Should I not speak like that?’ ‘No. You must say something new,’ I told him. He said, ‘In that case, I shall speak accordingly from tomorrow.’ He was prepared for that too. What I have observed is what I am saying now.”

Since the 1950s, His Holiness maintained a diary in which He recorded not His thoughts, feelings and experiences but what was relevant to the *Maṭha*, such as which place was visited and who the organizers were. Yet, in a sort of exception, He noted, in Kannada, about a speech delivered by Śrī Sannidhānam on the eve of Their departure from Chennai years ago, “*Rasavattāgi ittu* (It was delightful.)”

Śrī Sannidhānam accompanied His Holiness on His various tours in the period 1974 to 1983. After ill-health led to His Holiness curtailing His tours, in response to His directive, Śrī Sannidhānam started touring independently too. Śrī Sannidhānam’s first such tour commenced on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 1983; the last of His independent tours during the lifetime of His Holiness began on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 1989, covered Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Maharashtra and He was in Pune when His Holiness attained *videha-mukti* on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 1989. During His tours, Śrī Sannidhānam kept His Holiness posted about events through letters. Here is an English translation of a letter penned by Him in Namakkal (in Tamil Nadu) on 4<sup>th</sup> February, 1988:

☆☆☆

This submission is preceded by my *sāṣṭāṅga-namaskāra* at the lotus feet of the most worshipful, eminent *Guru*. By the kindness of Your Holiness, the tour is proceeding well. After completing the *Mahāśivarātri-pūjā* at Dindigul, I shall proceed, via Palakkad, to Kallidaikurichi. I shall perform the installation of the idols of Śāradā and Śaṅkara there at the newly constructed Shankar Math and then proceed to Coimbatore. *Sahasra-çaṇḍī* and other religious rites are to take place at Coimbatore in the *śukla-pakṣa* of the month of *madhu* (19<sup>th</sup> March, 1988 – =3<sup>rd</sup> April, 1988). I intend to perform the



Śrī Sannidhānam accompanied His Holiness on His various tours in the period 1974 to 1983. After ill-health led to His Holiness curtailing His tours, in response to His directive, Śrī Sannidhānam started touring independently too.



installation of Śāradāmbā that month itself at Tiruppur and reach Chennai on *kṛṣṇa-caturdaśī* (15<sup>th</sup> April, 1988) to initiate the celebration of *Śaṅkara-jayantī* there. I believe that by the mercy of Your Holiness all these functions will proceed as intended. I laid the foundation stone for the construction of a marriage hall in our Shankara Gurukulam in the pilgrim centre of Srirangam.

I have an intense desire to prostrate before the feet of Your Holiness at Sringeri after completing the tour as quickly as possible. I believe that it will be fulfilled through the unlimited compassion of Your Holiness and Śrī-Śāradā-candramaulīśvara.

A disciple offering *sāṣṭāṅga-namaskāra*,

Sd/- Bhārati-tīrtha

☆☆☆

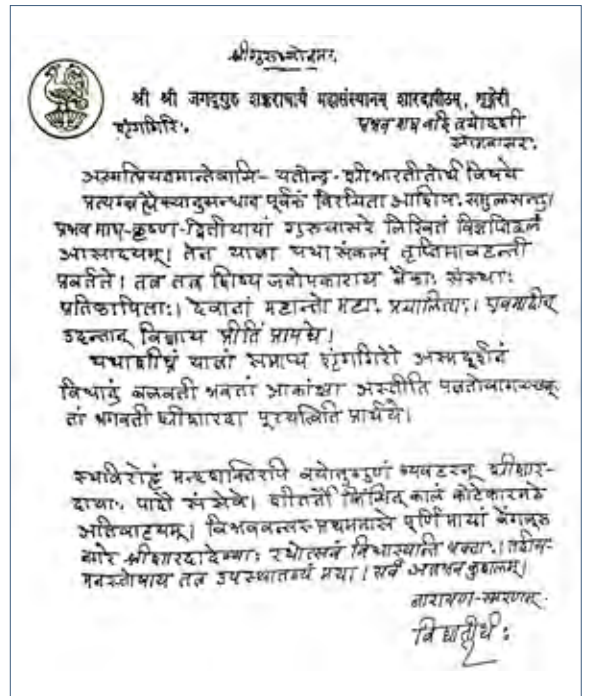
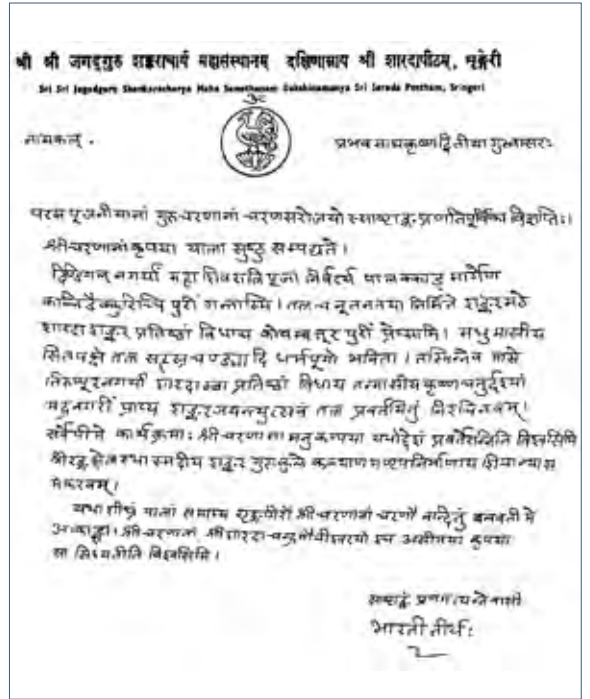
In response to this, His Holiness wrote to Śrī Sannidhānam from Sringeri an epistle dated 15<sup>th</sup> February, 1988. A rendering of that into English is as follows:

☆☆☆

Prostration to the glorious, revered *Guru*.

May the blessings, preceded by the contemplation of the unity of the inner self and Brahman, conferred in respect of my dearest disciple, the eminent monk Śrī-Bhārati-tīrtha manifest well.

I have received your letter penned on *prabhava-māgha-kṛṣṇa-dvitiyā* (4<sup>th</sup> February, 1988), Thursday. The tour is proceeding satisfactorily, as planned. Several institutions are



being established at various places for the benefit of disciples. Great rites and festivals pertaining to the divinities are being conducted. I felt pleased on knowing this and other news through it.

From your letter, I understood that you yearn to have my *darśana* at Sringeri after completing the tour as quickly as possible. I pray that Goddess Śrī-Śāradā fulfils your wish.

Though old and weak, acting in accordance with my age, I am sincerely serving the feet of Śrī-Śāradā. I spent some time at the *Maṭha* at Kotekar during the winter season. Devotees will be celebrating the *rathotsava* of Goddess Śrī-Śāradā at the city of Bengaluru on the full-moon day of the first month of the year *Vibhava* (3<sup>rd</sup> April, 1988). I need to be present there for their mental satisfaction. All is well here.

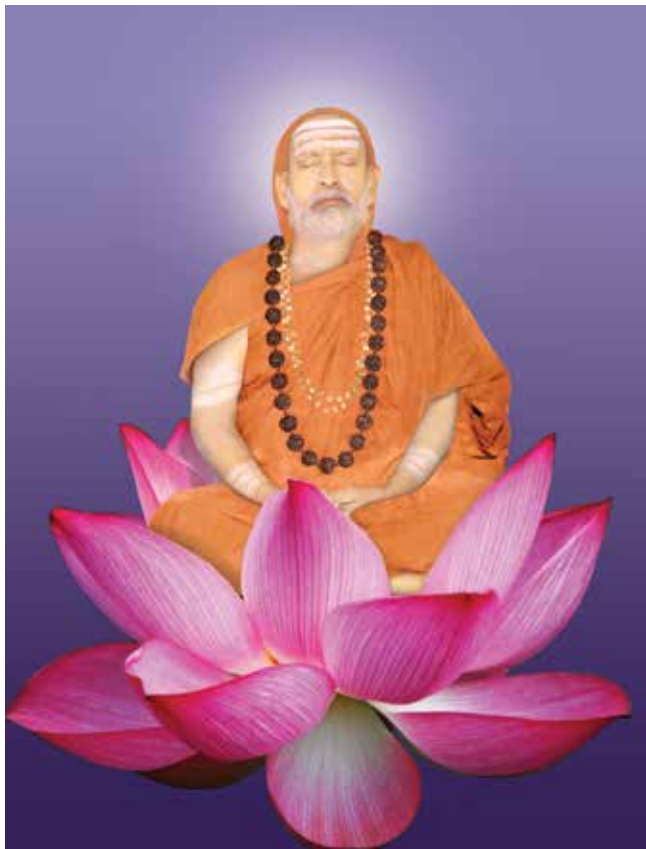
With the recollection of Nārāyaṇa

Sd/- Vidyātīrtha.



Śrī Sannidhānam has highlighted the glories of His Holiness through a couple of hymns composed by Him during the lifetime of His Holiness and, after that, through an *aṣṭottara*, a *carama-śloka* and a verse inscribed in His Holiness's *samādhī*. In the late seventies, I requested Śrī Sannidhānam one morning to bless me with some verses on His Holiness. Within minutes of His going to His room after completing His *āhnikā* and paying obeisance to His Holiness, He called out to me and gave me a sheet of paper in which He had quickly penned, in a neat hand, eight verses in the *anuṣṭubh* metre. The first letters of the verses were 'A-bhi-na-va-vi-dyā-tī-rtha', which, when read together, formed His Holiness's holy name 'Abhinava-vidyātīrtha'. As there is no word in Sanskrit beginning with 'rtha', His Holiness had, in the eighth verse, ingeniously written "rtha preceded by a' and thus generated the word 'artha (import)'. The meaning of the this octad of verses is, "I take refuge in Śrī Vidyātīrtha, the *Jagadguru*, who confers all joys, has a charming lotus-like face and is adored by everyone. I take refuge in Śrī Vidyātīrtha, who is tranquil and is both the Highest and its effect, about whom the *Veda* says, 'On realizing Him, the knot of the heart (the host of impressions in the form of desires that hang on to the intellect) is rent asunder.' I take refuge in Śrī Vidyātīrtha in the stage of whose mouth, the Goddess of learning (Sarasvatī) dances and who is proficient in terminating the miseries of those who bow before Him. I take refuge in Him, who is none other than Lord Dakṣiṇāmūrti who, having left His abode at the base of the banyan tree, dwells in Sringeri and imparts the

knowledge of the Truth to devotees. I take refuge in Śrī Vidyātīrtha who bestows grace on the saintly ones who, having renounced the desire for sense-objects, are established



in extreme dispassion. I take refuge in Śrī Vidyātīrtha, the Supreme Lord of all about whom the *Veda* says, 'He is the sole effulgent one who created heaven and earth.' I take refuge in Śrī Vidyātīrtha, the foremost *Guru*, who dwells on the bank of the Tuṅgā (in Sringeri) and expounds the Reality to disciples. I take refuge in Him who makes known the true import of the scripture to disciples and makes them dedicated to the path of *dharma*."

On a later date, when I requested Śrī Sannidhānam to grace me with a hymn that portrays His Holiness in *nirvikalpa-samādhi* and can serve as a *dhyāna-śloka*, He quickly wrote down and gave me verses, whose overall import is, "For getting liberated from the state of

transmigration, I meditate upon the greatest *Guru*, Śrī Vidyātīrtha, who is the resplendent sun that dispels the darkness of ignorance, whose mind is established in the Supreme *Brahman* of the nature of absolute existence and limitless bliss, who is seated in the *padmāsana*, whose eyes are partially closed in meditation, whose body, neck and head are held upright, who is brilliant, whose bodily splendour vies with the effulgence of the sun, whose limbs are motionless, who is auspicious and abides in *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, who deems insignificant every object of experience commencing with one's body and culminating in the state of *Brahmā*, who removes the suffering of those in distress, who resolves all doubts, who purifies all beings by His glance itself and whose feet are positioned in the lotus of my heart."

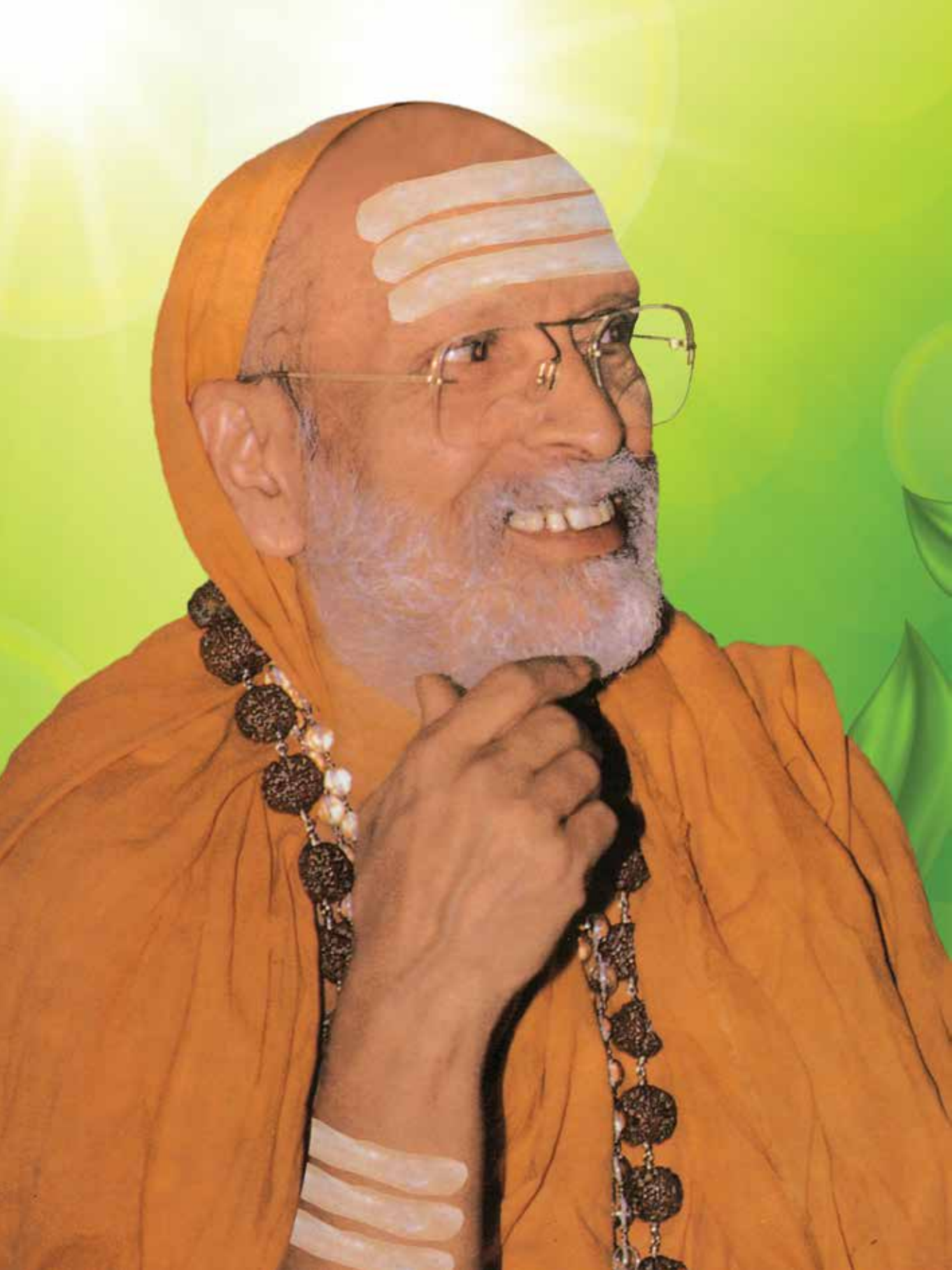


*Audience to Rajiv Gandhi in Chennai - 1988*



*Consecration at Narasaraopet - 1989*





## CHAPTER 22

# Enriching Stories

His Holiness had an innate ability to explain even complex topics in a simple manner through stories composed by Him on the spot or based on texts such as the *Vedas*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas*. This section contains His parables grouped under 55 heads. The sources of these parables are His benedictory addresses and what He told me in private. I have taken the following minor liberties: (1) Wherever appropriate, I have grouped the parables narrated by Him in more than one benedictory address under a single head; (2) In just a few instances, I have given names to the characters of a story even when He did not do so when telling me that story; (3) Where His Holiness narrated more than one version of a story, I have taken into account all the versions.



## 1. Insidious Attack of Desire

A group of monkeys dwelt in a forest. One day, the leader declared, “Humans fast on *ekādaśī* days and thereby obtain *punya*. We too shall fast on *ekādaśī*.” So, on the next *ekādaśī*, all of them assembled and sat on the ground, with their eyes closed. After some time, one of them said, “We are unsafe sitting motionless on the ground. A herd of elephants passing by may trample us. It is also possible that a passing tiger may maul us. Further, as we are tree-dwellers, remaining continuously on the ground is uncomfortable for us. So, why not we climb the trunks of trees and remain at the start of the branches? We will be safer and yet will not be close to the fruits at the end of the branches.” His suggestion was appreciated by them and they implemented it.

Some time passed. Another monkey said, “A cheetah can attack us here. Were we to go to the end of the branches, we will be better off. Cheetahs cannot come there because the portions concerned will not support their weight. Further, we can easily save ourselves by jumping to the next tree. We can also save ourselves easily from snakes. We could sit facing away from the fruits, keeping a watch on the ground and the tree trunks.” This idea too was liked by all and immediately implemented.



Some more time passed. One monkey said, “Continuously watching the ground is terribly boring. Why not we take turns to spot danger? The rest of us can then feel free to look around and thereby avert boredom. Surely, no fast will get broken even if our eyes were to momentarily fall on a fruit.” “He is right,” felt the others. Soon, they were frequently eying the fruits.

It was not long before a monkey opined, “While we are seated here,


we might as well feel the fruits to identify the ripe and juicy ones. That will make our task of foraging easier tomorrow. After all, we will be hungry then and would not like to spend much time picking the right fruits to eat.” There was no voice of dissent. Soon, the monkeys got busy feeling the fruit, with their hands lingering for a while on the good ones.

An aged monkey then said, “Not only will we be hungry tomorrow morning but also weak. Setting out for forage will be difficult. So let us pluck the good fruits now and keep them ready for eating tomorrow.” “A wise suggestion,” thought the others and began to pluck fruits.


A little later, another aged monkey said, “One cannot pick good fruits merely by feeling them. Smelling them is also necessary. After all, a fruit may be nice to feel but may smell bad. Definitely, we would not like to eat any foul-smelling fruit.” The others agreed. So all of them began to smell the fruits plucked and to throw away those whose smell was unsatisfactory.

Some time passed. Another aged monkey said, “From experience, I know that even a fruit that is nice to look at, good to feel and pleasant to smell can have a rotten core or worms. Thus, tasting fruits by biting each of them is necessary to confirm that the fruits we will be eating tomorrow morning are truly nice. Surely, we would not want to get a stomach-ache by eating bad fruits in the morning. Our *ekādaśī* fast will remain unbroken even if each of us were to taste a piece of fruit but take care not to swallow it.” The suggestion was regarded wise and implemented.

In but a few minutes, the monkeys began swallowing the delicious pieces of fruits in their mouths. That was the end of their fast.



Underestimation of the power of the senses to unsettle the mind, flawed self-justification for one’s actions, overconfidence and making of compromises where one should not are among the factors that cause a person to have a moral or spiritual fall.





## 2. Harmfulness of Anger

Śaṅkara and Hari were resident students of Sanskrit literature at a *pāṭhaśālā*. They shared a room along with two others. It was *paurṇamī*. There were no classes that day and the students were in their rooms. Śaṅkara was seated in his corner reading the portion of Kālidasa's *Raghuvamśa* that his preceptor had taught a couple of days earlier. Hari and his two room-mates were chatting.

Hari: Have you heard of any elephant that is terrified of rats and which jumps, runs and creates an earthquake on seeing one.

Companions: No.

Hari: I know of one. Śaṅkara is that elephant. He is so fat that he weighs as much as a pachyderm. He is mortally scared of rats. Yesterday evening, when he was seated under the *aśvattha* tree, a rat passed by. Our elephant jumped up and ran. He tripped on a banana peel and fell. There was a minor earthquake. Poor Mother Earth! What a blow she received!

Hari burst out laughing and so did his friends. Śaṅkara, who heard all that was said, lost his temper. His face red and his breathing shallow, he vituperated Hari and called him names. Hari turned and walked out of the room. After a few minutes, Śaṅkara's other two room-mates went out to attend to some work.

The moment they left, Śaṅkara tiptoed to Hari's corner, picked up Hari's *Raghuvamśa* book, hid it and resumed his seat. Hari entered. He appeared upset on not finding his book but did not say anything. He automatically assumed that Śaṅkara was the culprit. So when Śaṅkara went to answer the call of nature, Hari brought a vessel of water and threw it on Śaṅkara's bedding. Śaṅkara did not realize what had happened when he returned.

A teacher who taught Hari and Śaṅkara had observed from the hall all that had transpired. He entered the room. The two boys prostrated before him. He sat down and asked them also to do so. He then told them a story.

Teacher: On a wintry night, a person was sleeping with a blanket pulled over him for warmth. He woke up when he felt something moving on the blanket, near his ankles. In the dim light, he was able to make out the figure of a rat. Without a second thought,

he picked up a bottle containing water that was by his side and hurled it towards the rodent. The bottle grazed the rat's tail, struck the man's feet and broke. He yelled in pain; his bedding became wet. He cursed the rat and looked around for it. He found that it was hiding in a corner, not far from him. Wanting to terminate the rat's life, he swung his arm swiftly and succeeded in catching the rodent by its tail. Desperate to escape, the rat bit him. Feeling sharp pain, he relaxed his grip. The rat scurried away. Well, Śaṅkara, what do you think of the man?

Śaṅkara: He was a thorough fool.

Teacher: Why do you say so?

Śaṅkara: The man tried to kill the rat with a bottle, which was certainly not appropriate for the purpose. He did not realize that he would be hurting himself by his action and that he would be unable to sleep comfortably thereafter because his bedding would get wet. Catching the rat by its tail was a stupid thing to do, for he virtually forced the rat to bite him.

Teacher: When Hari made fun of you, you could have laughed at yourself. Alternatively, you could have let the matter rest, thinking, "I am fat. It is also true that I am scared of rats and that, yesterday on seeing a rat, I jumped up, ran and fell. Sarcastic embellishments apart, Hari's narrative is not false." Instead, you lost your temper. Just as the rat disturbed the man of the story, Hari's ridicule disturbed you. The bottle hurt the man and wet his bedding. Your anger too affected you in two ways.

Śaṅkara: How?

Teacher: Did you mean all the things that you told Hari in anger?

Śaṅkara: No, I was so excited that I could not think rationally and choose my words then.



Teacher: The ability to think logically and act sensibly is a very valuable asset of humans. You temporarily lost that ability. Did you not?

Śaṅkara: I admit I did.

Teacher: That was a major, immediate setback for you just as the blow on the feet was for the man. After you snapped at Hari, you tried to continue with your studies. Were you able to concentrate as before?

Śaṅkara: For some time, I could not. My mind was agitated and the thought that Hari had humiliated me in the presence of my friends kept recurring.

Teacher: Just as the man was unable to sleep in comfort that night because of the wetness of his bed, you were unable to attend to your studies for some time because of your mental agitation. The man did not realize the consequences of his hurling the bottle. He only thought he was going to get rid of the rat. You did not think of the consequences of your anger. You only thought of putting Hari in his place. Do you agree?

Śaṅkara: Yes.

Teacher: Hari, tell Śaṅkara what you did to his bedding and why.

Hari: Śaṅkara, you hid my book. In retaliation, I threw water on your bedding.

Teacher: Irritated with the rat, the man caught it by its tail and it bit him. To punish Hari for having teased you, you hid his book. Because you did so, you have a wet bedding.

Śaṅkara: I now clearly see that there is much in common between the foolish man and myself.

Teacher: I know that you have a quick temper. Try to change yourself. Remember that anger harms the very person who gives room to it. It temporarily deprives him of his precious God-given gift of rational thinking and sensible behaviour. It agitates the mind and destroys peace. It does not give the least happiness; no man feels jolly when he is in the grip of wrath. Lord Kṛṣṇa has spoken of anger as one of the gateways to hell.

Śaṅkara: If I give up anger, will not people take advantage of my resulting docility?

Teacher: A person should be patient and should not give room to anger. This does not mean that he must allow people to ride roughshod over him. He can be firm and

even give a strong verbal response when the situation necessitates it. A boss may have to reprimand an indolent subordinate who is not amenable to soft words. In such situations, anger may be feigned but mental composure must be retained.

Śaṅkara: I understand the importance of conquering anger and shall do my best to reform myself.

Teacher: Hari, there was no need for you to tease or provoke Śaṅkara. People normally resent censure and humiliation. Because of what you did, Śaṅkara gave you a good dressing down. His rebuke hurt you, did it not?


Hari: Yes, that is why I left the room. For some time, I continued to feel ill at ease.

Teacher: Śaṅkara foolishly hid your book but your retaliation too was unwise. Had Śaṅkara found out later that you had wet his bedding, he would have hurt you for what you did. You are familiar with the *Mahābhārata*. You know that when Droṇa sought help from Drupada, the latter insulted him. So, after training the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, Droṇa got Arjuna to capture Drupada and took possession of half of Drupada's kingdom. Drupada, for his part, performed a sacrifice and obtained a son who would slay Droṇa. Dhṛṣṭadyumna killed Droṇa during the *Mahābhārata*-war when the latter laid down arms on being told by Yudhiṣṭhira that Aśvatthāma had died. Later, Aśvatthāma avenged his father's death by slaying Dhṛṣṭadyumna. What a chain of reactions!


Hari: In future, I shall try to keep the feelings of others in mind and abstain from unwisely initiating retaliatory measures.

Teacher: Both of you should apologize to each other and be friends as before.

The boys did as told. Śaṅkara then returned Hari's book; Hari put Śaṅkara's bedding in the sun to dry.




Anger harms the one who gives room to it in more ways than one. It is, as declared by the Lord Himself, a gateway to hell. Hence, it is in the interest of everyone to give no quarter to anger. A person should be patient. However, if the situation necessitates it, he may simulate anger; even then, he should not become mentally agitated.



### 3. The *Veda* Determines What is *Dharma*


A lawyer argued, “Your Honour, my client should not be treated as guilty. It is true that he stole. But there is a reason for that. He was forced to commit the theft because his family was starving. With the stolen money, he not only helped himself but also his family. While stealing, he did not destroy any property. In fact, he did not even damage the lock as he used a duplicate key. The money that he took away was meagre compared to the rich man’s hoard of black money. My client performed a service to the Government by unearthing black money. This apart, the wealthy man has so much cash that this little depreciation ought to mean nothing to him.”

How would the judge respond to such an argument? He would presumably declare, “I am not interested in such arguments that ignore the law of the land. Stealing is an offence under the Indian Penal Code. Even you admit that your client did steal. So I am duty-bound to punish him.” Then he would hold the lawyer’s client guilty and send the thief to jail.



Judges determine whether an act is a punishable offence or not by relying on the penal code and not on fanciful arguments that disregard the penal code.

Likewise, to determine what is *dharma* and what is *adharmā*, a person must turn to the *Veda* and not to mere reasoning that is independent of the scriptures. The penal code, having been formulated by humans, may require occasional revision. However, the *Vedas*, which emerged from Īśvara, are ever flawless.



## 4. Spotlight on Speaking the Truth


A person stole some goods. He was accosted and made to take an oath that he would answer truthfully. He said, “As long as there is life, I shall speak the truth.” He was then cross-examined. He flatly denied that he had stolen anything. On the basis of his testimony, he was let off. A friend of his, who had participated in the vile act, asked him, “Why did you utter falsehood so brazenly in spite of the oath that you took?” The man nonchalantly replied, “I did not lie. All that I had said was true. I agreed to spell out the truth as long as there was life. I had an insect in my hand. Before I started answering, I crushed the insect to death. Hence my statement, ‘I shall speak the truth as long as there is life’, continued to hold.”

This is an example of sophistry. When a person has something in mind but makes equivocal or confusing statements so as to cause the listener understand something else, he is guilty of having deviated from the truth. To speak the truth, as insisted upon by the scriptures, one’s words should accord with one’s thoughts. The next point to be noted with regard to veracity is that one should speak what is pleasant. But uttering what is pleasant does not imply speaking what is not factual.


A mischievous person decided to fool a friend of his. He went to his friend and said in an excited voice, “Are you not aware that you have won ten lakhs in a lottery? How can you sit here so calmly?” The friend was dumbfounded. When his amazement decreased a little, he began to build castles in the air. In the meantime, the prankster left. Finally, the man took up a newspaper to have the pleasure of seeing his lottery-ticket number there. When he could not find it, his exultation gave way to total dejection. This is an example of a pleasant untruth.

One should not irresponsibly verbalize a distressing truth. Following a





To sum up, one should speak the truth. Further, one's words should be pleasant and beneficial to others. Distressing truths ought not to be irresponsibly verbalized and words should not be chosen so as to mislead others.



massive heart-attack, a person was convalescing in a hospital. One day, his son was involved in a road accident and died. A person who had witnessed the accident rushed to the hospital and exclaimed to the heart-patient, "Do you know what has happened? Your son has died!" The patient, who was very fond of his son, could not bear the terrible news. As his heart was already weak, he breathed his last. The conduct of the person who conveyed the bad news was blameworthy.

## 5. Truth and Silence

Once, three persons were proceeding to heaven in a celestial vehicle which had come to collect them. On their way, they chanced to behold a snake that was just about to swallow its prey, a frog. One of the three commented, "O serpent! Do you not have any compassion for the frog? For heaven's sake, spare its life." The irritated snake cursed, "How dare you deny me my food? May you go to hell." Sad to say, the man went to hell.

The second man, who was bewildered on seeing this, supported the snake's stance and said, "The frog is but your natural food. You can surely eat it." Now, the frog became wild and retorted, "How dare you suggest that I be eaten! You have no kindness. May you suffer the tortures of hell." The man fell from the celestial vehicle. The third man, who remained silent, reached heaven.

This story illustrates that, on certain occasions, remaining silent is even better than speaking the truth.

## 6. Subtle Aspects of Truthfulness

After the death of Droṇa, Karṇa became the commander-in-chief of the Kaurava forces. In an encounter with Karṇa, Yudhiṣṭhira, Nakula and Sahadeva were worsted and injured. Humiliated and in much pain, Yudhiṣṭhira withdrew from the battlefield to his tent to take some rest. The battle raged on. After a while, being anxious about Yudhiṣṭhira, Arjuna wanted to see him. So, leaving the Pāṇḍava forces under the control of Bhīma, he asked Kṛṣṇa to take him to Yudhiṣṭhira's tent.

When Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna came to pay their respects, Yudhiṣṭhira wrongly assumed that Karṇa had been killed by Arjuna. He sought to know the details. Arjuna explained to him that till that point of time, he had not been successful in putting an end to Karṇa's life. He averred that he would definitely do so.

On hearing Arjuna's words, Yudhiṣṭhira felt greatly dissatisfied and gave way to wrath. He severely censured Arjuna saying, "Unable to defeat Karṇa, and moved by fear, you have left Bhīma in command of the forces and come away here. Had you told me long ago that you would not fight Karṇa, I would have taken my decisions in a different manner. You promised that you would kill Karṇa but have not fulfilled your promise. Your chariot has been fashioned by Viśvakarma and on it, there is a flag with the symbol of Hanumān. You have the Gāṇḍīva bow with you. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself is your charioteer. Still, out of fear of Karṇa, you have run away and come here. Give away your Gāṇḍīva to Kṛṣṇa. Let Him do the needful by killing Karṇa. Alternatively, give your Gāṇḍīva to somebody else. You are unfit to have it. Shame on you! Shame on your prowess! Shame on your Gāṇḍīva!"

Yudhiṣṭhira's rebuff stung Arjuna enough to make him lose his temper. He started to pull out his sword. Seeing this, Kṛṣṇa asked him, "What is it that you are trying to do? There are no foes here. Why do you want to pull out your sword?" Arjuna said, "I am going to kill Yudhiṣṭhira. I had secretly vowed that if anyone were to tell me, 'Give away your Gāṇḍīva', I would certainly slay him. Now, in fulfilment of my promise, I am going to murder Yudhiṣṭhira, for he has insulted me by asking me to give away the Gāṇḍīva to another and regarded me as unfit for wielding it."

Kṛṣṇa said, "Shame on you, Arjuna! Nobody who knows the true nature of *dharma* would behave the way you intend to. Upholding the truth is most exalted. However, the nature of truth, as upheld by noble persons, is not readily comprehensible. There



are occasions when a person may tell a lie without incurring sin. For instance, one can utter a falsehood to save one's life or to protect oneself from complete ruin or for the well-being of a holy one. By doing so, one does not become guilty of unrighteousness. There are also occasions when, by bluntly speaking the truth, one incurs not merit but sin."

Kṛṣṇa then narrated the story of a man named Kauśika who was not very learned but who wanted to be truthful. He was well-known as a speaker of the truth. One day, when he was seated, certain people ran past him. A short while later, he saw a gang of dacoits. They approached him and asked him about the whereabouts of the persons they were following. Deeming utterance of truth to be priceless, Kauśika indicated where the people had gone. The dacoits resumed their pursuit and finally massacred them. Kṛṣṇa then explained that by virtue of his factual speech, Kauśika not only did not acquire merit, he incurred sin. The Lord said that in the circumstances, Kauśika should have remained silent. Alternatively, if his silence itself would have been a hint to the effect that the persons had run in that direction, he could have misled the dacoits.

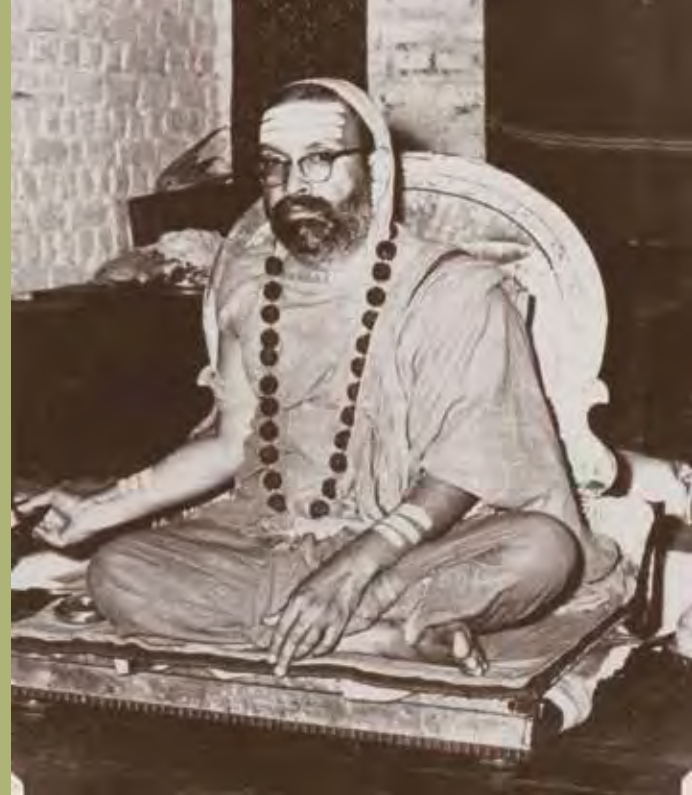
Kṛṣṇa clarified to Arjuna that Yudhiṣṭhira was in great pain and had been humiliated by Karṇa. Karṇa had attacked Yudhiṣṭhira even after the latter had stopped fighting. Thus, Yudhiṣṭhira was in a sad plight when he censured Arjuna. Further, by his sharp words, he sought to exhort Arjuna to bring about the death of Karṇa, for he knew that Arjuna had the requisite capacity. The Lord explained that since Yudhiṣṭhira was a noble person who deserved to be venerated by Arjuna and since his words could be satisfactorily justified, it would be thoroughly improper for Arjuna to slay him; such an act would be a gross violation of *ahimsā*, which is paramount.

Arjuna requested Kṛṣṇa to unequivocally specify what he should do, for, on the one hand, it was wrong for him to assassinate Yudhiṣṭhira and, on the other, he had to fulfil his vow. The Lord said, "When extreme opprobrium is inflicted on a great, highly-respected person, he dies, as it were. The *Atharva-veda* teaches that speaking disrespectfully to an august leader is tantamount to slaying him without extinguishing his life. Taking recourse to this scriptural pronouncement, fulfil your vow by insulting Yudhiṣṭhira. Thereafter, fall at his feet and seek his forgiveness. Being pious and understanding, he will excuse you."

As instructed by Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna began to rudely reproach Yudhiṣṭhira. "You have escaped to this place that is far removed from the battlefield and are fully dependent for your safety on the prowess of your well-wishers. What a contrast there is between you and

the heroic and powerful Bhīma! Unlike him, you are quite unfit to find fault with me. You are addicted to gambling. It is because of you that we lost our kingdom and had to face severe hardships,” said Arjuna.

As he finished his tirade, he was overcome with remorse. He again drew out his sword. Seemingly surprised, Kṛṣṇa queried, “What is the problem now?” Arjuna said that he intended to get rid of his body with which he had behaved in an unbecoming manner towards his elder brother who was truly worthy of being worshipped by him.



The Lord stopped him saying, “Think of how terrible it would have been if you had slain Yudhiṣṭhira. It was only to avoid that unrighteous act that you spoke rudely to him. Why, then, are you drowned in grief? You want to commit suicide but that is something that wise men never do. If you kill yourself, the sin you shall incur will be more than the sin that would have accrued to you had you assassinated your brother; you will experience overwhelming agony in hell. Self-glorification is on par with suicide. So, eulogize yourself and thereby commit the equivalent of the self-killing you intended to indulge in.”

Arjuna then began to boast, “With the sole exception of Lord Śiva, the wielder of the bow Pināka, there is none who is a match for me in archery. I can single-handedly destroy the entire world with its inhabitants. I was the one who earlier defeated the kings ruling in the various directions and made them subservient to you, O Yudhiṣṭhira. I have now destroyed half the Kaurava forces.” Having been saved by the Lord from the sins of breaking his vow, slaying Yudhiṣṭhira and committing suicide, Arjuna paid obeisance to his brother and begged to be forgiven.

Having propitiated Yudhiṣṭhira, Arjuna readied himself to return to battlefield. “My life is for doing what is pleasing to you,” he asserted. In the meantime, Yudhiṣṭhira,

This episode of the *Mahābhārata* shows that while one must ever adhere to the truth, truthfulness has several subtle aspects. When issues are complex, one should rely upon the conduct and the advice of great people.

who had earlier listened silently to Arjuna's stinging rebuke, became dejected and felt that he was despicable. He said, "I am a vile sinner who has caused all of you so much trouble. I deserve to be killed. Bhīma is fit to rule and should become the monarch, not I who am impotent. I shall depart for the forest."

Yudhiṣṭhira got up from his cot to leave but Kṛṣṇa fell at his feet and pleaded, "Arjuna could not falsify his vow to kill anyone who asked him to give the Gāṇḍīva to another. Hence, in keeping with my advice, he spoke disrespectfully to you and thereby fulfilled his promise. We seek refuge in you. Prostrating before you, I beseech you to kindly

forgive our transgressions. You desired the death of Karṇa. Today, he shall be slain and the earth shall drink his blood."

Thoroughly appeased, Yudhiṣṭhira lifted Kṛṣṇa up and said to Him, "Arjuna and I were deluded and would have drowned in the ocean of calamity and sorrow. You saved us. Your wisdom is the boat that enabled us to safely reach the shore."

## 7. Vedic Chanting Should be Error-Free

A poor pundit had unmarried daughters. He was at a loss as to how he could find the money to get them married. A friend told him, "Musicians get handsome rewards." Consequently, the desire to learn singing sprouted in his mind. He found out that to train his voice, he would have to practise singing for long. Hence, he sat under a tree at the outskirts of his village and practised singing. But what emerged from him was mere cacophony.

A ghost that had earlier been a musician inhabited that tree. It was not able to bear the pundit's murder of music. So it told him, "I am a music-knowing ghost. This tree is my home. Your cacophony is making it impossible for me to stay here. Go elsewhere." The pundit replied, "Why should I go? I want to earn money and for that I want to become a songster by ardent practice. This is my chosen place for practice."

The ghost said, “Since it is money that you want, I will tell you how you can get it. I shall possess the princess. The king will have his physicians attend to her. However, they will be unable to cure her. You seek the king’s audience. Tell him that the princess is possessed by a ghost and that you can exorcise it and cure her. With the king’s permission, go to the princess and sing there as you are doing now. I, who cannot bear your atrocious singing, will immediately leave the princess. She will get cured. The king will handsomely reward you. Thereafter, there will be no need for you to come here and kill music.”

The man agreed and the ghost’s plan was successfully executed by them. As a consequence, the man was able to get more than enough money to get his daughters married, while the ghost was able to live in peace on its tree. Just as the music-knowing ghost of the story was put off by the poor man’s cacophony, *Vedic* scholars feel ill at ease when someone chants the holy *Vedic mantras* incorrectly in their presence.

While bad singing might exceptionally fetch rewards as illustrated in the tale, incorrect chanting of the *Veda* invariably results in sin accruing to the person who chants.

Care must be taken to learn and chant the *Veda* correctly, without errors in either the words or the intonations. While there is no rule that a person should learn music, it is obligatory on a qualified man to learn *Vedic mantra-s* from a teacher and to chant them correctly. By fulfilling this duty, the chanter acquires *punya*; by neglecting it, he incurs sin.

## 8. Parents and Children

There was a beautiful child whose parents were poor. A wealthy childless couple lived nearby. They approached the child’s parents and requested, “Please allow us to adopt your child.” The mother was hesitant. However, the father said, “We are poor and cannot afford to give our dear one good food, clothing or comforts. Our child will, after all, be living in the next house and so we can see it everyday. It would be in the child’s interest for us to part with it.” Reluctantly, the mother agreed.

The child was given all comforts in its new home. However, with the passage of time, the rich couple forbade the child's parents from coming to see it. The mother was taken aback and wept copiously. But what could the poor lady do except reconcile herself? One day, the rich man's servant told her, "The child has small-pox and nobody is willing to go near it." "Oh, my child!" cried the mother, and rushing to the affluent man's house, took her dear one in her arms.

The story shows that a mother's love for her child is intense and unconditional. Parents strive for the welfare of their children. They put up with innumerable sufferings and inconveniences for the sake of their offspring. So it is not surprising that the *Veda* declares, "Revere your mother as a god. Revere your father as a god." Manu states that the mother is ten times more venerable than the father. In any case, it is impossible for a person to repay his debt of gratitude to either of his parents. Were he to be ungrateful to them, he would be committing a heinous sin for which there is no expiation.

The scriptures speak of the duties of a son towards his parents. When his parents are alive, he should obey them. After they have passed away, he should perform the *śrāddha* ceremony every year. The performance of *śrāddha* at least once at Gaya is deemed laudable.

A person wished to send some money to a relative living in another town. So he went to the post-office and obtained a money-order form. Having filled it, he submitted it at the pertinent counter along with the money he wanted to give his relative. His money remained at the post-office but an equivalent amount of cash was delivered to his relative.

In a similar manner, by the power of God, what is offered by a man with faith at a properly-performed *śrāddha* ceremony reaches those for whom the offering is intended in a form beneficial to them, regardless of whether they dwell in the world of manes or have been reborn on the earth. The *śrāddha* ceremony benefits the performer too, for he obtains much *punya* and the blessings of the manes. Were he to abstain from performing *śrāddha*, he would be guilty of giving up his scripturally-ordained duty and would incur sin.

Parents, for their part, should try to inculcate good habits and righteousness in their children.

## 9. Thankfulness

A man threatened to file a criminal complaint against a rich businessman for defrauding him and also causing injury to his subordinates due to negligence. The affluent man felt perturbed and discussed his problem in depth with a law-knowing friend. The friend told him that he was in for great trouble. He advised him to immediately engage a leading lawyer and also suggested the name of an advocate. The rich man promptly rang up the lawyer concerned and sought an appointment. He also briefly mentioned his problem. The lawyer told him that as he was leaving on a vacation in a couple of days, he was not in a position to take up the case. The affluent man pleaded but the lawyer was firm.

That evening, the advocate was surprised to find the rich man waiting at his house. The potential client pleaded so much that the lawyer finally told him, "Send the case details to my office tomorrow morning. I shall read the papers and then convey my decision about accepting or not accepting the case to you over the phone." The next morning, when the advocate went to his office, he found the rich man there in person. After hearing the details of the problem and reading the pertinent documents, the advocate said, "Your position is pretty weak. Much preparatory work and reading need to be done to defend you. I am hard pressed for time and also plan to leave tomorrow on a holiday. So I suggest that you contact some other lawyer." "Please do not refuse me," begged the rich man. "I have come to you for succour as did Vibhīṣaṇa to Rāma. I am counting on you. Kindly do not let me down. No matter what your fees and other expenses in connection with the case may be, I am ready to pay. Money is no criterion." Moved by the entreaties of the man, the advocate decided to cancel his vacation and take up the man's case.

Soon, a warrant of arrest was issued against the rich man. He immediately rang up his lawyer and, breaking into sobs, stuttered, "Help me! I will die of misery if I have to spend even 24 hours in confinement." The lawyer effectively rebutted the points raised by the prosecution against his release and persuaded the judge to grant him bail. After his release, his friend told him that his lawyer had been very forceful. However, the man was not particularly thankful and said, "Perhaps, getting me out on bail was, in any case, a simple task."

The main case soon came up for hearing. The lawyer conducted the defence in a brilliant manner. Further, for reasons unknown to the prosecution, its main witness went back on what he had told the police. So the man was acquitted. He perfunctorily thanked

his lawyer and, full of joy, went out to celebrate. That evening, when he was relaxing at his house, his servant received a phone call and informed him that his lawyer wished to speak to him. He, however, asked his servant to convey that he had gone out. The lawyer left a message asking him to call back. The rich man did not bother to do so. Instead, the next day, he left on a month-long holiday.

When he returned, he received a bill from the lawyer. Summoning his secretary, he told the man to meet the lawyer and to somehow get the fees reduced to the extent possible. The secretary did as he was told. Disgusted with the haggling of the secretary, the lawyer said, "I am sick with him. I should never have taken up his case. Let him pay what he wants or nothing at all." The rich man then paid only about 50 percent of what he was required to.

His friend, who had recommended the lawyer to him, said, "Earlier, you waited at his house and office and pleaded with him to help you. You even said that you had come to him for succour as Vibhīṣaṇa had approached Rāma. Yet, having won the case, you not only did not go to see him but even avoided his phone call. You earlier said that money is no criterion. Now, you are unwilling to pay even the modest bill received by you. Are you not ashamed of yourself?" The rich man nonchalantly replied, "There is nothing for me to be ashamed of. Actually, the case against me was weak. The lawyer's role was inconsequential. So, why should I pay him much? Do not refer to Vibhīṣaṇa and Rāma in the present context for, unlike this lawyer, Rāma did not present Vibhīṣaṇa a bill for granting him protection. It is only because of his love of money that this advocate cancelled his vacation and took up my case. He has done me no favour whatsoever."

There are people who behave even with regard to God the way the rich man did towards his lawyer.

Once, a villager had climbed to the top of a palm tree situated at some distance from his village when he heard the growl of a tiger. He then saw the tiger walking up to the base of the tree, sitting down there and looking up. He was feeling quite uncomfortable on the tree and knew that he could not remain there for long. So, in an attempt to drive away the tiger, he waved his hand and shouted at it. The tiger growled in response.

Fearful of life, the man prayed to his favourite deity, "O goddess, if I emerge from this ordeal unhurt and reach home safe, I shall sacrifice a goat to you." After this, the man saw the tiger slowly rise and begin to walk away from him. Gaining some courage, he climbed down a little. He looked down again and found that the tiger was no longer nearby and was continuing to move further away. His fear came down. He thought,

“I will have to spend hundreds of rupees to purchase a goat to sacrifice. People offer the goddess not only goats but also hens. A hen is far cheaper than a goat. So why not I immolate one?” Hence, he mentally conveyed to the goddess, “I shall offer you a hen instead of a goat.” He then began to move down further.

When his descent was more than half complete, he took a look around and noticed that the tiger was not visible. His fear decreased even further. He reflected, “Even a hen is costly. So, why not I sacrifice another animal that is somewhat of the same size as a hen?” Consequently, he told the goddess that he would immolate a bandicoot. He soon reached the ground. He looked around and found the tiger to be nowhere around.

He thought, “It is true that it doesn’t cost me anything to trap a bandicoot and kill it. However, it is difficult to catch a bandicoot. My goddess has saved my life. In keeping with my prayer, as a quid pro quo, I should offer her a life. It is not necessary that I sacrifice only a bandicoot; any living creature will do.” Concluding thus, he picked up a small crab that was on the ground and crushed it. He felt satisfied that he had fulfilled his promise to his goddess and went home, quite happy with what he had done and glad to be safe.

People normally seek human or divine help when in trouble. The tendency to ignore or forget a benefactor once one’s problem has ceased is wrong and must be countered. Ingratitude is a sin that has no expiation. A true devotee’s mind is centred on God regardless of whether everything is fine or he is in deep trouble. Kuntī, it is said in the *Bhāgavata*, went to the extent of requesting Kṛṣṇa, “O Teacher of the world, let calamity always befall us, for when You come to our aid, we will have Your transmigration-effacing vision.” In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, it is said, “By virtue of His self-control, Rāma does not recall even a century of wrongs done to Him but is satiated even with a single favour done to Him.







## 10. Benefits of Charity

People think that wealth will give them great happiness and the fulfilment of desires. For the sake of wealth, a person goes to the extent of doing what is improper. He does not feel inclined to give the Government what is due to it. So it becomes necessary for him to prepare a false account. On getting caught, he pays a bribe to save his skin. He feels that, somehow, he must amass more and more money. But then, there crops up the problem of where he is to keep it. There would be a tax problem if he were to deposit it in a bank. Therefore, he is forced to keep it in a box, lock it and ensure that the box remains in a safe place.

When he performs *sandhyā-vandana*, the thought of the box comes to his mind. When he sits for the worship of God, again, the thought of the box crops up in his mind. When does he finally become freed from this thought? Only on the day he dies and departs. His zealously-guarded wealth then completely passes to others without his knowledge.



The scriptures prescribe the giving of gifts to the deserving as an antidote for greed. So, charity, apart from bringing about happiness in others, greatly conduces to the spiritual well-being of the donor. A person who loses some money feels unhappy. But he feels happy, not sad, when he voluntarily gives the same amount to a poor student who is not in a position to pay examination fees. Charity can thus make not only the receiver but also the donor happy.



Such a man would have loved to take his wealth with him to the next world. He might have thought, “I have somehow earned money and so far kept it with me. I do not at all want to part with it even after death. If possible, I would like to place it on my head and carry it with me.” To such a person, Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita has given a humorous but valuable advice. He has said, “If you desire to take your wealth with you after death, then donate it, while you are alive, to a good, deserving person. What will happen if that is done? The wealth will get transformed into *punya*. Regardless of whether or not you have a head after death, it is certain that the wealth will accompany you in the form of *punya*.”

## 11. Charity in Keeping with Capacity

A person was advised by a holy man to gift a vegetable a day and told that he would attain great merit by doing so. The poor man strictly followed the advice. After death, he was reborn in a royal family and grew up to become a king. He was able to recall what he had done in his past birth. So he continued to gift a vegetable a day. Surprisingly, after death, he was reborn as a beggar. The man was unable to comprehend the reason and so sought the advice of the holy man who had earlier blessed him.

From the sage, he learnt that prior to becoming a king, he had been very poor and so a gift of a vegetable a day was sufficient to give him a lot of virtue. On the other hand, as a king, he was endowed with affluence. Thereafter, the gift of just a vegetable a day was quite insufficient to to earn him merit of any consequence.

The person realized that the extent of charity needed to earn a certain degree of merit depends upon one's financial capacity to give.

## 12. Lord Rāma and the Profundity of *Dharma*

The *śāstras* declare that one must obey one's parents. However, a complex situation arises when the instructions of one's father and mother are antithetical. In that case, obedience to the father entails disobedience to the mother and vice versa. Lord Rāma Himself had to face such a situation. His resolution of the moral dilemma is instructive.

On learning of Daśaratha's intention to install Rāma as prince regent, Kaikeyī's maid Mantharā poisoned the queen's mind against Rāma. So, when Daśaratha went to see her, Kaikeyī asked him to make a solemn vow to the effect that he would fulfil her keen desire. The unsuspecting emperor obliged. Kaikeyī then called upon the *devas* to bear witness to her husband's oath. Invoking the two boons that Daśaratha had offered her on an earlier occasion, she demanded that Bharata be installed as prince regent and that Rāma be sent away to the forest for 14 years. Shocked, Daśaratha pleaded with her to change her mind and even fell at her feet. But she refused to relent. Though he loved Rāma very dearly, being a man of his word, Daśaratha was unable to turn down Kaikeyī's demand. So he sent for Rāma.

When Rāma came to His father's chamber, He found the king grief-stricken. When He sought to know the reason, Kaikeyī told Him about the emperor's promise and of the boons that she had sought from him. Rāma assured her that He would definitely proceed to the forest and spend 14 years there. He said that even if He had been commanded just by her, He would have gladly parted with the kingdom in favour of Bharata. "How much more gladly," said He, "shall I part with it when commanded by My father and that too with the intention of pleasing you and for honouring the pledge given by him." Such being the case, stated Rāma, He felt upset that instead of personally telling Him about Bharata's installation, the emperor gently shed tears, with his eyes riveted on the ground. He told Kaikeyī that as His mother, she had greater authority over Him than His father. He presumed that she did not see any trace of virtue in Him and hence felt the need to approach His father instead of commanding Him on her own. He assured her that He would leave for the forest on that very day after taking leave of Kausalyā.

He then proceeded to see His mother. She was, at that time, engaged in her morning worship. On seeing Him, she warmly embraced Him. As gently as possible, He told her what had transpired. But she immediately fell down unconscious. On regaining her senses, she expressed her anger at the turn of events. She told Him, "Just as Your father is venerable to You, so am I, Your mother. Further, I have been diligently discharging my duties as a mother and am extremely fond of You. You should not go to the forest. I refuse to grant You leave. Remain here and practise *dharma* by serving me. Attending upon the mother is deemed to be most virtuous.

"A son of the Sage Kaśyapa stayed on at home, engaged in the service of his mother. As a consequence, the disciplined *tapasvin* ascended, after death, to heaven and attained the position of Prajāpati, the Lord of creation. Emulate this example. A single hour in Your company means more to me than mastery over all living beings. On the other hand, if You leave me and go, I shall be plunged into unbearable sorrow. In fact, I shall take a vow of fasting unto death. Were You to depart, the responsibility for my suffering and death shall be upon You and You shall incur great sin. Samudra inflicted suffering upon his own mother. Hence, he had to suffer hellish tortures. Do not go his way." Since Kausalyā explicitly forbade Rāma from going to the forest, the Lord was forced to deal with contradictory commands from His mother and father.

Rāma told her that Daśaratha had offered Kaikeyī two boons and so had to grant them. Though what Kaikeyī had asked Daśaratha hurt him intensely, and though he loved Rāma extremely, still it was because he was an unswerving adherent of the truth that

he had acquiesced to Kaikeyī. Thus, Daśaratha's act was in conformity with *dharma*.

A son was duty-bound to obey his father. There were instances of great persons acting in accordance with the instructions of their father even when the directives were inappropriate. For example, Sage Kaṇḍu killed a cow in deference to his father's command even though he knew it to be a sin. Likewise, in obedience to the order of his father Jamadagni, Paraśurāma killed his own mother Reṇuka who had entertained lustful thoughts on



seeing king Chitraratha. In the present case, the command of Daśaratha was righteous and so there was all the more reason for Him, as a son, to obey it.

Rāma went on to explain to Kausalyā that her directive was not correct. As Daśaratha's wife, she ought to be his companion in the path of righteousness. It was wrong for her to thwart her husband's adherence to *dharma*. Further, Daśaratha was the emperor. His subjects were duty-bound to obey him. So his directives had to be respected not only by Him but also by her.

Rāma thus explained that while His father's command conformed to *dharma*, His mother's directive did not, and that in the present case, the right course of action for Him was to obey His father and go to the forest. He requested Kausalyā to await His return. On hearing Rāma's explanation, she agreed with Him. She, however, wished to accompany Him to the forest. He told her that it was not right for her to disregard her righteous, aged husband and live with Him, her son. Further, Daśaratha was already suffering much because of His impending departure and was feeling miserable at being betrayed by Kaikeyī. It would be downright cruel for her to leave him at this stage because his grief would then be too much for him to endure.

Kausalyā appreciated what Rāma had to say and finally gave Him her complete blessings. She said, "My son, depart with an unswerving mind. May *dharma*, which You scrupulously



observe, protect You. May You live long protected by Your truthfulness. And by virtue of the service You have done to Your father and mother, may the *devas* ever bestow happiness on You as You roam about in the forest. I shall happily behold Your return to Ayodhyā.” Having received His mother’s blessings, Rāma prostrated before her and took leave of her.

*Ahimsā* is highly eulogized. A person is advised not to harm even one who is inimical. Obviously, he ought not to injure one who bears no ill-will towards him. Does that mean that a strong man should be a passive spectator to violence perpetuated by evil persons against those who are harmless and unprotected? Rāma had to tackle a question of this kind.

After Rāma’s departure to the forest from Ayodhyā, on an occasion, He visited the Ashram of Śarabhaṅga. The sage honoured Him and then ascended to the realm of Brahma. The hosts of sages assembled there approached Rāma. They told Him that *rākṣasas* were obstructing their rituals and austerities and were also killing many of them. They did not want to curse the ogres to save themselves, as they would be thereby wasting their *tapas*. They beseeched Rāma to protect them from their tormentors. Rāma told them that they ought to command Him rather than make a request to Him. He assured them that He would slay the troublesome *rākṣasas*.

Thereafter, as had been suggested by Sage Śarabhaṅga, Rāma went to the hermitage of Sage Sūtīkṣṇa and spent the night there. Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa then headed towards the Daṇḍaka Forest. Sītā expressed to Rāma Her misgivings about His resolve to kill the *rākṣasas*. She told Him that it was terrible for a man to be cruel to one who bears no enmity towards him. She stated that the ogres had done Him no harm and so He was not justified in attacking them. Further, wielding of weapons was incompatible with forest-life. If He wished, He could don the role of a warrior after His return to Ayodhyā.

She told Him that by His taking up arms, there was a possibility of His misusing them. She cited the story of a truthful and pious ascetic who dwelt in a forest. Indra wanted to obstruct the sage's *tapas*. So he assumed the guise of a warrior with a sword. The warrior came to the sage and, depositing his sword with the ascetic, requested him to take care of it. The warrior then went away. The sage felt it was his duty to pay attention to the sword and see that it was not stolen. So he began to take it with him even when he went to pluck fruits. In the course of time, he began to use the sword that he was carrying. Gradually, he became cruel and turned away from austerities. As a consequence of his cruelty, he went to hell.

Sītā emphasized that Rāma was so well-acquainted with *dharma* that none was really capable of teaching Him. Because of Her holding Him in high esteem, She was not making any effort whatsoever to instruct Him. However, because of Her great affection for Him, She did not want that He should ever err in any way. Hence, She was reminding Him about the *dharma* that He already knew.

Rāma appreciated Her concern. He told Her that it was the duty of a *kṣatriya* to protect those who were suffering and that it was for that purpose that they wielded weapons. Harmless sages were being troubled and killed by the *rākṣasas*. So it was His duty to save them by combating the ogres. Moreover, the sages had sought His protection. It was incumbent upon Him to provide succour to those who sought refuge in Him. Also, in response to their appeal, He had promised them full protection. Truth being extremely dear to Him, He could give up His life but not a promise, especially one made to the holy sages. Having heard Rāma's explanation, Sītā's misgivings ceased.

A related episode pertains to the killing of Vāli. In the course of their search for Sītā who had been abducted by Rāvaṇa, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa encountered a demon named Kabandha. From Kabandha, they learnt that, to find Sītā, they should first approach Sugrīva, the monkey-chief who lived on Ṛṣyamūkha, the mountain adorned with the catchment of Pampā Lake. So the brothers proceeded there. They were met by Hanumān who enquired about the details of their life. He then reported the arrival of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa to Sugrīva. Sugrīva gladly approached them and offered his hand of friendship to Rāma. Rāma and Sugrīva solemnized their bond of friendship in the presence of fire. Sugrīva lamented that he was suffering much because of his brother Vāli. He explained that when his father died, his brother, the valorous Vāli, was crowned king. Thereafter, Sugrīva lived with Vāli, respecting and obeying his brother.

One night, a demon named Māyāvi came to the outskirts of the town and challenged Vāli to a fight. Vāli immediately rushed out, accompanied by Sugrīva. When Māyāvi saw both the brothers standing boldly, he took to his heels. Vāli and Sugrīva chased him. After some time, he ran into a hole in the ground. Vāli decided to follow him. Sugrīva wished to accompany Vāli but was ordered by his brother to stand guard at the entrance of the hole till he returned. Vāli went inside and Sugrīva heard the roar of his brother. He waited there for one full year but Vāli did not come out. Sugrīva then observed a stream of blood flowing out. He heard the sound of the demon but not the roar of his brother. Presuming his brother dead, he blocked the entrance of the hole with a big rock and returned to Kiṣkindhā. There, the ministers crowned him king.

After some time, to his delight, Vāli returned. Sugrīva explained the situation to him and readily offered the throne back to his brother. However, Vāli was very furious with Sugrīva and accused him of betraying him. He drove him out of the capital and also usurped Sugrīva's wife for his own enjoyment. Sugrīva escaped to the Rishyamūkha Mountain, which Vāli could not approach because of a curse that he had received. Sugrīva implored Rāma to kill Vāli and save him. Rāma readily agreed to do so. Sugrīva then tested Rāma's might by subjecting Him to two tests. Thereafter, he gained full confidence in Rāma.

Rāma told him to fight with Vāli, adding that He would do the needful. However, when Rāma saw Vāli and Sugrīva engaged in combat, He found that they looked so much alike that He was unable to identify Sugrīva. He did not discharge an arrow to kill Vāli, lest the one He strike down be Sugrīva. Injured, Sugrīva ran away. Rāma explained to him the

reason why He had not acted and asked him to again challenge Vāli. Lakṣmaṇa put a garland of flowers upon him to serve as a mark of identification. Sugrīva returned to Vāli's fort and roared out a challenge.

Vāli was about to rush out when his wife Tārā restrained him. She told him that the very fact that Sugrīva had returned so quickly after having been severely mauled implied that he had found an ally. She had learnt from the spies who



had reported to their son Angada that two Ikṣvāku princes named Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa were in the region. She suspected that Sugrīva must have sought the friendship of Rāma. She told Vāli that as per the data she had received, Rāma was equal in might to Indra, the Lord of *devās*, and was extremely righteous. She advised Vāli to desist from fighting with Sugrīva and to patch up with him.

Vāli did not pay heed to her advice and said that if Rāma was so righteous, He would have no occasion to attack him. He emerged from his palace to fight with Sugrīva. The two brothers engaged in a very severe combat. Gradually, Sugrīva began to lose ground and was about to be overpowered. At that juncture, Rāma shot an arrow and severely wounded Vāli. Vāli, however, did not die immediately by virtue of the power of a gold chain gifted by Indra that he wore. He lay mortally wounded on the ground.

Addressing Rāma, he said, “I have done You no harm, nor have I committed any offence in Your kingdom. So You did wrong in striking me. If You had wanted to attack me, You should have challenged me to a duel and fought with me. Instead, You injured me while I was engaged in combat with another. From what I have heard about You, I believed that You are fully endowed with virtues such as forgiveness, righteousness, valour and meting out punishment only to evil-doers. I also took into consideration Your excellent pedigree. That is why, though I was warned by Tārā, I came out to fight Sugrīva with the full confidence that You would never stoop so low as to strike me while I battled my brother. Now, I realize that though putting on an appearance of being virtuous, You are quite sinful.

“Monkeys such as I dwell in forests and subsist on fruits and roots, while men such as You dwell in towns and require different kinds of cooked food. So, what ground is there for any animosity between us? Men hunt animals for their flesh and skin. However, it is forbidden for a *Kṣatriya* to eat the flesh of a monkey. Further, it is not permissible for noble people to wear the skin of a simian or use its skin and bones. Hence, there is no justification for You even to hunt me as an animal.

“Instead of obliging Sugrīva in the hope of recovering Your wife, You could have approached me. Regardless of whether Your wife has been held captive on an island or below the ground, I would have brought Her back to You in a single day. I would have also tied Rāvaṇa and delivered him to You.

“It would have been appropriate for Sugrīva to ascend the throne only after my death in the normal course. Now, however, for his sake, You have sinfully inflicted a mortal wound on me. What justification do You have for Your action?”



Rāma gave a detailed reply to the objections. He said, “This land too falls under the jurisdiction of the kings of Ikṣvāku Dynasty, for their ancestor Manu bequeathed it to them. The country is now ruled by emperor Bharata who is extremely virtuous. He and his representatives are dedicated to upholding the paramount kingly duty of duly chastising evil-doers.

“As per the dictates of *dharma*, a younger brother and a virtuous pupil are like one’s own son. Sugrīva is your younger brother. Yet, though he was blameless, you behaved very unfairly with him and drove him out of Kiṣkindhā. His wedded wife Rumā is your virtual daughter-in-law. Yet, you took possession of her and, blinded by lust, have been cohabiting with her. Hence, you are guilty of a heinous crime. Death is the punishment ordained for a man who lustfully associates with his daughter, sister or his younger brother’s wife. Acting as a royal *Kṣatriya* who is a representative of King Bharata here, I have awarded you that very punishment. At the time when My irrevocable friendship with Sugrīva was solemnized, I gave My word, in the presence of other monkeys, that I would get back for him his wife and his sovereignty. How could a man like Me ever allow a promise to remain unhonoured? This too is a reason for My striking you.

“You complained that you were struck when engaged in combat with your brother. Remember that you are only a monkey. It is not a practice of men to challenge an animal to a fight and only then to kill it. A hunter, for example, kills a deer regardless of whether it is attentive or careless and regardless of whether it faces him or away from him. You being a monkey, it is irrelevant whether you were fighting someone or not when you were pierced by My arrow.

“In a pair of verses accepted as authoritative by those versed in *dharma*, Manu has declared, ‘Men who have perpetuated sins become free from faults on being punished by kings and ascend to heaven like those who have performed virtuous deeds. A thief gets absolutely freed from sins either through punishment or by being pardoned and allowed to go free. However, a king who does not punish a sinner incurs that man’s sin.’ You had committed a terrible sin. By punishing you, I have freed you from that sin. Now you can ascend to heaven.”

Vāli was fully satisfied with Rāma’s explanation. With joined palms, he told Rāma, “What You have said is absolutely correct. Forgive me for the unbecoming and harsh words I uttered by mistake.” He then beseeched Rāma to protect his young son Angada and to establish the best of relationships between Sugrīva and Angada. Rāma granted his request.

## 13. Though Unseen, God Exists

A boy refused to believe the existence of anything that he could not see, inclusive of air. His father pointed to the fluttering leaves of a tree and said, “See the role of air, which you deny.” “You are showing me the leaves, not the air. Where is air?” retorted the boy. The father quickly pressed shut the boy’s nostrils and mouth. Experiencing suffocation, the boy struggled to free himself. In less than a minute, the father released him. “You blocked my breathing. It hurt,” protested the boy. The father queried, “What is it you wanted to breathe in?” “Air,” said the boy, conceding its existence.

Imperceptibility does not always imply non-existence. God, like air, cannot be grasped by the eye but certainly exists. It is He who originates, sustains and annihilates the cosmos.

## 14. Atheist in a Quandary

A minister, who was an atheist but had great regard for me, came to see me. During his conversation with me, he commented, “Our ancients were very wise indeed. Long ago, people were discharging their duties properly. Though some of them might have erred, generally speaking, policemen were not required in large numbers to maintain law and order. The reason was that people had faith in Īśvara and the *śāstras*. Consequently, they feared His punishment. Nowadays, people like me proclaim that God does not exist and that *dharma* is meaningless. We thought that people would be captivated by such rhetoric and that they would be guided by us. However, our scheme backfired. People fear none now and heedlessly violate the law of the land. They give very little importance to ethics. We eliminated God from the scene but could not get a suitable replacement to ensure discipline. I feel that the ancients wisely conceived a God and propagated what they had imagined.”

As can be seen, even an atheist will do well not to deny God!

## 15. God's Merciful Justice

One day, when Rāma and Sītā were dwelling on the north-eastern base of the Chitrakūṭa Mountain, not far from the Gaṅgā, a crow pecked at Sītā. The vicious crow was actually Indra's son. She sought to drive the bird away by hurling a clod of mud at it but it defiantly remained in Her vicinity. Sometime later, while Rāma slept on Her lap, the wicked bird sharply attacked Her breast. Again and again, it tore at Her bosom. Her blood wet Rāma. She woke Rāma up and, on seeing Her injured chest, He demanded to know who was responsible for it. He then Himself beheld the crow closely in front of Sītā, with its talons stained with blood. The bird quickly hid itself in the ground.

Angry, Rāma invoked the *brahmāstra* in a blade of *darba*-grass and hurled it at the hidden son of Indra. The bird flew as swiftly as it could all over the world but was unable to shake off the missile. Indra, the *devas* and the sages refused succour. So, finally, it sought refuge in Rāma. Though the crow deserved to be killed, Rāma compassionately offered it protection. He told the bird, which had arrived helpless, "The *brahmāstra* cannot be rendered futile. Hence, you yourself suggest a way out." The crow replied, "Let your arrow destroy my right eye." Rāma acceded to its plea and hence the *astra* blinded its right eye but spared its life.

Rāma thus meted out justice and yet exhibited great compassion. It is noteworthy that mercy did not cause Rāma to reduce the death penalty to some unjustly minuscule punishment such as the loss of a single feather. The heinous act of Indra's son is an example of the saying, "He who is in the grip of lust neither feels ashamed of himself nor fears the consequences of his behaviour. Such is the ruinous nature of lust."

There was a judge whose misguided compassion caused him to pardon even hardened criminals. He felt that as a votary of *ahimsā*, he ought not to subject even murderers and rapists to the prolonged suffering of life imprisonment or deprive them of their lives. On an occasion, a man who was guilty of repeated, armed robbery and murder was brought before him. The prosecution's case against the man was ironclad. Yet, the judge ruled that the prosecution had not established its case beyond reasonable doubt and set the man free with a warning. The unrepentant criminal did not waste much time before commencing his despicable acts.

A few days later, he broke into the judge's house itself. He managed to open the safe containing valuables. As he was getting ready to decamp with his loot, the judge's wife,

who had been awakened by sounds, saw him and tried to raise an alarm. Without a moment's hesitation, the dacoit strangled her to death and escaped. All this would not have happened had the judge not discarded justice in favour of his thoroughly misguided compassion.

No physical, verbal or mental sin committed by a person either in this or an earlier birth fails to fructify in the form of suffering experienced by the doer. Scripturally-prohibited behaviour indulged in this birth often yields its consequence only in a future birth and so some mistakenly imagine that God lets off wrong-doers. The current prosperity of a debased individual stems from his *punya* of an earlier birth and is like the inherited property of a wastrel. God, being just, awards punishment to a sinner but, being compassionate, mitigates the suffering awarded to a penitent man to the maximum extent possible without making a travesty of justice. His functioning is not foolish like that of the judge of the example considered. Just as repentant first-time wrong-doers are looked upon leniently by judges but unrepentant, habitual offenders are severely punished by them, God is lenient towards those who unknowingly commit a misdeed on multiple occasions or knowingly commit it once but comes down hard on those who knowingly and repeatedly sin.



It is said, "The sin of an earlier birth troubles the doer in the form of disease in the present birth. It is neutralized by recourse to medicines, gifts, sacred recitation, *homas* and worship of God." Further, "There is expiation for a sin committed unknowingly or once with knowledge. However, what remedy is there for a misdeed repeatedly performed with attention?"

While a person may be able to escape the arm of the law of the land, he cannot ever escape God's law of Karma. Justice and compassion find perfect consummation in God.

## 16. *Jīva*, the Reflection, and God, the Prototype

A foolish person looked at a mirror and saw a clear reflection of his face. He found it to be ugly. He mused over the possible reason. He noticed that the reflection had a blank forehead; there was no *tilaka* on it. His aesthetic sense induced him to apply vermilion on the reflection's forehead. But when doing so, he moved his face slightly. Consequently, the vermilion spot went out of alignment. He tried to re-position the vermilion over the reflection's forehead but again failed. After several such failures, the foolish man realized that it was impossible to directly beautify the image. He then applied *tilaka* on his own forehead and was pleasantly surprised that it immediately appeared on the image at the right place.

To improve the reflection, it is necessary to adorn the original face. Likewise, if we seek happiness, we should worship God. This is because a relation between God and the *Jīva*, the individual soul, as postulated by the scriptures, is that between a face and its reflection.



The mind is a servant of the *Jīva*. A serf's duty is to please his master. How is the mind to please its master, the *Jīva*? If it directly strives for the welfare of its lord, its efforts will be futile; they would be on par with the fool's attempt to directly beautify his reflection. However, if it were to direct itself towards *Īśvara*, joy would accrue to its master. Bhagavatpāda has charmingly elucidated this point in a verse addressed to Lord Narasimha.

## 17. Anyone Can Tread the Path of Devotion

In order to tread the path of devotion, is any special qualification a sine-qua-non? This is an oft-raised query. A popular verse supplies the reply in the form of rhetorical questions.

The verse commences with the rhetorical query, “What was Dharmavyādha’s profession?” Dharmavyādha was a butcher. He carried on his duties without any attachment and dutifully served his parents. As a result of this, he was recognized as a great follower of *dharma*. The *Mahābhārata* contains a story about him.

A certain *brahmacārin*, by virtue of his *tapas*, acquired some powers. A bird innocently put its droppings on his head. The celibate looked up enraged and the bird was reduced to ashes. Puffed with conceit at the spontaneous manifestation of his supernatural ability, he proceeded for *bhikṣā*. He went to a house and begged for food. The lady of the house asked him to tarry a while as she was serving her husband. This infuriated the *brahmacārin*. However, the lady calmly replied, “I am no bird to be burnt up by you.”

The continent one was amazed that the lady knew about the incident. Humbled, he sought her guidance. She directed him to Dharmavyādha who gave him detailed instructions. The teaching was particularly pertinent to the *brahmacārin*, who had ignored his obligation to his father and mother. Dharmavyādha was greatly blessed by the Lord, though his profession was deprecated by many. Thus, one’s profession poses no restriction for treading the path of devotion.

The next consideration is age. Should one be of a prescribed age to be a devotee? The verse under consideration asks, “What was Dhruva’s age?” Dhruva’s father Uttānapāda had two wives. Dhruva’s stepmother Suruci did not like him. Once, when he wished to sit on his father’s lap, his desire was frustrated because Suruci wanted Uttānapāda to fondle her child. Weeping, he went to his mother Sunīti. Unfortunately, Sunīti was not in a position to help him. She asked him to pray to the Lord.

With determination in his heart, Dhruva retired to a forest. Sage Nārada saw the boy and, being immensely pleased with him, initiated him into the worship of Lord Nārāyaṇa. Dhruva sat absorbed in meditation. So pleased was the Lord with his love that He manifested before him and declared that he would earn the love of his father, and later become a great king. The Lord continued that after his death, he would constantly abide in the firmament as the pole star. Since Dhruva was a young boy when he obtained

a vision of the Lord, it is clear that there are no age restrictions for treading the path of devotion.

Is great scholarliness needed? The verse asks, “What was the learning of Gajendra?” Gajendra was an elephant who lived with his wives. He was a great devotee of the Lord. One day, a crocodile grasped his foot with its jaws. A great struggle ensued between the two. The crocodile gradually gained the upper hand. Despairing for life, Gajendra called out to the Lord to save him. Lord Viṣṇu rushed to the spot, slayed the crocodile and liberated Gajendra. Gajendra, an uneducated elephant, was thus able to acquire the grace of the Lord. Hence, absence of learning is no bar for devotion.

Should one be high-born? Is it necessary that one should only be a Brahmin in order to gain the grace of the Lord? The verse asks, “What was Vidura’s caste?” Vidura was born to a servant-maid. As such, he was not a high-caste individual. When Lord Kṛṣṇa came to Hastināpura as an envoy of the Pāṇḍavas, He chose to stay, not in the royal palaces offered to Him by the Kaurava princes, but in Vidura’s house. This shows that the Lord does not regard low caste as any bar for resorting to and succeeding in the path of devotion.

Maybe factors such as profession, age, learning and caste do not matter. But could it be that great grit and manliness are essential? The verse asks, “What was Ugrasena’s manliness?” Ugrasena was Kamsa’s father. The demon Kamsa had imprisoned his father and usurped power. Kamsa’s nephew was none other than Lord Kṛṣṇa. When He was brought to Mathura, He killed Kamsa in a duel and restored Ugrasena to the throne. Thus, even one who was lacking in prowess was graced by the Lord.

Is physical charm something that captivates the Lord’s attention? “Was Kubjā a bewitching damsel?” is the counter-query contained in the verse. When Lord Kṛṣṇa arrived at Mathurā, a hunchbacked woman, who was certainly no belle, offered scents to Him. The Lord was satisfied and blessed her. Her deformity gave way to beauty. Thus, absence of a delightful appearance does not preclude the reception of Īśvara’s grace.

People are often pleased by affluence. Is the Lord too like that? The counter-question in the verse is, “Did Sudāma have great wealth?” Sudāma was a boyhood friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa. They studied together and later parted, Kṛṣṇa becoming a royal prince and Sudāma a devoted Brahmin householder. Sudāma suffered intensely on account of his poverty. However, he bore it with great fortitude. Unable to withstand the problems of penury, his wife requested him to go and see his friend, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Overjoyed at the thought of meeting his beloved friend, he consented.

His wife gave him some puffed rice. Sudāma went and met Lord Kṛṣṇa. The Lord received him with due honour. Sudāma felt ashamed to offer the puffed rice he had brought. But Lord Kṛṣṇa was quick to notice it and asked for it. The Lord began eating it. After some time, His consort Rukmiṇī stopped Him. When Sudāma returned, he found a



palatial mansion at the location of his old, dilapidated house. He saw that his wife and children were expensively clad. He realized that it was the Lord who had made him affluent. It is clear that the Lord ignores factors such as richness. What is He concerned with? He considers only devotion.

Where there is devotion,  
He is satisfied. It follows that  
there are no specific qualifications  
needed for treading the  
path of devotion.

## 18. Forms of God

A person was on his way to his place of work, wearing a shirt, trousers and a tie. A friend tapped him on the shoulder and said, “I am really glad to see that you are dressy. This is the type of dress that is needed for you to be successful as a sales representative.” The man came home in the evening, changed into a dhoti and sat down to chant the *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma*. A friend who dropped in just then remarked, “It is true that while going to work, you have to dress to suit your profession. But it is this dress that suits you. I prefer to see you like this.”



The story reveals that a person, when attired differently, pleases different people. God is formless but, for the sake of His devotees, He assumes different forms. The *purāṇas* describe numerous manifestations of the Lord. The scripturally-described forms of Śiva, Viṣṇu, etc., do have implicit meanings.

For instance, Śiva has ten hands. The ten hands denote the ten directions, inclusive of top and bottom, and convey the omnipresence of God. Śiva is well-known as the three-eyed one. The sun, moon and fire constitute these eyes. He has the crescent moon in His crest. This moon stands for knowledge. Śiva's wearing it in His matted locks is a pointer to the Lord being endowed with pure knowledge.

“God is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent and there is naught but Him,” is a common inner meaning of the descriptions in the *Purāṇas*.

## 19. Light on Idol Worship

A person purchased a mud idol of Vināyaka and began worshipping it on Vināyaka-caturthī. At the end of three days of *pūjā*, he carried the idol and immersed it in a river. This was seen by a friend of his who had hardly any knowledge of idol worship and was puzzled by what he saw.

Friend: You were worshipping the idol with great faith. Yet, now, you have thrown it into the river. Why?

Worshipper: Originally, the idol had no sanctity and was just a beautifully shaped piece of mud. Then, at the commencement of worship on *Vināyaka-caturthī* day, I duly invoked Lord Gaṇeśa into it. Thereafter, it became sacred. Treating it as the Lord Himself, I performed *pūjā* to it. At the end of the stipulated period of worship, I requested the Lord to withdraw His special presence in it. The idol lost its sanctity and became just a piece of mud. It was that mud piece which I immersed into the river.

Friend: How is it possible for a mere piece of mud to become holy and to then revert to its original state? Further, how can a devotee have the capacity to effect such transformations?

Worshipper: Consider an example. There is an ordinary man with whom we are all familiar. We are able to meet him whenever we wish. If he desires to see a high-ranking government official, he has to struggle to get an appointment. At the suggestion of people like us, he contests an election and, because of our votes, wins.

He then gets appointed as a minister. Thereafter, if we want to see him, we have to fix up an appointment. The very officials whom he had difficulty in meeting, now come to him and carry out his orders. He is provided with security and good accommodation. After his tenure as minister, he contests an election again. This time, the people do not vote for him as before and hence he loses. Thereafter, as before, he becomes a common man. The special privileges and the authority of a minister are not his any longer.

People like us, by our votes, cause this ordinary man to become a minister and then we revert him to his earlier state. Likewise, in response to the devotee's āvāhana, invocation, the Lord specially graces an idol and the idol then becomes holy. Having accepted the devotee's worship, the Lord withdraws His special presence in response to the devotee's request; the idol loses its sanctity.

An idol in a temple may have originally been a part of a rock on a hill; people might have walked over that rock and may have even urinated on it. A sculptor fashions what is an ordinary rock into a beautiful idol by chiselling it. Even then, it does not become holy. It, however, becomes sanctified when it is duly consecrated in a temple. Thereafter, people worship it. The very sculptor, who earlier delivered hammer blows to it, prostrates before it and does not so much as touch it.

Friend: Why did you make reverential offerings to the idol during your worship? After all, it did not even move a millimetre to accept anything.



Worshipper: When a venerable guest comes to our house, it is in our holy tradition to receive him with honour. He is offered a seat and his feet are washed. He is fed. Devotees see in the idol not just mud or stone but the living presence of God. They hold that God does accept what is offered to Him, though the idol itself does not stretch out its hand to take what is given. That is why, in the course of my worship, I offered God a seat, just as I would, to a holy one who comes to my house. I then

offered *pādyā*, water, to wash His feet. Subsequently, I fed Him; this was my offering of *naivedya*.

Suppose a guest proves unworthy of the respect that is shown to him by misbehaving with a female in the host's house or by pilfering costly items. It is likely that the host will hand him over to the police. In the case of God, there is no possibility of His ever proving unworthy of the devotee's worship. Hence, devotees never discard the idol they worship in the middle of the *pūjā*.

Friend: On *Vināyaka-caturthī* day, Gaṇeśa is worshipped in many places at the same time. Which idol does He choose to specially abide in? What influences His choice?

Worshipper: All idols wherein God is properly invoked become sanctified. Wherever there is a drop in pressure, air rushes there. Likewise, God, who is everywhere, specially occupies all the idols where He is worshipped, regardless of the number and the location of such idols.

Friend: In some places, the food that is offered is very small in quantity and in others, it is very large. Is not the former insufficient for a deity and the latter excessive?

Worshipper: No. In the Vedas, it is said that the offering gets modified in accordance with the wishes of the deity to whom it is offered. What is important is that if a devotee were to resolve to offer a certain number of *modakas* (sweetmeats of a particular kind), say 1000, in a *Gaṇapati-homa*, that is the number he must offer. He should not think, "This is too much for Gaṇeśa to eat," and offer less. Actually, the Lord needs nothing but accepts and becomes satiated with whatever is offered by a worshipper with devotion.

## 20. Gopuras Induce Humility

Two friends were walking along a road. One of them was a braggart and an egoist to the core. He told his friend, “Who else can achieve as much as I? I am indispensable at my place of work and earn a fat sum.” He carried on in this fashion, listing his various achievements. The two happened to pass by a temple with a massive *gopura*. The braggart’s friend told him, “Just have a look at this *gopura*.” The egoist turned around and beheld it. Being an architectural wonder of gigantic proportions, it filled him with awe. As he stood gazing at the *gopura*, he felt insignificant. He realized that compared to the huge structure, he was but an insect-like creature. It was an ego-shattering experience for him. Our ancients built massive *gopuras* to induce humility in people.

## 21. Significance of Śivarātri

Once, Brahmā and Viṣṇu were quarrelling as to who was the greatest of all. Śiva appeared before them in the form of a Lingam. Viṣṇu sought to locate the foot of Lord Śiva and for that purpose, took up the form of a boar. Assuming the form of a swan, Brahmā went in search of the Lord’s head. Neither of Them was able to locate His intended target. Hence, Their pride was crushed. They realized that the Supreme Being, the Omnipresent Lord, is the greatest of all.

This story is not meant to differentiate the Trinity, nor is it meant to induce the feeling that Viṣṇu is inferior to Śiva. Its primary purpose is to show that the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Lord of the cosmos is the greatest. The manifestation spoken of in the narration is said to have occurred on *Śivarātri*, which falls on the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight of the month of *Māgha*. One should observe a fast that day and keep awake throughout the night, engaged in the worship of Śiva. It is meaningless to forego sleep but not spend the night thinking of God.

What is the fruit of performing *pūjā* throughout the night? A reply to this query is found in a verse which means, “O Eyes! It behoves you to carefully keep awake this night which is most auspicious and sacred. If you do so, a companion resembling you shall manifest between both of you.”

The idea is that one becomes akin to Śiva Himself if one offers worship on *Śivarātri*.

## 22. To Which Deity Should a Person Pray

A Brahmin stood hesitant on the banks of a river in spate, waiting to cross over. He enquired of a Muslim who happened to come that way about the means to reach the farther shore. “Trust in God and jump in, my friend,” said the latter. “He will take you across.” But the Brahmin was shrewd. He did not want to take unnecessary risks. So he told the Muslim, “You dive in first. Then I will follow.” “Very well,” said the Muslim. Catching hold of his beard and saying, “Allah-Ho-Akbar,” he took off. Somehow, he managed to ferry himself across.



Now, the *Brahmin* mustered a little courage. He prayed to Ganeśa, the destroyer of obstacles. No sooner did he jump than the thought struck him that he would have a greater chance of survival if he prayed to Śiva, Ganeśa’s father. He, therefore, sought refuge in Śiva as he plunged. Ganeśa thought that His great father would protect the *Brahmin*. Śiva, on the other hand, expected Ganeśa, who had jurisdiction over obstacles, to save the man. Neither offered help. The doubting *Brahmin* had his fatal trip.

A person should realize that it is the same Lord who has manifested as Śiva, Viṣṇu, Ganeśa, etc. Hence, he should not imagine that one deity is less potent to help him than another. It is, however, perfectly legitimate for a person to have an *Iṣṭa-devatā*, a preferred deity, such

as Śiva. He ought to think, “It is my beloved Śiva who has taken the forms of all the other divinities, such as Viṣṇu,” rather than, “Viṣṇu is different from and inferior to Śiva.” A person with such an outlook will be fully at ease in any duly consecrated temple and will not be troubled by thoughts such as, “If I pray to Viṣṇu, will Śiva be displeased with me?”

## 23. Characteristic of a Great Devotee

Once, Nārada went to Lord Śrī Viṣṇu and asked Him, “Who is Your greatest devotee?” The Lord said, “There is a farmer who is truly devoted to me.” Nārada grew angry at this and exclaimed, “What! Am I not Your foremost devotee? How can that poor despicable farmer be as devoted as I am?” The Lord told Nārada to go and see the man for himself. Nārada scrutinised the activities of the farmer. Every morning, the farmer got up, prayed to God and then attended to his domestic tasks. Thereafter, he went to the fields and sat in silence for a while absorbed in the thought of God. He then attended to his agricultural duties. His next prayer was reserved for the evening.

Nārada returned to Lord Viṣṇu and protested, “What is this? The farmer does not even repeat Your name often. How is he great?” Lord Viṣṇu said, “Before I answer, I shall give you a task. Take this cup that is full of water and go round the streets. Then return to me. Ensure that not a drop of water spills.” Grasping the cup, Nārada set out. No sooner had he walked a few paces than the fear that a drop or two might spill gripped him. It possessed him to such an extent that his mind failed to think of anything other than the water in the cup. On the completion of his task, he returned to the Lord.

Lord Viṣṇu asked him, “How many times did you recite my name while you were on the streets?” Nārada was taken aback and said, “How could I have chanted Your name? I was too busy to do that; I had, after all, to ensure that no water spilt.” The Lord said, “The farmer was also busy like you. Despite that, he thought of Me. That is what made him great.”

One morning, Yudhiṣṭhira came to behold Lord Kṛṣṇa. He found Him seated motionless, in deep meditation. When Kṛṣṇa opened His eyes, Yudhiṣṭhira respectfully asked Him, “You are the creator and destroyer of the cosmos and are without a beginning and an end. Yet, You were in deep meditation. Could You kindly tell me the significance of Your meditation?”

Kṛṣṇa replied, “Lying on a bed of arrows, Bhīṣma has fixated his mind on me. Hence, my mind locked onto him.” Though pierced by numerous arrows and in deep pain, Bhīṣma thought of Kṛṣṇa with such intensity that he completely drew the Lord’s mind to himself.

## 24. Concentration

Droṇācārya impartially expounded the nuances of archery to both the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas. At the end of their course, he gave them a test. “See that small bird perched on the tree,” said the *Guru*. “You will have to shoot it down with an arrow.” He called his disciples one by one and asked, “What do you see now?” Each of the disciples replied, “Sir, I see the bird, the tree and also the surroundings.” The *Guru* told them, “You have not mastered archery.” Finally, Arjuna’s turn came. Droṇa asked him the same question. Arjuna answered, “Revered sir, I see only the bird and nothing else.” The master asked him to release the arrow. The disciple obeyed and the bird fell.

This story brings out the praiseworthiness of intense concentration on one’s target or the task on hand. Focussing the mind on God during meditation is certainly very important, particularly for a spiritual aspirant. However, many say that they are unable to meditate because their minds keep wandering. Quite often, a major reason for their poor concentration is the inadequacy of their interest in meditation.

A person was given a packet of hundred-rupee notes to count. As he was busy counting, a friend called him. He, however, did not hear the call and so did not look up. Only after he had finished his task, he noticed the presence of his friend. He told him, “My whole attention was on the notes because I knew that any error in my counting would have proved costly for me.” This man regarded his task as important and so was able to suitably direct his attention.



In like manner, if a man regards meditation as extremely important and feels that he stands to lose greatly by inattention during meditation, it is likely that he will succeed in focussing his mind on God.

## 25. Fate and Free Will

The fields of two farmers were identical in size and had similar kinds of soil. They worked equally hard, tilled their lands well and sowed seeds of the same quality. The rainfall over the fields was neither excessive nor scanty and so the crops grew well. At the appropriate time, they commenced their harvesting. Before they left for their homes on an evening, they were able to behold with joy large heaps of grains, the result of their efforts. There was hardly any difference in the yields obtained by them.

That night, while they slept, there was a very heavy downpour on one land and only a light drizzle on the other. The next morning, when they went to their lands, one was dismayed to find that the rain had ruined his grains while the other felt relieved that his heaps of grain were intact.

Thus, notwithstanding the similarity in their efforts, the results they obtained were markedly dissimilar. It was the unfavourable destiny of one farmer and the favourable fate of the other that led to the loss of the former and the gain of the latter. Those who have faith in the *Vedas* and *śāstras* and are logical do not regard the experiences of humans as just fortuitous.

Two students wrote an examination. The boy who had studied better answered all except two questions well. The other managed to answer just two questions correctly. The examiner was an impartial but a lazy man. He scrutinized two of the first boy's answers. They happened to be the incorrect ones. Assuming the other answers too to be incorrect, he awarded the boy low marks.

He then took up the second boy's answer book. The answers he selected for checking happened to be the correct ones. Taking it for granted that the remaining answers were also correct, he awarded the boy concerned high marks. On seeing the results, the boy who had studied better grieved, while the other rejoiced. Thus, hard work fetched a poor result and poor preparation yielded good marks. Here too, the hand of destiny is seen.

There was a poor man who was a wastrel and a drunkard. His wife gave birth to twins. Gazing lovingly at her children, she told her spouse, "They look regal." The husband laughed and announced that he would name them Chakravarthi and Raja, ironical names for the members of a poverty-stricken family. To make ends meet, the wife used to work



as a domestic help in the house of a very affluent couple. After becoming a mother, she started taking her children with her to her place of work as there was no one at her hut to take care of them. Being good, understanding people, her employers did not mind in the least.

Unlike the twins' father, their mother was very keen that they be sent to school. So, when they were five years of age, she admitted them into a government school that provided free education. The twins took to their school as a fish to water. Chakravarthi was particularly fond of his mother and hence insisted on helping her for some time at her employer's house everyday before going to school. Raja, for his part, swept the hut and washed the utensils used by his mother for cooking. Thereafter, he proceeded to school and joined his brother.

The affluent couple had a son who was almost the same age as the twins. He had been born five years after their marriage. They doted on him. Just before the woman had conceived, they had sought the blessings of a holy man for progeny. That man used to wander from place to place and sustained himself on food obtained by begging. So he was commonly known as Akinchana; the word means, "he who has nothing." Believing that his wife had conceived because of the holy man's blessings, the husband named their son, the heir to an immense fortune, Akinchana. Akinchana made friends with Chakravarthi and the two spent some time with each other every morning.

When Chakravarthi was nine years old, his beloved mother died. His alcohol-loving, good-for-nothing father had the habit of scolding and beating his children on the flimsiest of grounds. Because of his wife's demise, he had to make do with less money than before and this made him highly irascible. To ease the financial situation, Chakravarthi started to work at Akinchana's house in the mornings and in the evenings, before and after his school timings. His brother Raja decided to do the cooking, cleaning and washing at their hut.

Akinchana and Chakravarthi became quite close. One day, Akinchana asked his mother, "Can I take Chakravarthi with me by car everyday and leave him at his school? After all, his school is almost on the way to mine." "Certainly," said his mother, "I myself wanted to suggest this." Akinchana and Chakravarthi thereafter left for school together.

One day, the car in which they were travelling was involved in a major accident. The driver died on the spot. Akinchana's legs were pinned in the wreckage and soon a minor fire broke out. By the time he was pulled out by some good Samaritans, he sustained

significant burn injuries; his legs were badly damaged. Chakravarthi phoned Akinchana's parents and they summoned an ambulance. Screaming in pain, Akinchana was rushed to the hospital. There, the doctors were forced to amputate his legs. The amputation and the extensive burns caused Akinchana agony. After a month of intense suffering, he appeared to be on the road to recovery. Unexpectedly, he contracted pneumonia. The doctors did their best to cure him but he did not respond to their treatment and died.



Akinchana's parents were devastated. Their sorrow declined with the passage of time but every time they passed or entered Akinchana's room, they felt miserable and nearly broke down. After six months had passed, they paid a visit to the holy man, Akinchana. He advised them, "Sell your house and shift to another town; also adopt a son." The advice appealed to them and they decided to act according to it.

Akinchana's mother told her husband, "We have known Chakravarthi for a long time and he is, undoubtedly, a well-behaved boy. Akinchana was so fond of him. Why not we adopt him instead of some unknown boy?" He readily agreed, for he too had a good opinion of Chakravarthi. They talked to Chakravarthi about their intention and, finding his response favourable, approached his father. They expressed their wish to adopt Chakravarthi and offered the man a substantial sum of money. The wastrel had no hesitation in parting with his son; as far as he was concerned, Raja was there to attend to his house.

Chakravarthi had been sickly since childhood but he quickly acquired robustness because of the good food and excellent medical care he received in his new home located in an unpolluted hill-station. His adoptive parents developed deep affection for him; they sent him to an excellent school and eagerly satisfied his every wish. They never spoke to him harshly; the question of their giving him corporal punishment did not arise at all.

Everything was going right for Akinchana. Then, for no major fault committed by him since birth, the good boy lost his legs, suffered terribly for weeks and finally passed away. As for Chakravarthi, he suffered because of sickness, poverty, the death of his beloved mother and the bad treatment meted out to him by his father. He had not done anything wrong since birth to merit so much suffering. After Akinchana's parents adopted him, the picture changed completely for him. The road accident about whose occurrence the boys had no inkling and over which they had no control, radically altered the course of their lives. Destiny that had been smiling at Akinchana began to frown at him. On the other hand, fate, which had been scowling at Chakravarthi, began to smile at him.

Many examples such as these can be given to highlight the power of destiny, which is actually nothing but actions performed by a person in an earlier life that have begun to fructify and are responsible for the present birth. Likewise, there is no dearth of instances in favour of the power of effort stemming from the exercise of free will.

Aśvapati, the pious and just ruler of Madra, was desirous of progeny. So chanting the *Gayatrī-mantra*, he offered thousands of oblations into fire every day. Pleased with him, Goddess Sāvitrī manifested before him and told him that his longing would find fulfilment. In due course, a daughter was born to him. The king named her Sāvitrī, in honour of the Goddess who had graced him. When she came of age, he sent her along with his minister on a tour to enable her to identify a prospective husband. When she returned, the celestial Sage Nārada was with Aśvapati. She said that she wished to marry Satyavān, the son of Dyumatsena.

Dyumatsena was a firm adherent of *dharma* and had ruled Śālva. He always spoke the truth and so did his wife. Hence, they named their sole son Satyavān. When Satyavān was still a child, Dyumatsena lost his eyesight. Taking advantage of the situation, a neighbouring king successfully invaded Śālva. As a result, Dyumatsena was forced to leave for the forest with his son and wife. On seeing Satyavān in the forest, Sāvitrī felt that he was the ideal husband for her.

Nārada said that Satyavān was very handsome, valorous like Indra, forbearing like the earth and self-controlled. But, added the sage, he had one great shortcoming and this was that he was destined to die in one year. On hearing the sage's words, Aśvapati asked Sāvitrī to choose another man. She, however, said, "I have once desired him as my husband. Regardless of whether he is long-lived or short-lived, I cannot choose anybody other than him." Nārada told the king, "She cannot be swayed from her righteous decision. Satyavān has unmatched good qualities. My opinion is that you should give your daughter in marriage to him."

Aśvapati then approached Dyumatsena, obtained his approval and, thereafter, gave Satyavān the hand of his daughter. After marriage, Sāvitrī removed her jewels and donned a simple ochre dress appropriate for her life in the forest. She proved to be an ideal wife to Satyavān and a perfect daughter-in-law to Dyumatsena and his wife. They were very happy with her.

Sage Nārada had specified to her the exact moment at which Satyavān was scheduled to breathe his last. She did not disclose this information to her husband but constantly worried about what was to come to pass. Four days before the specified day, she commenced a fast and stood motionless. On being questioned by Dyumatsena, she replied that she was observing a vow. She did not eat a morsel and remained where she was till the final day. That morning, she formally ended her religious observance but announced that she did not wish to eat till evening.

She expressed to Satyavān her desire to accompany him to the forest when he went to fetch sacrificial faggots, flowers and fruit. He asked her, “You have not ventured into the forest in the past. The path is tough to tread. You have become enfeebled on account of your fast. How will you be able to walk far?” “I am enthusiastic and am unexhausted by my fast. So, please do not forbid me from accompanying you,” requested Sāvitrī. He acceded to her wish but wanted her to get the approval of his parents. She obtained their consent and left with Satyavān.

Deep inside the forest, both of them gathered flowers. Then, taking up his axe, Satyavān proceeded to chop wood. After some time, he experienced fatigue. His head and limbs ached severely and he felt too weak to stand. He explained his condition to Sāvitrī. She rushed to him and, as he lay down, rested his head on her lap. Satyavān closed his eyes.

At that time, Sāvitrī beheld an effulgent, dark person holding a noose. She stood up reverentially and asked him, “Your body is not like that of humans. I think that you are a Deva. Kindly tell me who you are.” The effulgent one said, “I am Yama. It is because of your chastity and *tapas* that you are able to see and converse with me. The life-span of your husband has come to an end. I have arrived to take his life.” “O Lord, I have heard that your emissaries carry out the task of taking the souls of humans. Why is it that you yourself have come?” queried Sāvitrī. Yama replied, “The reason for my coming is that Satyavān is an ocean of good qualities and is established in righteousness.” Then, at the precise moment specified by Sage Nārada, Yama withdrew Satyavān’s soul; Satyavān’s breathing ceased.

By virtue of her devotion to her husband and her religious observances, Sāvitrī was able to follow Yama and did so. He told her to return. She, however, said, “Wherever



my husband goes or is taken, I shall accompany him; that is in keeping with *dharma*. The learned persons who have realized the Truth have declared that when a person walks with another, they become connected by friendship. I seek to speak to you on the strength of the bond that has arisen between us by my accompanying you.” Then she spoke words that appealed to Yama.

Yama: I am pleased with you. Ask for any boon other than the life of Satyavān.

Sāvitrī: Let the eyesight and strength of my father-in-law be restored.

Yama: I grant you that. Now return. Do not strain yourself.

Sāvitrī: In being near my husband, I feel no strain. I shall accompany you wherever you take him. It is said that proximity with holy men on even one occasion is most desirable. Friendship with them is even more valuable. Thus, one should always keep the company of the holy.

On hearing her extol the company of the holy and express her desire to be in his and her husband’s presence, Yama felt happy.

Yama: Ask for another boon but not for your husband’s life.

Sāvitrī: Please let my father-in-law regain his kingdom and may he never deviate from the path of *dharma*.

Yama: So be it. Now you go back.

Sāvitrī: Great ones such as you forgive even foes who seek refuge. Please show mercy on people like me.

Yama: Ask for any boon other than your husband’s life.

Sāvitrī: My father, king Aśvapati, has no son. Please bless him with male progeny.

Yama: It shall be as you wish. You have come a great distance. Go back now.

Sāvitṛī then glorified Yama and made him happy with her words.

Yama: I am highly gratified by you. Ask for any fourth boon other than the restoration of your husband's life.

Sāvitṛī: May my husband and I have strong, valorous sons who will propagate our line of progeny.

Yama promised her what she desired. Sāvitṛī then told him that, unlike the first three boons, the fourth could not find fulfilment without her husband being restored to life. She, being a chaste woman, could not have a son by any man other than Satyavān. Yama saw her point and released Satyavān's soul.

Then he told her, "You have given me full satisfaction by your righteous words. Satyavān shall be restored to health and shall be fit to be taken back by you. He shall live with you for long and shall, by his adherence to *dharma*, attain great fame. Both of you shall have sons who shall become kings." After bestowing this blessing, Yama left. Sāvitṛī returned to where her husband's body was and sat down, placing his head on her lap. Satyavān opened his eyes. He thought that he had slept for long and wondered why she had not awakened him earlier. He said that he had beheld a dark-coloured person and wanted to know where that person was. Sāvitṛī assured him that she would tell him later. She then led him back to their abode.

Some *ṛṣis* were with Dyumatsena when the couple returned. They asked Satyavān, "Why did both of you not come back much earlier instead of so late in the night? Your parents were worried." Satyavān responded that he had fallen asleep. A sage announced, "Your father's sight was suddenly restored. Perhaps Sāvitṛī can give the reason." She described all that had transpired. The next morning, the former subjects of Dyumatsena came to the forest and met him. They told him, "O King, your foe and also his family have been killed by his own ministers." They requested him to again take over the reins of the Śālva kingdom. All that Yama had promised came to pass.

Dyumatsena was destined to be blind and live in a forest. By Sāvitṛī's efforts, he regained his sight and his kingdom. Aśvapati was not destined to have sons. But obtained them. Satyavān was to die young, but he lived long; he sired sons and ruled the Śālva kingdom for many years. This story is a striking example of how what is destined to happen can be markedly changed by human effort.

Mārkaṇḍeya was fated to die at the age of 16 but lived on because of his devout worship of Lord Śiva. Śuka, the son of Vyāsa, was such a great *yogin* that he attained disembodied

liberation at the time of his choice. Numerous instances of the alteration of the course of fate by personal effort and by the grace of God can easily be cited.

Neither destiny nor personal effort singly determines the course of human life; there is great interaction between the two. Destiny or actions of the past that have begun to fructify, human effort and divine grace together govern what comes to pass. Manu has compared destiny and personal effort to the two wheels of a chariot; a chariot cannot move on a single wheel.

After the *Mahābhārata* war, Kṛṣṇa took the Pāṇḍavas to Bhīṣma who lay on a bed of arrows, yet intensely meditated upon the Lord. The Lord relieved Bhīṣma of pain and imparted to him unimpeded and complete Knowledge. He then asked Bhīṣma to answer the questions posed to him. One of the questions asked by Yudhiṣṭhira was, “Is destiny more powerful or human effort?” In the course of his elaborate reply, Bhīṣma cited the answer given by Brahma to Vasiṣṭha when the latter had posed a similar question.

He said, “Destiny is comparable to a seed and individual exertion to the soil. Seedless soil does not yield a harvest nor does an unsown seed. Crops grow from the combination of seeds and the soil. It is by the combined influence of destiny and effort that people rise to heaven.

“The doer reaps the fruit of his deeds; happiness and unhappiness result from good and bad deeds respectively. A deed done always has a consequence. If one’s action were to bear no fruit, then all actions would be puerile; relying on destiny alone, men would become idlers.

“Everything can be secured by effort but nothing can be got through destiny alone by a man who remains idle. By well-directed human efforts, a person attains heaven, objects of enjoyment and the fulfilment of his wishes. The celestials attained their high status from that of a human being, through dint of effort. Just as a small fire becomes big when fanned by the wind, weak, favourable destiny increases greatly in potentiality when it is associated with individual exertion. A noble man who is diligent in his efforts can acquire the wealth that is hidden and guarded by unfavourable destiny.

“A sinner soon loses his precious gains; destiny does not help the man steeped in delusion and greed. A man may have obtained, through favourable destiny, vast wealth, women and objects of enjoyment but if he is inactive, he cannot enjoy them. When oil is used up, a lamp gets extinguished. Likewise, favourable destiny loses its influence in the absence of human perseverance. Favourable destiny cannot uplift a man who treads the path of evil; there is no inherent power in it.



“Just as a disciple follows his *Guru*, so does one’s action, guided by fate, follow one’s own individual effort. One’s own self is one’s friend and one’s enemy. Virtue is the refuge of the *deva*-s and by it, everything is attained. Destiny cannot thwart one who is established in virtue.”

## 26. Gaṅgā, the Great Purifier

Once, Śiva and Pārvatī were flying over Kaśī. Pārvatī observed numerous people vying with each other to have a bath in the Gaṅgā. She asked the Lord, “So many people are bathing in the Gaṅgā. They believe that their bath rids them of their sins. Is it true that Gaṅgā washes off their sins? If so, will not people deliberately sin and then bathe in the Gaṅgā in order to be free from the consequences of their misdeeds?” The Lord replied, “I shall explain to you. But first, assume the form of an old woman. I shall appear as a helpless man who is Your husband and is drowning in the water. We shall scream for help.” He then gave Her some further instructions.

Thereafter, She stood near the Gaṅgā and, pointing to Her drowning spouse, wailed, “Will nobody save my husband?” Immediately, a large number of people rushed into the waters. As instructed, She warned them, “None but a sinless one can touch my husband. Therefore, sinful ones need not proceed.” All but one withdrew. That man jumped into the Gaṅgā and pulled out Her husband.



Gaṅgā does purify people.  
When the faith of the person  
who resorts to her is intense,  
he is greatly benefitted by her.  
This, however, does not mean  
that one will be redeemed if  
one commits sins deliberately  
and then bathes in the Gaṅgā.

Pārvatī thanked him profusely but hastened to ask, “I had said that only a sinless one can touch my husband. How did you touch Him? Are you sinless?” The man replied, “Yes, I am. I jumped into the Gaṅgā and only then saved Your husband. Once I came into contact with Gaṅgā, all my sins were washed off.” Pārvatī and Śiva took to the skies. Addressing Her, Śiva said, “If a man has such intense faith, Gaṅgā will certainly wash away his sins.”

## 27. Influence of Food on the Mind

**A** *Yogi* lived in a small *āśrama*. Daily, he used to beg for food and partake it. He was thus leading a calm and peaceful life. The king of the land had a great regard for the sage. One day, he invited the ascetic to his palace for *bhikṣā*. The *saṁnyāsin* said, “O Sovereign! I have been eating only food procured by begging. I do not know how my mind will be affected if I consume anything in your palace. Hence, I feel that it is best for me to decline your invitation.”

However, in response to the ruler’s repeated requests, he relented. When the ascetic was washing his hands after his meal, his eyes fell on a necklace of pearls. Noting that nobody was watching him, he picked it up and put it in his *kamaṇḍalu*. He then went to the main hall, blessed the king and returned to his hermitage. Only after some time, he began to ponder over what he had done.

Meanwhile, the queen complained to the king about the loss of the necklace she had left in the bathroom. The king analysed the situation and concluded that one of the servants must have pilfered it. In order to extract the truth from them, he applied third degree methods. They kept on pleading innocence. When one of them suggested that the hermit might be the thief, the monarch became infuriated.

At the *āśrama*, the ascetic was thoroughly ill at ease. “What a foul deed I have committed today! For whose sake did I steal the necklace? If I wear this and go for *bhikṣā*, certainly no one will offer me food. If I leave it here itself, someone may steal it. Why did I become a kleptomaniac? I have beheld many necklaces but have never been affected by desire for them. The fact that a longing has arisen today implies that my mind has become

impure. What could be the cause?" he pondered. It dawned on him that the food he had eaten that day must have been the reason for his mental defilement.

He induced vomiting and then went to the king. On seeing the commotion in the palace, he asked for the reason. The king replied that no one had admitted to stealing a missing necklace. The *Yogin* said, "How will these innocent ones plead guilty?" "Here, take the necklace," continued the remorseful ascetic. "I, the thief, have brought it for you."

The shocked king asked the *sarṁnyāsīn*, "You are a great sage. Is it proper for you to have taken the necklace? Further, what made you bring it back? I am thoroughly confused. Please elucidate." The sage replied, "In the beginning, I refused your invitation to have *bhikṣā* in your palace. However, I finally gave in to your request. The result is that so many people have got unnecessary beatings and I have also earned a bad name. O King! You have stored so much rice in your granary. I wonder whether you have rightfully collected it." "I am sorry to say that unfair means have been employed to collect so much rice," the monarch replied truthfully. "I ate this rice for only one day and even that was enough to spoil my mind," sighed the *Yogin*. "Such being the case, I shudder to even think of its effect on all of you who take it daily. So, please do not invite me for food hereafter. I will get my food by begging as I have been doing hitherto." "Cannot begged food also be impure?" queried the sovereign. "The food may be impure but it is so only till it is put into my begging bowl. Such is the verdict of the *śāstras*," clarified the sage.

This story illustrates that food does influence the mind. Eatables are classified as *sāttvika*, *rājasa* and *tāmasa*. *Sāttvika* food is pure and confers strength and good health; curd is an instance of a *sāttvika* product. *Rājasa* food stimulates desire and anger; an example is a pungent item. *Tāmasa* food leads to sloth, sleepiness, etc. Putrid food and ort are instances of *tāmasa* eatables. The mentality of the cook and the presence of defiling factors, such as a strand of hair, also have a bearing on the purity of food. Care should be taken by a *sādhaka* (a practitioner of spiritual disciplines) to consume only properly prepared, *sāttvika* food.

## 28. How a Householder Should Conduct Himself

A district collector was distraught. A friend who dropped in at his office to pay him a casual visit, sensed his discomposure and asked, “What is your problem?” The collector replied, “My wife and children are all laid up with fever. My son first fell ill and his infection spread to the others.”

Friend: Did you not call a doctor?

Collector: Of course, I did. He prescribed medicines and said that they would recover in a few days.

Friend: You are so upset at the illness of just four people living in a house situated in a quarter of an acre. How then do you deal with problems in your jurisdiction which covers thousands of acres and is populated by lakhs of people? What indeed would be your condition if there were to be an epidemic in your region?

Collector: I would inform the health department. Investigations would be carried out and the disease identified as cholera, plague or something else. Treatment and preventive measures including sanitation would be taken up on a war footing. I would handle such a situation efficiently, with a cool head.


Friend: If such a major, widespread problem can be dealt with by you without getting ruffled, why are you so distraught about a minor problem confined to four members of a single house?

Collector: Unlike the others, those who are ill now are my very own.


Such is the deleterious influence of strong attachment and of the feeling, “This person or thing is my own,” that the collector who worked hard and efficiently discharged his official duties without losing his composure became inefficient and beset with worry when it came to his wife and children.

A pilgrim, on the way back to his town, halted at a *dharmasālā*. He appeased his hunger there with the free meal offered to him. Then, desirous of doing good and acquiring *punya*, he joined the inmates in serving food to the pilgrims who had come there. Thereafter, he helped in cleaning up the place. Before retiring for the night, he engaged in conversation with the others, expressed his sympathy to those who voiced their personal problems and also gave them beneficial suggestions.

He behaved as if the choultry was his home and the persons there were his family members. Yet, his mind was fully at peace and he left the next morning without the least hesitation or regret. After he had returned to his home, a person asked him, “Where did you spend last night?” “At the *dharmasālā*,” he replied. “What transpired there?” asked his relative. “Nothing of consequence. I ate there, slept and left. That is all.”



A married man has many duties and responsibilities and has to face many a problem affecting his family. The scriptures and Bhagavatpāda graciously advise him to lead his family life without attachment. He ought to be like the collector when engaged in the discharge of his official duties and like the pilgrim during his stay at the *dharmasālā*. He will then perform his duties and face family problems effectively and efficiently but without any mental agitation.



## 29. Karma-yoga

Three brothers went on a vacation to a hill station and stayed there in a cottage booked by them. One night, when they were fast asleep, a powerful earthquake wreaked havoc in the region. The roof of the cottage fell and would have crushed them to death had not a portion of the roof beam come to rest on a piece of wooden furniture in the bedroom. From the creaking sounds the brothers heard, they realized that in moments the roof would descend on them. There was simply no question of their remaining where they were till help arrived.

They turned towards the two doors that led out of the room. Due to an electric short-circuit, a fire had started near one of them. The flames were spreading. The way to the other door was strewn with glass pieces from the shattered window panes. One of the brothers ran towards the door where the fire was. He managed to escape through it but suffered severe burns and had to be hospitalized for weeks. The second brother recognized the danger of passing through the flames and so moved as swiftly as he could to the second door. His soles were pierced at several spots by the glass pieces on the way. He had to be hospitalized for two days.

The third brother thought, “It is madness to remain here. Heading towards the spreading flames is foolish, for severe burns will be inevitable. So I must escape through the other door. But, first, I must do something to protect my feet from the glass pieces.” He tore his bed sheet and wrapped a piece of cloth on each foot. He worked fast and so the whole process took only seconds. Then he headed for the door chosen by him. He escaped unhurt.

A person cannot remain without performing some action or the other just as the brothers were not in a position to remain where they lay in the bedroom. All his acts do have consequences. If he engages in *adharma*, he will experience much suffering in future, in hell or on earth. His behaviour would be on par with that of the brother who headed towards the door engulfed by fire. He who performs meritorious deeds experiences happiness for some time in heaven or acquires a good birth on the earth. In any case, he has to be reborn. Thus, even the acquirer of *puṇya* does suffer the bondage of transmigration. His conduct is comparable to that of the second brother. The path to the fiery door was easy to tread like the path of evil; the other door had to be reached with difficulty like the path of *dharma*, to go along which one has to restrain the mind and the senses.

The Lord has explained how a person may perform actions but avoid being bound by them. The person should dedicate all his actions and their fruits to God and discharge his duties without hankering for the results. This means of performing actions but escaping bondage is called *karma-yoga*. The performer of *karma-yoga* is like the third brother, who escaped through the very door through which the second brother had left but without suffering any injury. The most intelligent of the brothers protected his feet with bandages; the *karma-yogin* protects himself by dedicating his actions and their fruits to God.

A person had the practice of performing *pūjā* to God, and offering Him fruits and other eatables. After the worship, he used to partake of an offered fruit as God’s *prasāda*. An agnostic friend of his mockingly told him, “Your practice of performing *naivedya* is silly. The fruit that you place before your God remains exactly at the same spot where it was kept. It undergoes no physical change either. Further, it is not the God you worship but you who consumes it.”

The devotee responded with a smile, “I submit a fruit to God with the firm conviction that, in keeping with His statement in the *Bhagavadgītā*, He will accept it. Having received it, He is free to do with it whatever He pleases. Since He is omnipotent, He is perfectly

capable of making it vanish or leaving it behind in its entirety after having consumed it. I believe that it is He who leaves behind the fruit for me after partaking of it in a humanly inconceivable way. As far as I am concerned, what I consume after *naivedya* is the remnant of what God has eaten.

“Recently, when your political leader came to town, you and numerous others received him and offered him garlands. He certainly did not and could not wear all of them. He even gave you one of the garlands that he had received and you



accepted it joyfully. As he walked through the large crowd of his supporters, he tossed some garlands to them and the crowd cheered. It is possible that a supporter got back the very garland that he had given. Just because your leader does not retain garlands presented to him, you people do not abstain from the practice of garlanding him; you derive joy in honouring him and do not tell him what he should do with the garlands you give him. Why then are you uncomfortable with my sincerely offering God fruits and feeling happy? Further, when your leader can return a garland to you, why should God not be free to give me back the submitted fruits with His blessings? A *karma-yogi*, in fact, offers to God not just eatables but all his thoughts, words and deeds.”

A man had two servants. One of them was particular about eulogising his employer but not in executing his master’s instructions. The other sincerely carried out the tasks assigned to him; he also held his master in high esteem. The employer obviously preferred the second servant to the first. A devotee, who, like the second servant, sincerely performs the duties ordained for him by God and specified in the scriptures and, further, does so in a spirit of dedication, pleases God greatly and receives His grace in abundance. By the Lord’s grace, his mind becomes very pure. In due course, he realizes the Truth and gets liberated.

A woman doted on her young son and took great care of him. One day, she woke up with a splitting headache, fever and nausea. Nevertheless, she attended to her child's morning requirements without any laxity. That day, she found the rice prepared by her to be slightly overcooked. Promptly, she started to cook some more. Her husband noticed this and told her, "You are sick and in pain. Why do you want to strain yourself? The rice that is ready is quite eatable." "I want to give my son only the kind of rice he is used to and likes. As for the overcooked rice, I shall consume it," replied the wife. Out of deep love for her child, the woman did her very best for him. Likewise, a *karma-yogin*, by virtue of his devotion to God, performs his duties to the very best of his ability and refrains from *adharma*.

Two students appeared for an examination. In spite of having prepared well, they fared badly because the questions were very tough and some of them fell outside the scope of the prescribed syllabus. One of them, who did not practise *karma-yoga*, became highly dejected because of his inept performance. When he went home and sat down to prepare for the next day's subject, his mind kept reverting to that day's question paper. His worry greatly hampered his preparation. The other boy, being a practitioner of *karma-yoga*, did not experience the least anxiety. This is because, in the examination hall itself, he had dedicated his performance and its fruit to God. After returning home, undistracted by worry, he focused his attention on the next day's subject.

On the following day, the first boy became flabbergasted on encountering a tough question. The *karma-yogin* read the question carefully and answered it to the best of his ability without getting perturbed in the least. It is hardly surprising that the first boy secured a lower rank than his friend. This example shows that the efficiency of a *karma-yogin* exceeds that of a person who acts with a longing for the fruits of his actions.

The Lord has declared in the *Bhagavadgītā*, "Perform your prescribed duties, for action is superior to inaction. Moreover, even the maintenance of your body will not be possible by inaction. Man becomes bound by all his actions except those done by him for the sake of God. O, son of Kuntī! Perform actions for the sake of God without being attached...By performing his duty without attachment, a person attains liberation (through the purification of his mind)."

## 30. Fitness for Knowledge of the Supreme

Desirous of heaven, Vājaśravasa performed the Viśvajit sacrifice in which one gives away everything. He had a son named Naciketas. Being full of faith, the boy was dismayed to find that the cows his father was gifting to the priests were decrepit and barren. He felt that as a son, he should do something to compensate this shortcoming in his father’s sacrifice. He decided to allow himself to be gifted. So he asked his father, “To whom will you offer me?” Vājaśravasa ignored him. When Naciketas asked for the third time, Vājaśravasa angrily told him, “I hereby offer you to Yama.”

“My father has spoken these words in wrath without any consideration of purpose. Nevertheless, they must not be allowed to get falsified,” thought Naciketas. The boy left for Yama’s abode. As the latter had gone out, Naciketas patiently waited for him for three days. When Yama came back, he offered the boy three boons to expiate for his sin of not attending to a guest for three days.

As his third boon, Naciketas wanted to know whether or not there is an *Ātman*, distinct from the body, senses and the mind, that survives the death of the body. With a view to testing Naciketas and determining whether he was truly fit to be taught about the *Ātman*, Yama tried to dissuade him and to tempt him in various ways.

Yama said, “Ask for sons and grandsons who will be centenarians. Ask for many cows, horses, elephants and gold and a vast expanse of land. Live for as many years as you wish. If you desire some other equivalent boon, do ask for it. Ask for wealth and a long life. Become the king of a huge region. I shall make you fit to enjoy all pleasurable objects.

“Ask, according to your choice, for desirable things that are difficult





This story of the *Kaṭha-upaniṣad* reveals that unwavering dispassion characterizes the person who is fit for the knowledge of the Supreme.

to obtain. Here are celestial nymphs with chariots and musical instruments; they cannot be had by mortals. Get yourself served by them. But do not enquire whether anything exists after the fall of the body.”

Although Yama did his best to tempt the boy, Naciketas remained unperturbed like a still, vast lake. He said, “O Yama! All these enjoyable things enumerated by you are ephemeral. Moreover, they waste the vigour of man’s senses. All life, without exception, is short indeed. Therefore, let all these remain yours.” He insisted that he only wanted the boon he had sought. Extremely pleased with Naciketas’ dispassion and firmness, Yama taught him about the *Ātman*. The boy became enlightened.

## 31. Contentment


Desirous of progeny, a man prayed to God to bless him with an offspring. Soon, he became the father of a male child. It refused to suckle. Hence, the devotee again sought the Lord and said, “You gave me a child but it does not consume milk. I fear that it will not survive. So, please do something.” “I see,” said the Lord, “From tomorrow, it will start taking milk. Do not worry.” That problem got solved but the child gradually became intolerably mischievous.

Once again, the devotee turned to the Lord. He prayed to Him to make the child behave better. “So be it,” blessed the Lord. From that moment, the child stopped its misconduct. It became so subdued that it remained silent. Unable to tolerate this, the devotee requested the Lord to come to his aid. Thereafter, the child conversed normally. After many such prayers, the devotee got his son married. A few years passed but his daughter-in-law did not conceive. So the devotee beseeched the Lord, “I feel I would have been happier if You had not given me a child. My mind is fraught with sorrow at the thought of my son not having any progeny.”


Quite obviously, such prayers have no end at all. People are normally not contented with what they have. Our ancients have declared, “A man with a rupee longs for a

hundred. He who has a hundred wants a thousand. He who has acquired a thousand desires to possess a lakh. The owner of a lakh seeks to become a king. A king yearns to become Kubera, the god of riches. Kubera wishes to become Indra, the king of the gods. Indra hankers after the rank of Brahma. Brahma pines for the position of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu covets the state of Śiva. Who, indeed, has attained the limit of desires?"

There is a humorous verse to the effect, "A mountain is huge. The ocean is larger than a mountain. Space is more expansive than the ocean. God is bigger than Space. More extensive than even God is desire!"



While  
discontentment  
makes a man miserable,  
contentment confers  
steady joy.  
A dispassionate man  
is contented;  
contentment favours  
dispassion.

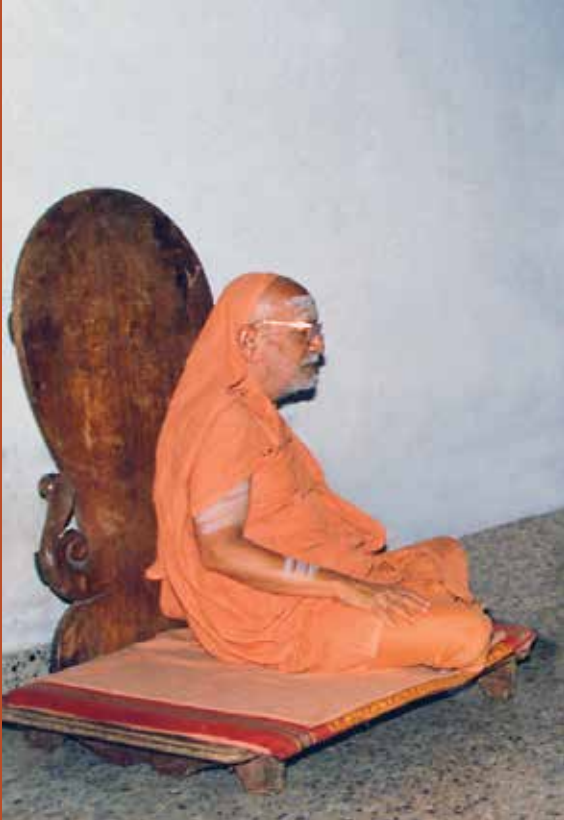


## 32. The Feeling, "Mine," Kills Peace

A man pondered for long about the kind of house that would be ideal for him and also sought the views of several knowledgeable persons. Finally, he framed a clear conception of it. He entrusted the construction to a competent and reputed engineer. But so concerned was he that there should be no shortcoming or deviation from what he had in mind that he spent almost all his time at the site. He proffered suggestions and comments to the extent of making a nuisance of himself. Finally, the house of his dreams was ready and he joyously moved into it with his family.

He swelled with pride whenever anyone expressed even the slightest appreciation of his home. One day, his son who wished to hang a picture started to hammer a nail into a wall. No sooner had the boy struck a single blow than his father came running into the room. His face crimson with anger, the man ordered his son to immediately stop the hammering. "How dare you do something that might mar the smoothness and beauty of the wall?" he asked. "If you want the picture, then keep it on your desk." The boy was taken aback by the intensity of his reaction, for he was usually soft-spoken and indulgent.

Years passed. In the interest of his health, which had begun to deteriorate, he decided to shift to a hill-station with good medical facilities. He sold his house for a large sum



and received much of the payment in the form of a bank draft. As his bank had closed for the day, he locked the draft in his cupboard with the intention of presenting it at the bank the next day. That night, as he tossed and turned unable to fall asleep, he heard a sound. Without making the least attempt to determine what might have caused it, he phoned the police. A few policemen soon arrived. On investigating, they found that the culprit was not a thief but a rat.

After they left, his wife asked him, "Why did you panic so easily?" "I was so apprehensive about the safety of the draft that I did not

fall asleep. The moment I heard a sound, I felt that my fears had come true and that a burglar had entered, who would steal the draft. Hence, I phoned for help. Now I realize that I overreacted," he said sheepishly. He spent a sleepless night and arrived at his bank the next morning even before it opened. It was only after duly presenting the draft that he relaxed. Shortly after he left, a strange event transpired at the bank.

Some cheques and drafts, including the one given by him, were found to be missing. Tension gripped the manager and the concerned staff and they began to frantically search for the missing items. A sigh of relief escaped them when a peon announced the solution of the mystery. The manager's five-year-old son who had come to the bank to see his father had picked up the cheques and drafts lying on a table and entered the toilet. After filling a bucket there with water, he had been about to make paper boats with them when the peon had seen and stopped him.

The man who had deposited the draft was unaware of all this. The next day, he finalised the purchase of a house of his choice located at the hill-station where he had made up his mind to live. Soon, he shifted lock, stock and barrel to his new residence. His old house was demolished and a shopping complex came up in its place. When he saw the shopping complex for the first time, he remarked to his friend, "It looks nice."

The man of the story first had a strong idea, “This is my house,” and was deeply attached to the building concerned. Hence, a nail partly driven into a wall seemed to him to be a spear thrust into his heart. After selling the house and receiving a bank draft in return, he firmly felt, “This draft is mine,” and deemed it important. Consequently, he spent a sleepless night worrying about it. Once he presented it at his bank, he ceased to view it as his precious possession. So he relaxed. On the other hand, the bank officials, who became its temporary custodians, lost their peace when they found it to be missing.

After the protagonist had shifted his residence to the hill-station, when he first saw a shopping complex in the place of his former house, he did not feel perturbed; he was even able to appreciate the new construction. It was because he no longer had the notion ‘mine’ with respect to his former house that its demolition did not affect him. Had his feeling towards it been as strong as before, he would have been rendered senseless by grief; after all, he had earlier been unable to bear even the hammering of a nail into its wall.

Janaka, the great king of Videha, was once informed that his capital Mithilā was on fire. He remained thoroughly unruffled and averred, “Though Mithilā is ablaze, nothing of mine is burning.” He was completely free from the notion ‘mine’ with respect to his kingdom and so, though he sincerely shouldered the massive burden of suzerainty, he was always peaceful.

When a person has the notion ‘mine’ with respect to an object, he is affected by what happens or what, he thinks, might happen to that object. On his giving up that idea, the article ceases to be a trigger for his mental disquiet. Abandonment of the feeling “mine” with reference to persons, places and things makes a man calm and blissful, without compromising his efficiency.

### 33. The Source of Happiness

“Sweets give me great joy. Hence, I do not hesitate to accept them whenever they are offered. Further, I always make it a point to eat some everyday,” remarked a man to his friend. Some days passed. He fell ill and was laid up in bed. His doctor informed him that he was suffering from diabetes and infection. His friend, who was unaware of


all this, dropped in one day and said, “I have brought you a bag of sweets.” Almost in despair, the bed-ridden patient replied, “Oh! Take it away from me. I do not desire it at all. Sweets are like poison to me.”

The story shows that what is considered pleasurable at one time is deemed to be a source of suffering at another. Were sweets to be intrinsically a source of happiness, the man would never have despised them; his sickness definitely did not impair his basic desire for happiness and his dislike for misery. In fact, a little analysis would readily reveal that there is no sense object that is intrinsically a source of happiness. Such analysis engenders dispassion.


A father fondled his child. As he kissed it, his rough beard and moustache pricked its tender face, causing sharp pain. The child bawled. Keen on pacifying it, the father repeatedly kissed it. As a result, the baby began to wail all the more.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* teaches, “It is only for the sake of the *Ātman* that everything is dear.” A husband loves his wife not purely for her sake but because he regards her as his spouse and associates his happiness with hers. In the example considered, the father wished to calm down the child because he regarded it as his own baby and associated his happiness with its pacification and joy.

Bhagavatpāda has taught in His *Śataślokī*, “An object continues to be dear as long as one derives pleasure from it and it is detested for the duration that it causes pain. The same object cannot be always liked or disliked. Sometimes, that which is not dear may become dear. Moreover, that which was loveable can turn unpleasant. The *Ātman*, towards which affection never wanes, is always the most beloved.”



The *Ātman* is ever the dearest because it is always the source of joy. In fact, the *Upaniṣads* are emphatic that it is of the nature of unalloyed bliss. Because one fails to realize one’s intrinsic nature of being pure bliss, one turns towards sense-objects, mistakenly imagining them to be sources of one’s happiness. The happiness that one seems to derive from sense-objects actually has for its basis the bliss of the *Ātman*. Thus, there is just one source of joy and that is the *Ātman*.



## 34. Entrapment in Eddies

A worm fell into a river. It was dragged along by the current and soon got trapped in an eddy. Round and round it went. Despairing for life, it struggled to escape but in vain. After some time, primarily because of the very dynamics of the flow, it found itself out of the eddy. Alas! Even before it could savour its respite, it was trapped in the watery grip of another eddy. Again, it was spun around in circles. Its freedom from this eddy too was short-lived, for it got caught yet again in churning waters.

Its life would surely have ended but for the fact that a kind-hearted man beheld its plight. He reached the spot where it was spinning in an eddy and gently rescued it. He carried it to the bank and finally left it on dry land. The worm realized that if the water level were to rise with the passage of time, it would be in trouble. So it moved away from the river and soon reached a safe spot under a tree in the vicinity.

Man's plight in the cycle of transmigratory existence is akin to that of the worm. People strive to obtain pleasure. The enjoyment they obtain motivates them to endeavour further to obtain pleasure and avoid pain. Thus, a vicious cycle comprising activity and enjoyment sets in from which there is virtually no respite. This cycle is like an eddy in the river of life. After death, a man moves on to another birth just as the worm passed on from one eddy to another.

Like the kind man of the example, the *Sadguru* provides succour to the helpless man trapped in the cycle of work and enjoyment and the cycle of birth and death. Having received the grace and guidance of a *Guru*, it behoves a person to put in effort, like the worm placed on the shore, and become a *Jīvanmukta*, one liberated while alive.

## 35. Need for a Guru

A customer approached a jeweller. He had a diamond with him and wanted to ascertain its value. He was under the impression that the diamond was flawless and that it would fetch him a good price. The jeweller examined it and said, "This diamond is not very worthy as it has a defect in the form of a black dot." The customer examined the diamond thoroughly but could not locate the dot. So he told the jeweller, "I see

The grace and instructions of a *Guru* are vital for the dawn of enlightenment. It is said in the *Chandogya-upaniṣad*, “Knowledge acquired from the *Guru* is what definitely becomes most beneficial.”

no dot.” The jeweller asked him to inspect it carefully. Still, the customer failed to perceive the dot. The jeweller then gave several directions as to how the spot could be identified. After some time, the customer was able to apprehend the dot.

Even in a matter like examining a diamond, guidance is necessary. What then need be said about the importance of guidance in comprehending the Truth, which is most subtle? The *Kaṭha-upaniṣad* declares, “As the *Ātman* is subtler than the subtlest, It is beyond the scope of arguments.”

A person may peruse the *upaniṣads*, which expound the Truth, and reflect deeply on the import of the scriptures. But this much is insufficient for him to get direct realization of the Supreme and, hence, liberation.

## 36. The *Sadguru* Graces All Immaculately

An enlightened sage lived in a forest spending most of his time oblivious of his body and surroundings, in *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, the acme of *yoga*. One day, two youths came to his divine presence and reverentially waited, standing motionless with joined palms, till his mind emerged from *samādhi*. When, on his opening his half-closed eyes, his glance fell on them, they prostrated for long. Thereafter, they humbly beseeched him to grace them by accepting them as his disciples. By virtue of his realization of the non-dual Truth, he had transcended all duties and wants. However, being an ocean of mercy, he acquiesced to their request.

To provide them an opportunity to perform *Guru-sevā*, which is invaluable for a disciple, he assigned them tasks to be performed on a daily basis, such as washing his ochre robes, cleaning the place where he performed *tapas* and obtaining food by begging in the villages at the edge of the forest. He initiated both of them into a *mantra* and taught them how to meditate.

One of the disciples soon became an adept at meditation who sat for hours with a rock-steady, concentrated mind, without awareness of even the body. The other wholeheartedly and regularly attempted to meditate but found his efforts consistently thwarted by distracting thoughts that kept on arising and disappearing like the waves of the ocean. The first disciple readily grasped, in its entirety, what the sage taught. The second lad sincerely attended the classes and read for long the portions taught. But as he was not bright, he comprehended far less than his companion. Both the disciples efficiently carried out the tasks assigned to them with thoroughness.



Five years passed. One day, the *Guru* told his disciples, “Your studies are now complete and it is time for you to return to your homes.” They loved their *Guru* dearly and the mere thought of being separated from him was very painful. However, they had the firm conviction that at no time should any command of the *Guru* be transgressed, even to the slightest extent, for any reason whatsoever. So, in deference to their *Guru*’s directive, they got ready to leave. The first disciple prostrated before his *Guru*. The sage blessed him with *abhaya-mudrā*, upraised palm. When the second disciple prostrated, the sage placed his divine hand on the disciple’s head and stated with certainty, “May you become fully enlightened, right now.” His grace was so potent that the disciple instantaneously became an enlightened *mahātman*.

The first disciple felt unhappy that, unlike his friend, he had not received the special blessing. Not one to hide his feelings or thoughts from his *Guru*, he asked with joined palms, “O Lord, a doubt has arisen in my mind. I seek your permission to express it to you. By your grace, my meditation has been far superior to his and I have grasped much more during your classes than him. Such being the case, O Master, why did you specially grace him rather than me? In case, my query is inappropriate, kindly forgive me.”

*Guru*: Prior to my answering your question, let me pose some queries to you. What do you think of me?





First disciple: You are my revered *Guru*. You are a great sage who has realized the Supreme and achieved all that is to be achieved.

*Guru*: Do I appear to be a man given to transacting business with his disciples?

First disciple: Certainly not.

*Guru*: My child, you referred to your superior meditation and your greater grasp of *Vedānta*. You aver that I am not a trader. Why, then, do you expect me to dispense grace proportional to a disciple's service, success in absorbing my teaching and progress in meditation practised according to my instructions? You further say that I have achieved all that is to be achieved. If so, I stand to

gain nothing by your service or by producing a scholar adept at meditation, through whom my name shall spread.

First disciple: Are not meditation and enquiry means to getting knowledge of the Truth, which is what my companion has now got?

*Guru*: Of course, they are. If properly practised, meditation and enquiry eradicate the ego. You, my child, feel, "I meditate well. I am a scholar." You should not be egoistic like this. Your companion, on the other hand, feels, "I am nothing. Whatever state my *Guru* places me in, that is all that I want. Let my *Guru* do whatever he wishes to do with me."

First disciple: If there be the possibility of a disciple who has not progressed in the spiritual path straight away getting enlightened by the grace of the *Guru*, then does not spiritual effort become something that is dispensable?

*Guru*: Not at all. A disciple should carry out his *Guru's* instructions to the very best of his ability and then leave everything in the hands of his *Guru* or God; that ability of his may be great or insignificant. If, thinking, "I need not personally take steps in the direction shown by my *Guru*. May he himself deliver me to the goal," a disciple were

to be indolent or careless, he will certainly not attain the highest. Undoubtedly, your companion did do his best. It is true that you, whose capacity is far greater than his, were also sincere.


My child, I love both of you equally. A mother attends more to a babe that is a few days old than to her ten-year-old child. This is not because she loves the latter less but because the former is in greater need of care. You are very intelligent, learned and meditate well. Combat your ego and realization of the Supreme shall be yours. For that, you have my complete blessings. Your companion is helpless like a new-born babe. He is neither intelligent, nor learned and his mind wanders like the wind. If I had not uplifted him myself, he would have been lost. So I gave him special blessings. As for you, you too shall become enlightened. Have no doubt or apprehension regarding this. Numerous are the persons who shall be uplifted by you.

The *Guru* then called out to the second disciple, who was standing at some distance to allow his companion to converse in private.


*Guru*: If I had ignored you when you prostrated, what would you have thought?

Second disciple: Lord, you are everything to me. You know best. So I would have remained quiet and fully satisfied if you had ignored or even cursed me.

Turning to the first disciple, the *Guru* said, "See how profound his devotion is. He spoke truthfully when he said that he would have been satiated even if I had cursed him. I blessed you and yet you felt dissatisfied. What a difference there is between his devotion and yours!" The first disciple hung his head in shame. Looking at him with compassion, the *Guru* unequivocally declared, "I questioned your companion for the sole purpose of creating a situation conducive to eradicate your ego, the obstacle in your path. Now that humility has pervaded your heart, you deserve the highest and shall have it." Saying so, he specially graced the first disciple and the latter promptly attained the highest.



Regardless of the differences between disciples, the ideal *Sadguru* knows and does what is best for each of them. His mode of gracing is ever immaculate.



## 37. Where Censure is a Blessing

Devadatta was a bright, dexterous lad who studied his *Veda* and the *śāstras* at the hermitage of an extremely erudite sage. Five other *brahmacārins* were his classmates. The *Guru* was strict and ensured that his pupils, who venerated as also feared him, led disciplined lives conforming to the rules of their *brahmacarya-āśrama*.

One day, at the commencement of his *śāstra* lesson, the *Guru* asked a question to a disciple. As the question was simple and pertained to the portion covered the preceding day, the not-very-bright disciple gave a satisfactory answer. The *Guru* merely nodded. Turning to another *brahmacārin*, he asked a simple question, again relating to the previous day's lesson. The *brahmacārin* hesitated for some time and then gave a completely wrong answer. The *Guru* spelt out the correct answer and asked the boy to repeat what he had said. On the lad doing so, the *Guru* told him, "Pay more attention. If you do not understand anything that I say, feel free to ask me."

Then, turning to Devadatta, he posed a tough question pertaining to a portion that had been covered over a month ago. Nevertheless, Devadatta thought over the matter and began his answer. He proceeded correctly for some time and then got struck. The *Guru* waited for a moment, and, with a frown on his face, shouted, "You fool! Your answer is unsatisfactory. Have you come here to study or to while away your time? After this class, do not show me your face again, unless and until you are able to give me the correct answer." Devadatta thought to himself, "My companion did not answer a simple question pertaining to yesterday's lesson correctly, but my *Guru* was soft with him. I, however, answered a tough question partly. Yet, he has given me a strong rebuke. To avoid such censure, I shall study harder and thereby ensure that I do not ever get caught inadequately prepared."

The *Guru* continued with the lesson. At the end of it, Devadatta did not go out like the other *brahmacārins* but continued to sit in the same room, pouring over his books. After a couple of hours, he approached his *Guru*. The *Guru* asked him, "I told you not to come to me unless you are ready with the correct reply. Can you give me the answer now?" Devadatta said, "Yes, master" and gave a flawless reply. The *Guru* did not express either approval or disapproval. He merely went on to ask a few more questions. Devadatta provided the correct answers. The *Guru* nodded and moved on. Time passed on with Devadatta never failing to answer correctly when questioned by his *Guru* during the classes.

One afternoon, he was fanning his *Guru* in his master's hut when another *brahmacārin* came there and announced that a person who seemed to be a reputed scholar had come to the *āśrama*. The *Guru* asked that *brahmacārin* to receive the visitor with due honour and to usher him to his hut. The *brahmacārin* obeyed. The scholar who entered exchanged pleasantries with the *Guru* and then said that he had come for a discussion based on the *śāstras*. He expounded a point and then posed a query. The *Guru* unexpectedly turned to Devadatta and said, "Answer!" Devadatta was taken aback, for he thought that the question was addressed to the *Guru*. Nevertheless, in obedience to his *Guru's* command, he began to give a reasoned reply. The visitor



raised another point and a further question. Again, Devadatta responded and soon a full-fledged discussion of great depth ensued. After about an hour of discussion, the visiting pundit posed a complex question. Devadatta rapidly called to mind all that he had read and heard from his *Guru* on the issue concerned. But he was unable to think of a satisfactory response. So he remained silent.

Noticing this, his *Guru* gave out a cogent answer that fully satisfied the visitor. Then, turning to Devadatta, his *Guru* shouted, "You are a disgrace. Can you not think beyond what is given in the books? Do you have to be told everything? If you are going to reproduce what is in the books and whatever I tell you, what is the difference between you and a parrot? I might as well keep a parrot here as a student instead of you." As the *Guru* was scolding Devadatta, the visitor was all smiles. Devadatta felt thoroughly humiliated.

He wondered, "Why is my *Guru* humiliating me like this in front of this reputed scholar? After all, I was not in the least expecting this discussion and yet managed reasonably well. I have been faring much better than my classmates. Yet, my *Guru* sharply censures

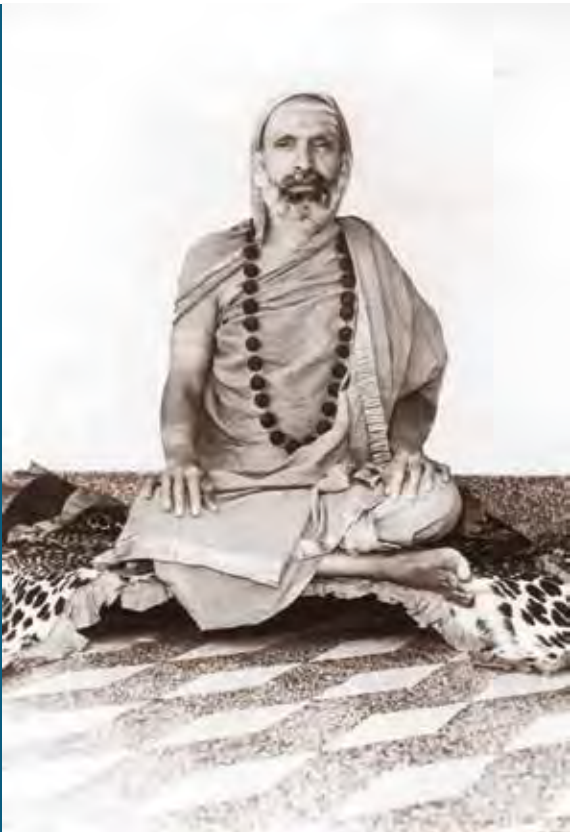
me and also has a low opinion of me. Perhaps, he does not like me.” Never one to lose hope, he resolved, “No matter how much effort I have to put in and regardless of the scolding and humiliations I receive, I shall somehow master the *śāstras* to such an extent that he will be forced to be proud of me.” Thereafter, Devadatta not only studied what he had been taught but also pondered on the implications of the passages. He considered possible unstated objections and thought up powerful replies to them.

One day, during his *Guru’s śāstra* class, Devadatta abruptly began to feel dizzy and nauseated. He tried to control himself so that he could continue to attend the class. His *Guru*, however, discerned what was happening. In a kindly voice, he said, “My child, you are unwell. Do not strain yourself. Go to the hut, lie down and rest.” Devadatta was surprised at the extreme softness in his *Guru’s* voice. He tried to get up but as he did so, because of the dizziness, he nearly fell. His *Guru* quickly got up and held him. Then, lifting Devadatta in his arms, the *Guru* personally carried him to the hut and made him lie down on a straw bed. He prepared a medical potion and administered it to Devadatta. When the other *brahmacārin* came there, he told them that he was cancelling his class for that day.

Taking a disciple with him, he went out of the *āśrama* after instructing another *brahmacārin* to tend to Devadatta. He returned a couple of hours later. He had cuts

on several portions of his body and was bleeding profusely. Worried, Devadatta asked him about what had happened. The *Guru* merely said, “Let us not talk about me,” and proceeded to prepare a special medicine, a little of which he administered to Devadatta. He then spent the whole night by Devadatta’s side, giving him a *kaṣāya* every one hour. Devadatta was deeply touched by his *Guru’s* affection. The next morning, he felt reasonably well.

As he was about to go for his bath, a co-student of his came to the hut. He said, “Last night, I heard you ask our *Guru* about the injuries on his body. But you got no answer. I know what



happened.” He continued, “Yesterday, our *Guru* took me and went out of the *āśrama*. He moved into the forest for some distance and gathered few herbs. He gave them to me and said, ‘Wait here for me in the safety of some tree. But do not tarry for more than an hour. If I do not return by then, return to the *āśrama*, prepare a medicine with these herbs and administer it to Devadatta.’ He explained in depth how I should prepare a potion using the herbs that he had given me.

“He then walked deeper into the forest, leaving me behind. I climbed a tree and from my perch could see him moving swiftly. He encountered a dense, thorny bush on the way. To cross it, he had to plunge through it. As he did so, his body was badly injured. But he did not

seem to mind. He just picked himself up and continued to walk. I was shocked to see that he was proceeding towards a cave, at the mouth of which a tigress was seated along with her cubs. She was nursing her cubs. You will recall that our *Guru* had told us that tigers do not normally harm human beings and that if we encounter a tiger during our walks in the forest, we should remain perfectly still till the tiger passes. You will also remember that he warned us to take special care to avoid a tigress nursing her cubs because, apprehending danger, she might maul us.

“As our *Guru* headed towards the cave, I watched helplessly. I felt like screaming out to caution him but knew that he would not approve. So I just sat where I was, petrified. The tigress sensed his arrival and growled. He ignored the warning and did not slacken his pace. Surprisingly, the tigress relaxed and continued to nurse her cubs. Our *Guru* soon reached the entrance of the cave and began to gather some herbs. I realized that he had gone there because the herbs concerned were found only at that spot. Having collected the herbs, he headed back. Again, he had no choice but to plunge through the bush on the way. He injured himself further. As he came up to the tree where I was perched, I descended.



“Seeing me stare at his wounds, he merely said, ‘Oh, these are nothing. Let us move on.’ We returned to the *āśrama* and it was with the herbs that he had gathered at the spot where I waited and at the entrance of the cave that he prepared the medicine that he administered you. He risked his life for you.” Devadatta was deeply moved and tears came to his eyes. He thought to himself, “What a blunder I have committed. I thought that he does not like me. Indeed, he loves me very dearly.”

One day, when Devadatta was busy cleaning his *Guru’s* hut, a *brahmacārin* came there and announced the arrival of two visitors to the *āśrama*. The *Guru* asked the *brahmacārin* to usher them in. Devadatta moved to leave the room. But his *Guru* ordered him to continue with his work. One of the visitors was obviously a pundit, while the other appeared to be his quiet, submissive attendant. The *Guru* asked the visitors to sit down and they exchanged pleasantries. The scholar said that he had come to have a debate. He then initiated it. The *Guru* instructed Devadatta to respond and the latter did so.

Soon, the discussion reached great heights. Arguments sallied forth from one side to the other. About two hours passed in this way without the visiting scholar being able to gain the least upper hand. After some time, the scholar advanced what

appeared to be an invincible argument in favour of his proposition. However, Devadatta beautifully demolished it. The scholar had no choice but to keep silent. Devadatta thought that the scholar would feel upset or annoyed. However, he was surprised to find the visitor in high spirits. The *Guru* then turned to Devadatta and said, “You can leave now.” Devadatta obeyed. Thereafter, the visitors and the *Guru* engaged in conversation for a while after which, the visitors left the *āśrama*.

Two days later, the king of the land came to the *āśrama* and met the *Guru*. On being summoned, Devadatta went to the meeting place, prostrated and stood reverentially at some distance from his



*Guru*. His *Guru* ordered him to sit down. He obeyed. The king turned to Devadatta and, rising from his seat, respectfully said, “I have built a big *āśrama* in the woods near the capital. Please accept it as a humble offering from me. I would be deeply honoured if you will agree to be my adviser in religious matters. I would be much obliged to you if you will also agree to gauge the scholarship of visiting pundits so that I can suitably honour and reward them. Please think over my requests and let me know whether you will grant them. I am eagerly hoping that you will give me an affirmative answer.”

Devadatta was perplexed to hear the king address him thus. He asked, “Why is it that Your Highness is making such an offer to me? You do not know me at all.” “I do,” said the king. “Your *Guru* has told me much about you. He is extremely proud of you and has unequivocally asserted that you are a thoroughly disciplined scholar par excellence.” “My *Guru* said that!” exclaimed Devadatta, his jaw dropping in amazement. The *Guru* said, “My child, I have always been proud of you. Because I rebuked you, you thought that I have a low opinion of you and do not like you. Is it not?” On hearing this precise description of his earlier state of mind, Devadatta felt ashamed of himself.

The *Guru* continued, “You will recall that I had posed a tough question to you during a class and when you had given a partially correct answer, I had shouted at you. I knew you to be a priceless diamond that would dazzle the eyes of beholders on being properly cut and polished. You were head and shoulders above all the other *brahmacārins* but I wanted you to rise higher and have all the lessons at your finger-tips. To make you drive yourself harder, I rebuked you. I was glad to find that the aim of my harsh words was amply fulfilled.

“You will also recall the discussion in which, after responding brilliantly for some time, you were unable to proceed further. The scholar with whom you held







that discussion was a classmate of mine. I was the one who had asked him to come here and that too at a time when only you would be with me in my hut. Further, the question that stumped you was asked by him in accordance with my earlier arrangement with him. As you know, after you were at a loss for an answer, I scolded you with extreme severity. My words broke my heart far more than they did yours. Nevertheless, I continued because my intention was to provoke you so much as to make you firmly resolve to prove yourself to me by becoming a scholar par excellence. I was overjoyed to find my efforts fully rewarded.

“My child, I did not praise you all these days not because I was not appreciative of you but to avoid any possibility of your becoming complacent. A *Guru* should keep in mind the risk of his eulogy serving as clarified butter to the fire of his disciple’s ego. Now that your studies are complete, I feel free to open my heart to you. You are the very best of the disciples I have ever had. Right from the time when you first came to me, you have been very close to my heart.” With joined palms, Devadatta said, “O Lord! How much I misunderstood you. I have been a thorough fool. Please forgive me.” The *Guru* said, “My child, there is nothing to forgive. Be at ease.”

The king who had been silently hearing the dialogue between the *Guru* and the disciple told Devadatta, “I should tell you at this stage that the scholar whom you debated a couple of days ago studied with your *Guru* at the hermitage of your master’s master. He has been my adviser in religious matters but has now decided to retire to the Himalayas. The quiet man who accompanied him that day was myself, in disguise. Your *Guru* invited us to witness a display of your superb erudition and debating skills. Needless to say, we were enthralled. Now you can see that I did not make my request to you without knowing about you.” After seeking his *Guru*’s directive, Devadatta acceded to the king’s wishes.



When a *mahātman* censures a person, it is not because of inadequate control over the tongue or out of malice or on account of a desire to humiliate or to derive sadistic pleasure. The purpose is to correct or uplift that person. That is why it is said, “Persons who are rebuked by the *Guru* with harsh words attain greatness.” Condemnation by a sage is truly a great blessing in disguise.



## 38. The Sadguru Rewards Unstinted Guru-sevā

Upamanyu was a disciple of the great Sage Dhaumya. In accordance with his *Guru's* instruction, he took the cows of the hermitage every day for grazing. In keeping with the rules to be observed by a *brahmacārin*, he obtained food by begging and submitted the same to his *Guru*. Desirous of testing Upamanyu, Dhaumya kept all the food that was brought by his disciple with himself and gave nothing to Upamanyu. However, the *Guru* found that even with the passage of days, his disciple remained quite strong and healthy. So he asked Upamanyu about how he had been able to maintain his strength. Upamanyu said that he had been fetching *bhikṣā* a second time. The preceptor said that his practice was wrong and forbade him from indulging in it.

Surprisingly, the disciple continued to remain sturdy. On his *Guru* asking him the reason, Upamanyu said, “Nowadays, when I take the cows for grazing, I drink some of their milk.” The *Guru* told him, “Henceforth, you must not do so. If you consume the milk, which is my property, it only amounts to your stealing it.” The disciple stopped imbibing milk. However, he continued to be robust. This was because he began to subsist on the foam that remained on the mouths of the calves after they had suckled their mothers. On learning of this practice of the disciple, the *Guru* commanded that he should desist from consuming foam. The disciple obeyed. But overcome by hunger, he started eating the leaves of an *arka* plant. As a consequence, his system became poisoned and he lost his vision. Blinded, he staggered and fell into a disused well.

At dusk, the cows returned home without him. The *Guru* began to worry about the non-arrival of Upamanyu. “I wanted to test his devotion. But he is in some trouble. Why has he not returned?” he thought. Calling out the pupil’s name, he began to search for him. When he approached the vicinity of the well into which Upamanyu had fallen, a feeble voice responded to his call. Observing the sad state of affairs, Dhaumya asked him, “How did you fall into this well?” “Overcome by hunger, I tasted *arka* leaves. Consequently, I became blind and stumbled into this well,” replied Upamanyu.

Compassionately gazing at the disciple, Dhaumya said, “Recite this particular portion of the *Veda* which is a hymn eulogizing the *Aśvinī-kumāras*.” As commanded by his *Guru*, Upamanyu chanted the said *Ṛg-vedic* hymn. Pleased with him, the *Aśvinī-kumāras*, the physicians of the gods, appeared before him. They offered him a cake of flour and asked him to eat it. Though extremely hungry, Upamanyu told them that he could not



do so without submitting the same to his *Guru*. The *Aśvinī-kumāras* tried their best to persuade him to consume it without offering it to his *Guru*, but Upamanyu did not budge from his stance. Extremely pleased with his devotion to his *Guru*, the *Aśvinī-kumāras* restored his eyesight.

Upamanyu climbed out of the well, approached his *Guru* and prostrated before Dhaumya. He then told his preceptor about what had transpired between him and the *Aśvinī-kumāras*. Thoroughly satiated with Upamanyu's *Guru-bhakti*, Dhaumya said to him, "You are intensely devoted to me. Hence I bless

you that even without further studies and service, all the 14 *vidyās* will spontaneously accrue to you." His words came to pass. In the course of time, Upamanyu became a great and revered sage.

Āruṇi of Pāñcāla was another very devoted disciple of the Sage Dhaumya. He served his *Guru* with diligence. One day, Dhaumya sent him to the fields to attend to the dyke there. Āruṇi tried his level best to plug an opening through which water was leaking. However, he was unable to succeed. Finally, he blocked the flow with his own body. Time passed. At the hermitage, Dhaumya asked, "Where is Āruṇi?" His other disciples told him, "O Lord, you had sent him to attend to the dyke."

Dhaumya immediately set out with his disciples in search of Āruṇi. He called out, "My child, where are you? Come to me." On hearing the words of his *Guru*, Āruṇi stood up, quickly plugged the opening as best as he could and rushed to the presence of Dhaumya. Having prostrated before him, he explained what had happened. Then he asked, "Master, what is your further instruction for me?" Dhaumya said, "In view of the task done by you, you shall become famous with the name Uddālaka. You have fulfilled my command. Let all the Vedas and the *dharmā-śāstras* become known to you." Uddālaka-Āruṇi instantaneously became thoroughly erudite.

## 39. Teaching Through Silence

The four mind-born sons of the creator Brahmā known as the Kumāras were thoroughly disinterested in getting married and begetting progeny. These sages were extremely dispassionate and wished to free themselves from the cycle of transmigratory existence. Out of compassion, Lord Śiva manifested as a four-armed figure, Dakṣiṇāmūrti, and sat at the foot of a banyan tree in the Himalayas, silent and lost in the bliss of the Supreme. The sages approached Him with the intention of asking Him how to get rid of the cycle of transmigratory existence and of getting their doubts set at rest. The Lord, as Dakṣiṇāmūrti, did not speak. Yet, so potent was His silence and grace that the sages immediately became enlightened; their doubts vanished.

The silence of an enlightened sage is adequate to dispel the mild ignorance of an extremely pure-minded disciple who is akin to the holy ones who approached Dakṣiṇāmūrti. However, disciples of a lower calibre, whose ignorance is denser, require to be taught the Truth by their *Guru*.

There is darkness on the night of the full moon as also on the night of the new moon; there is no night without darkness. In the darkness of the night of the full moon, people are able to move about on the roads and are also able to perform their routine activities. They, however, have to strain to read a book; that is all. In the darkness of the night of the new moon, if the sky happens to be overcast too, it is not possible for people to walk on the road or to engage in their activities; the question of reading a book does not arise at all. The ignorance of the sages such as Sanaka was like the darkness of the night of the full moon. On the other hand, the ignorance of almost all the others is like the darkness of the night of the new moon.

## 40. Brahma's Advice: "Da, Da, Da"

Brahmā once instructed the *devas*, humans and *asuras*. He rendered the same advice, "Da, da, da," to all of them. The Devas, as a rule, are given to enjoyment of sense objects. Hence, they thought that Brahma wanted them to be self-controlled. That is, they interpreted 'da' as connoting 'dāmyata (Control yourselves)'. Human beings

are selfish by nature and hoard wealth for future use. They comprehended the word 'da' to mean 'datta (Perform charity)'. *Asuras* are cruel by nature. So they understood the utterance 'da' to mean 'dayadhvam (Be compassionate)'.

Bhagavatpāda, in His commentary on the relevant portion of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, has clarified that the story does not necessarily refer to *devas*, humans and *asuras* considered separately. 'Deva' here means a person with a predominantly *sāttvika* nature, tainted by tendencies of enjoyment and conceit. 'Asuras' are stone-hearted persons with fierce instincts. All men should therefore cultivate sense-control, charity and compassion. To this day, the Creator declares "Da, da, da," through the sound of thunder.

A *Guru* instructs his disciples bearing in mind their competence. It is perfectly possible for a common teaching to have different implications for different disciples; the instruction of Brahma is an example.

## 41. Essentiality of Humility

A lad approached a sage and requested, "Please instruct me about the Supreme." The *Guru* said, "First live here as a *brahmacārin* for six months." The disciple did so, duly observing the rules for a *brahmacārin* such as serving the *Guru*.

At the end of the stipulated period, the disciple decided to approach his *Guru* for initiation. He first had his bath in the river. As he was about to start, a man appeared on the scene and dumped a basket of filth on him. The disciple flew into a wild rage and gave the man a beating. Having bathed again, he went to his *Guru*. The *Guru* asked, "Tell me what you did today." The disciple said, "Everything was fine till just prior to my coming here after a bath, when a rogue defiled me with filth. How dare he do that to me! So I beat him. Having purified myself, I have come here to receive holy instruction from you about the Truth." The *Guru* said, "The time for instruction is not yet ripe. Observe *brahmacarya* here for three more months."

The disciple obeyed. Again, on the day he was scheduled to be initiated, he took a bath and emerged from the river. The man who had dumped filth on him on an earlier occasion came there and repeated his act. The disciple felt irritated but far less than on the previous occasion. He scolded the man, bathed again and went to his *Guru*. The *Guru* asked him about what had transpired that day. The disciple narrated what had happened. The *Guru* said, “The time is still not ripe. Observe *brahmacarya* here for three more months.”

The disciple obeyed. At the end of three months, on the scheduled day, he bathed prior to approaching his *Guru* for instruction. When he had finished his bath, the man who had troubled him on the earlier two occasions again came there and dirtied him. This time, the disciple felt no anger. He saluted the man and said, “I am indebted to you. Thank you for helping me remedy the defects of arrogance and wrath.” He then took a fresh bath and proceeded to his *Guru’s* abode. This time, the *Guru* told him, “Now you are fit to be instructed,” and duly initiated him into the Truth.

The *Guru* was actually the one who had arranged for the disciple to be defiled on all the occasions so as to make the disciple shed his sense of self-importance and become humble.



A disciple who is proud  
and short-tempered fails to  
realize the Truth expounded  
by his *Guru*.

## 42. Some Errors of Disciples

A cow had fallen ill and its owner was worried about it. He took the animal to a veterinary doctor who prescribed a certain medicine with the instruction that it should be given after mixing with ghee. The owner of the cow reasoned, “The cow yields milk. From that we get curd, butter and finally ghee. So the essence of ghee is already present in the cow. Such being the case, why should I mix ghee with the medicine?” Having analysed thus, he administered the medicine without ghee. The indiscretion of the milkman aggravated the disease instead of bringing it down.

A disciple should carry out the instructions of his *Guru* to the last letter, without deviating from them in the least. Were he to introduce innovations of his own, he would be on par with the milkman.

A teacher had two foolish disciples. One day, he summoned them and said, “I am feeling some discomfort in my legs. Give them a good massage.” The disciples grasped a leg each and commenced their massage. Soon, for relaxation, the teacher rested his right leg on the left.




The student who was massaging the left leg thought, “What is this? Something has fallen on my teacher’s sacred foot. How can I, a devoted disciple, allow such a thing to happen?” He roughly pushed the right leg aside without realizing that it also belonged to his master. Seeing this, the other disciple shouted, “What do you think you are doing? How dare you shove my teacher’s leg?” He then wrathfully pushed the left leg. The other disciple retaliated.

The disciples quarrelled thus at the cost of their teacher’s comforts. When this went on for some time,


the master sat up and said, “What are you two up to? I asked you to massage my legs to relieve my pain but you have only worsened it. Get lost.”

Service of the *Guru* is essential but it should be done with due care, after obtaining permission. Improper service will only be a hindrance to the *Guru*.

Four students learnt the *mantra-śāstra* from a *Guru*. After the completion of their studies, they started for their homes. As they were passing through a forest, they came across a dead tiger. Three of them opined, “We are conversant with the *sañjivinī-mantra* which can restore the dead to life. Should we not test its efficacy? Let us revive this feline with it.” The fourth student saw the foolishness of their proposed course of action. He did his best to dissuade them but failed. So he climbed a tree nearby and sat on a branch. His companions utilized the *sañjivinī-mantra* to give the tiger a fresh lease of life. The carnivore rose. Feeling the pangs of hunger, it struck its saviours dead. Notwithstanding scholarliness in the *mantra-śāstra*, lack of common sense caused the trio to perish.



A person’s mind is like a blunt knife that is unfit for cutting unless it is sharpened by the knowledge acquired from a teacher. Erudition without common sense is like a sharp knife in the hands of a monkey. Thus, learning and common sense are both essential; bereft of these, one would be mentally blind though physically sighted.



## 43. Teachers to Avoid

A patient suffering from a bronchial ailment approached a doctor and narrated his tale of woe. “Do not worry,” said the doctor. “I have the right medicine for you. I am also suffering from this very disease for a long time and have been taking this medicine. It does not seem to have much effect on me. Now that you have come, I have an opportunity to test its potency. I feel that it will cure your disease,” he explained.

How can a patient have faith in such a doctor? Similarly, a teacher who himself is not sure of what he teaches will neither inspire confidence in his pupils nor expound well.





A boy's orthodox father took him to Kashi and enrolled him there in a *Vedānta-pāṭhaśālā* with the hope that he would become an erudite, renowned scholar. He attended the classes because he was required to but as he was neither hard-working nor intelligent, the understanding of the *Vedānta* texts that he acquired was meagre. After a few years, he dropped out of the *pāṭhaśālā* and returned to his home in South India. He claimed that he had completed his course successfully. As he was the son of a wealthy, respected man and he was supposedly a pundit, several *vaidikas* in his town had no hesitation in offering their daughters to him in marriage. He soon got married and set himself up as a teacher of *Vedānta*. He was

more than ready to accept anyone who came to him as a pupil, regardless of whether that person was a *brahmacārin* or a *grhastha*.

Being lazy and ignorant, he did not bother to prepare for any class. His mode of teaching was to read or to ask a student to read a few lines, restate the contents in different words without elaboration, and pass on to the next few lines. Now and then, he cracked some jokes and gave worldly examples that were more irrelevant than pertinent. He handled questions to which he did not know the answers in three ways.

Sometimes, he said, "This issue is not of significance. There is no need for us to waste time on it. Read on." When what was asked was obviously important, he looked at the watch. If the class was scheduled to end in a few minutes, he said, "There is no time for this today. We shall see sometime later." Were there much time left, he nonchalantly stated, "This very point has been discussed and clarified in our text itself in a portion that we will be covering in future. So there is no need to consider it at this juncture."

He was fortunate that his six students had great faith in him and felt that they had no one but him to make them *Vedānta-pañḍitas*. Further, they felt fully satisfied with the semblance of knowledge they were receiving. The teacher was happy and so were the students but the latter did not know that they were great losers.

One day, a bearded young man clad in a silken ochre dhoti and shirt turned up at a town. When some people met him, he said that he had descended from the Himalayas after spending seven years there absorbed in meditation. He claimed that his *Guru* was an omniscient celestial who had suddenly materialized before him years ago. His *Guru* had vouchsafed to him a hitherto-unknown, simple and quick method for people to get peace, fulfilment of desires and finally, freedom from rebirth.

His *Guru* had then transformed him, by touching select spots on his body, into a knower of Truth and endowed him with special powers. “Remain here in meditation for seven years. Then travel to various places and teach the potent method that I have made known to you, to others,” the *Guru* had said before disappearing. The people were impressed with his account. A person asked him about his life prior to his encountering his *Guru*. He responded, “That is a closed chapter. Having taken a new spiritual birth, I should not and shall not say anything about it.”

He was given some rooms for his use in the mansion of an affluent man who had begun to think much of him. That evening, he gave a talk to a modest audience. Being a good orator, he comfortably held the attention of his listeners. In the course of his discourse, he said, “There is no need to renounce the world or even desires to attain peace and liberation. I am ready to teach those who approach me with full faith. The new method that I have received from my *Guru* is most efficacious and simple but not time-consuming.”

His disciples were basically required to generate a sound like the braying of an ass synchronized with the outgoing breath. After doing so for five minutes, they were to breathe in and breathe out as fast as possible, while mentally chanting a monosyllabic *mantra* received from him. He assured them that on chanting the *mantra* for some time, they would feel light-headed. They were to then stop the *mantra*, breathe normally and enjoy the unusual feeling till it vanished. The process was to be carried out in a dark room.

Prior to initiating a disciple into a *mantra*, he said, “Make a complete confession to me. By my power, I will free you from the consequences of your weaknesses and faults. Once I do so, it will be immaterial whether you change your ways or not.” After hearing

out the disciple, he placed his right hand on his disciple's chest and intoned, "I free you from sins," thrice. He then began a complex process of initiation in a dark room, in the course of which the disciple was required to sit motionless, with eyes closed.

After initiation, he presented every disciple with a framed photograph of himself. Then, by waving his hand in the air, he produced some *kuṅkuma* which he gave his disciple. He was very particular that no disciple of his should divulge the *mantra* or the meditation procedure to another. Any violation of secrecy would, he severely warned, render the process infructuous for the disciple. Further, the erring disciple would fall seriously ill within six months.

Every disciple experienced tingling sensations in the body during initiation; some had a variety of experiences that filled them with wonder and joy. During the meditation procedure, the disciples did get an uncommon feeling after chanting the *mantra* for a short time; some had visions and felt ecstatic. Each disciple noticed a white powder forming automatically for a day on the photograph he received from his *Guru*.

The *Guru* frequently went on long tours and soon acquired a large following and much fame. Many gave him large donations or costly articles, out of a sense of gratitude. What his disciples did not realize was that they were losing, not gaining, by coming into contact with him.

It was by sleight of hand that he brought *kuṅkuma* to the palm of his right hand. The gradual formation of ash on his photograph was simply the consequence of his having applied suitable chemicals on the glass part of the frame. Hyperventilation caused by the rapid breathing was responsible for the disciples experiencing an unusual feeling during meditation. During initiation, he used a device to administer very mild electric shocks and also gently manipulated a disciple's body hairs to produce tingling sensations that seemed to spread. The disciple who sat full of faith with his eyes closed and that too in a dark, quiet room did not suspect or identify foul play.

The *Guru* knew the power of belief, expectations, auto-suggestions and hypnotic suggestions and exploited them to the hilt. Thus, the special experiences had by some disciples during initiation were the consequences of their *Guru* having successfully hypnotized them; they were highly susceptible to hypnosis and the *Guru* put them into a trance by appropriate, repeated suggestions given in a flat tone. The unusual experiences had by some during meditation was a consequence of factors such as their belief in what he had told them might happen and their high expectations.

The *Guru* had no scruples about taking advantage of the confessions made to him by his disciples and about sexually exploiting females during initiation if he found them to be gullible. He knew that they would heed his warning never to divulge the details of the initiation and of his imparting ‘special *śakti*’ to them by physical contact with them.

People stand to lose greatly by being the disciples of fraudulent *Gurus* such as this man and by studying under teachers like the ignorant *Vedānta* teacher. Unfortunately, persons who expound *Vedānta* without a deep knowledge of it and unenlightened or downright bogus *Gurus* are commonplace nowadays. It

is said, “Many are the preceptors who take possession of the wealth of their disciples but rare is he who takes away the sorrow of his disciples.” The *śāstras* say, “One should give up even a *Guru* who is tainted, who does not take cognizance of right and wrong and treads the wrong path.”

Bhagavatpāda has described a true *Sadguru* as, “He who has realized the Truth and is ever intent on the welfare of his disciple.” It is to such a *Guru* that one should resort.



To avoid the risk of being misled by a charlatan, it is advisable to go only to a *Guru* who belongs to a line of great preceptors, is conversant with the scriptures, teaches in accordance with the scriptures, does not propagate a self-discovered path, is a master of his mind and senses, is dispassionate, whose conduct is spotless, who is clearly interested in the welfare of the disciple and who does not expect anything in return from the disciple.

## 44. The Hypocrisy of Pseudo-Advaitins

A *saṁnyāsīn* was not observing any regulations with regard to food and spiritual practices. A householder approached him and asked, “You do not seem to be observing any regulations whatsoever. You eat as you wish, spend your time loitering and do acts that are unbecoming of a *saṁnyāsīn*. Is it proper for you to be like this?” The *saṁnyāsīn* replied, “Everything is *Brahman*. The body and mind perform actions whereas I am the pure, conscious *Ātman* which is unstained. As such, it matters little to me what the body and mind do. Indeed, everything is *Brahman*.”

The householder queried, “Will you come to my house for *bhikṣā*?” “Yes,” replied the *saṁnyāsīn*, “I have no objections. To me, who revels in the *Ātman*, nothing matters. I shall come.” That afternoon, the *saṁnyāsīn* went to the householder’s place and sat down to have a meal. However, his host did not offer him even a drop of water. As minutes passed, he became restless. His host deliberately ignored his uneasiness. Finally, unable to withstand the delay any longer, he shouted, “What do you mean by keeping me waiting? I am quite hungry. Serve me fast.”

The householder came up to him and said, “I fail to realize how hunger and thirst could arise in you who are totally immersed in the bliss of the *Ātman*. You are all-pervasive, for such is the nature of the *Ātman*. I am unable to offer you water, for, being omnipresent, you already pervade it from within and without.” The *saṁnyāsīn* got up saying, “Do not speak like that. I am unable to bear my hunger.” He then left in search of food.

This *saṁnyāsīn* lacked self-control and dispassion. Hence, he did not adhere to the rules meant for unenlightened mendicants. He misused *Advaita* philosophy merely to explain away his misconduct. His unrestrained behaviour fetched him much sin; his *Advaitic* declarations offered him no protection from demerits.

During an eclipse, a *paṇḍita* went to the sea for a bath. He had a copper vessel with him. He thought, “If I leave this vessel on the shore while I bathe, someone may steal it. On the other hand, if I take it with me, it may slip from my hand and get lost in the waters. What should I do?” He dug a hole in the beach, put the vessel in it and topped the vessel with sand. To be able to locate the spot, he made a sand *liṅga* there. Heaving a sigh of relief, he proceeded for his bath.

Some persons saw the *liṅga* on the shore and the pundit bathing in the sea. They assumed that everyone should make a *liṅga* before taking a sea-bath. Sometime later,

the pundit went to the place where he had hidden his vessel. What did he see there? Not one or two but numerous *liṅgas* made of sand. “My God!” wailed the pundit, “What happened? How did all these *liṅgas* crop up? How am I to find out the *liṅga* that I had made?” He searched for his vessel under some *liṅgas* but failed to find it. Finally, he returned home without it.

The above story gives a glimpse of the fact that many have the tendency to follow others without a second thought. Blindly following others is inadvisable. Further, the tendency of people to follow those whom they revere makes it imperative for teachers and religious personalities to set good standards.

A person was expounding *Advaita* philosophy to a group of students and, in the course of his discourse, pointed out that the world is unreal. Suddenly, a wild elephant chanced to come charging that way. The disciples ran helter-skelter; the teacher was no exception. Unfortunately, the teacher slipped and fell into a pit. After the elephant went away, the students discovered their teacher in the pit, shouting for help. They approached him and asked, “Sir, you were just telling us that the world is unreal. Why then did you run, gripped by fear, when the elephant charged? Further, why are you now shouting for help?” The helpless teacher thought for a moment, and said, “Please help me to come out and I shall explain.” Accordingly, he was pulled out.

He resumed his seat at the place where he was teaching and, without batting an eyelid, declared, “I stand by what I had said. The world is unreal. The elephant that charged was unreal. You noticed that I had fallen into a pit and was screaming for help. All that was unreal. Finally, your helping me out too was unreal.” The explanation shows that the so-called teacher was shrewd but it does not alter the fact that he was being hypocritical.

One should be true to one’s conscience. One may deceive others by high-sounding talk on *Advaita* but it will not be of any use if one does not mend one’s ways. It is said, “He who is attached to worldly comforts but still says that everything is *Brahman* is actually one who has fallen from Karma and also from *Brahman*. Such a person must be discarded like a lowly one.” Because such a man fails to realize the Truth and procure liberation, it is said that he has fallen from *Brahman*. Because of his putting up a show that he is realized, such a man does not perform the ordained duties sincerely. Hence, there is the declaration of his having fallen from *karma*.

## 45. Search Without Dismantlement

A person had a harmonium. When he played it, melodious music flowed out of it. Hearing the enchanting tunes, another man thought, “How does such sweet music come out of this? Probably, these sounds are present inside this instrument.” Getting very curious, he dismantled the harmonium and searched for the sounds in every nook and corner. However much he toyed with the internal parts, he could not get the original music out of them. “Ah, what a wonder! This instrument produces music out of nowhere,” he concluded.

While there are certain occasions when one should dismantle and analyse, there are numerous other situations where this technique will not be of any help. Analysis of the *Ātman* falls under the latter category. The *Ātman* has to be discerned without actually taking apart the body which It enlivens.

## 46. Superficial Knowledge

A certain philanthropist offered a sum of rupees fifty thousand to anyone who knew well all the four *Vedas*. After a couple of days, a young man approached him and asked for the award. “Are you familiar with the four *Vedas*?” queried the philanthropist. The seeker of the prize answered, “I am aware of the fact that there are four *Vedas*.” The donor was stunned by the reply and asked, “Is that all?” The young man said, “Sir, I know that the *Vedas* are four in number. Is that not sufficient?” Well, what was the philanthropist to do? He just sent away the young man.

Just as the man’s superficial knowledge was inadequate to fetch him the prize, superficial or indirect knowledge of the Truth cannot bring about emancipation. Direct realization of the non-dual Supreme is what annihilates ignorance and results in liberation from transmigratory existence.

## 47. Overlooking What is Immediate

Once, ten fools forded a river. After reaching the opposite bank, they wished to ascertain whether all of them had crossed. One of them started to count. He listed all except himself and so concluded that one of them had drowned. This caused him much grief. Another fool made the same error and confirmed that one person was missing. Consequently, all of them began to weep.

A well-wisher happened to pass that way and sought to know what their problem was. One of the fools said, "Ten of us set out to cross the river but now we are only nine." The well-wisher was amused. He told the leader, "Please count and let me know how many of you are here." As the others had done before him, he arrived at the answer, "Nine." The well-wisher announced, "No. The tenth man is not dead."



The fools experienced some relief. Quickly pointing at the man who had counted, he continued, "You are the tenth man." The significance of the well-wisher's words dawned on the fools. Exultation replaced their grief.

Each fool forgot to count himself; we have forgotten our true nature of being the non-dual Supreme. Playing a role like that of the well-wisher of the story, the *Sadguru* tells his disciple, "You are not the limited, miserable person you imagine yourself to be. You are the Supreme that is of the nature of existence, consciousness and bliss."

A very pure-minded disciple promptly becomes enlightened. A disciple of a lower calibre has to serve his *Guru* for long and sincerely practise spiritual disciplines to rid himself of defects such as uncertainty and misapprehension. Thereafter, he obtains direct realization of the Truth.



## 48. Upaniṣads are a Flawless Means of Knowledge

A man named Bharcchu was the favourite of a king. This was resented by the other courtiers who were highly jealous of him. So they drew up a plan and arranged for him to be kidnapped. With his hands tied and eyes covered, Bharcchu was taken far away from the kingdom and abandoned deep inside a forest. He began to shout for help.

Fortunately for him, a forester heard his cry. Coming up to him, he removed the bandage from his eyes and untied his hands. He then pointed out the direction in which Bharcchu ought to proceed to reach his kingdom. Bharcchu moved on for some time in the prescribed direction and encountered another woodman. He took further instructions from him. Thus, seeking directions from different people in the course of his journey, he reached the boundary of his kingdom. However, because of the precautions they had taken, the courtiers who had arranged to have him kidnapped got wind of his arrival. They threatened him and precluded his entry into the kingdom. Much earlier, they had informed the king that Bharcchu had died and gradually convinced him to the extent that the king had no doubt whatsoever in this regard.



One day, the king went out from the capital towards the forest. By chance, he happened to see Bharcchu. The king ought to have been overjoyed to meet Bharcchu. However, what he experienced was not happiness but fright. The reason was that he was quite convinced that the entity before him was Bharcchu's ghost, for Bharcchu,

the man, was dead. He immediately turned and quickly rode away, leaving Bharcchu quite perplexed and sad.

The king's organ of sight was faultless and presented him a clear image of Bharcchu. However, because of the defect of miscomprehension, he did not arrive at the right conclusion.

The *Upaniṣads*, too, are flawless like the eyes of the king in the story. They produce correct knowledge. However, in spite of this, many people who study the *Upaniṣad*-s do not immediately get enlightened. The reason is the defect that lies in their minds. They are beset with faults such as extreme attachment to sense objects, doubts about what has been taught, as also miscomprehension. Due to flaws such as these, an individual fails to get correct knowledge though the means of knowledge, the *Upaniṣads*, are flawless.

## 49. Unreal Can Point to the Real

A person went to sleep. He soon had a dream in which he beheld himself being chased by a ferocious tiger. Since the tiger was by far swifter than him, the distance between them shrank rapidly. He was overcome with fear. So terrified was he that he abruptly woke up, his forehead wet with perspiration. The tiger seen by him in the dream was undoubtedly unreal. However, it was instrumental in bringing about a real effect, awakening.

Some object, "According to the *Advaitins*, the world is illusory and *Brahman* alone is real. If so, the teachings of the *Vedas*, which are included in the cosmos, should be unreal. Hence, they cannot produce true knowledge. Consequently, *Advaita* philosophy, which is based on the *Vedas*, should be worthless." This objection is invalid.

*Advaitins* speak of the unreality of the world only from the standpoint of the Absolute. From an empirical standpoint, the world and the *Vedas* do exist. Another reply of the *Advaitins* is that an unreal object can, as in the example considered earlier, lead to the real. Hence, though being illusory, the *Vedas* can bring about enlightenment and, thereby, establishment in the Supreme.

## 50. Recognition of Identity

A prince was kidnapped when he was a child. He was taken to a forest and left there to die. Fortunately for him, some foresters took care of him. Brought up by them, he began to live, work and behave as a woodman. Years passed. In the capital, the king passed away. So the search for the prince was intensified. Certain persons who had known him as a child chanced to see him in the forest and even managed to recognize him. They informed him of his royal birth. Then they told him that as his father was dead, it behoved him to accept the throne. At first, he did not believe them. Gradually, he became convinced that they had spoken the truth to him. He returned to the capital and soon began to conduct himself in a manner befitting a king.

We are, in reality, the Supreme that is bereft of all bondage. On account of ignorance, we presume that we are subject to birth and death and that we are given to suffering. When, through the words of the *Guru*, we realize our true nature, we snap our imaginary shackles and remain as the blissful Supreme. No actual transformation takes place. False beliefs are discarded, as in the case of the prince.

## 51. Mind, the Cause of Bondage and Liberation

A three-year-old boy asked for an apple. As there was no apple at home, his mother offered him other fruits instead. He refused them and insisted that he be given only an apple. His mother told him that she would procure one for him in the evening. He, however, began to cry and continued wailing till his indulgent mother took him to a shop and allowed him to pick an apple of his choice. It was when his desire was gratified that he smiled joyfully.

His seven-year-old sister, who had witnessed all this, desired to have some fun at his expense. She informed him with assumed gravity, "Without realizing it, you ate a seed. I saw you do so. Do you know what will happen? An apple tree will start growing in

your stomach. It will cause you great pain and, emerging from your nose and mouth, make you look funny.” He swallowed her tale hook, line and sinker and turned pale with fright. Seeing him petrified, his mother ascertained the cause and did her best to pacify him. She emphasized more than once that his sister had been pulling his leg. But her explanation fell on deaf ears. He continued to remain terror-stricken and did not take even a drop of water for hours. His mother started to worry about him. So the moment her husband returned from work, she informed him about what had happened.

He held his son in his arms and said in a gentle reassuring voice, “Normally, no tree grows inside the stomach when an apple seed is swallowed. Even when it does, it is small. In fact, it is so tiny that it does not cause any pain and cannot be seen by others. So, even if a tree develops within you, you will neither suffer nor become the butt of ridicule. You like apples. Once there is a tree within you, you will have a constant supply of apples. You can put your fingers inside your mouth and pluck out a small fruit which you can then chew and swallow. It would be wonderful to be able to get delicious apples any time you desire them. Is it not?”

The boy nodded, with the traces of a smile forming on his face. “Do you want the tree to grow or not?” queried the father. “Definitely I do,” responded the boy. “The seed may not sprout. But if it does, to help it develop into a tree, you will have to eat food and drink water. If you starve yourself, the tree will die,” declared the father. Promptly, the boy ran to his mother and asked for his meal and a glass of water. His terror was completely replaced by joy and enthusiasm.

The boy was initially unhappy because of his unfulfilled desire for an apple. Thereafter, he was overcome with trepidation owing to his foolishly-imagined future danger to the body he was intensely fond of. His mind was thus the cause of his unhappiness before and after he obtained an apple.

Bharata, the eldest son of R̥ṣabha, was anointed king by his father who then renounced every possession. Bharata and his wife Pancajanī had five sons. Erudite and steadfast in the observance of *dharma*, he ruled justly and looked upon his subjects with affection. They, for their part, adhered to their duties and held him in high esteem. Bharata performed numerous sacrifices, such as the *Darśapūrṇamāsa*, and worshipped Viṣṇu with deep devotion. Having ruled well for long, he handed over his kingdom and possessions to his sons and retired to holy Śaligrāma on the bank of the river Gaṇḍakī. There, he lived as a recluse. He bathed thrice a day, unfailingly performed his *sandhyā-vandana* and spent much time in *pūjā* and meditation on the Lord.

One day, after he had bathed in the river and completed his *sandhyā-vandana*, he beheld a pregnant doe approach the river to quench its thirst. As it was drinking avidly, it heard the roar of a lion. Stricken with fright, it leapt across the stream. As it did so, the foetus in its womb emerged and fell into the water. Owing to exhaustion and because of having prematurely delivered a young one, the mother died. Moved by compassion, Bharata rescued the orphaned and helpless fawn. He assumed the responsibility of rearing it.

He took great care of it and grew increasingly fond of it. Consequently, he was smitten with anxiety whenever it went to roam in the forest and took time to return; he feared it might have been attacked by a carnivore. Even when it was in the hermitage, he interrupted his religious observances to confirm that it was safe and sound. Time passed. Finally, he lay dying. The thought about what would happen to the deer pervaded his mind. Focussed on the deer rather than on God, whom he had nearly attained prior to rescuing the animal, he breathed his last.

As a consequence of his intense attachment, he was reborn as a deer. Fortunately for him, the memory of his past birth did not desert him. He wended his way back to Śaligrāma and lived there, patiently waiting for his life as a deer to terminate. After death, he was reborn as the sole son of the second spouse of a pious Brahmin. Retaining as he did the recollection of his past lives, Bharata was terribly afraid of getting attached to the world. Eschewing attachment in its entirety, he focused his attention on the Lord and realized the Truth. He conducted himself like a dull-witted person. His father invested him with the sacred thread and taught him. However, Bharata's mind was disinclined towards even scriptural activity. So his father's efforts to educate him were unsuccessful. With the passage of time, Bharata's parents died.

Holding him to be a dunce, his step-brothers gave up all ideas of instructing him. They were unaware that he was a *jīvanmukta*, constantly reposing in the Supreme. Bharata wore no more than a rag around his loins and slept on the bare ground. His brothers employed him in their fields. He raised no objections but worked disinterestedly. Whatever his brothers gave him to eat, he consumed regardless of whether it was well-cooked or ill-cooked.

One day, a bandit chieftain desirous of a son made arrangements to offer a human sacrifice to Goddess Kālī. His servants had searched in vain for long for a victim when they espied Bharata, who was stout and flawless in every limb. They bound him with a rope, unopposed by him, and took him to the place of sacrifice. There, they bathed and decorated him. When he was about to be killed, the Goddess intervened to save the life of the saint and brought about the death of those wanting to shed his blood.

One day, the ruler of Sindhu-Sauvīra territory set out on a palanquin to meet Sage Kapila. The captain of his palanquin-bearers, who was on the lookout for recruits, spotted Bharata. He drafted the sage to bear the king's palanquin.

Bharata did not utter a murmur of protest. But he walked with his eyes riveted to the ground and his pace did not match that of the others. So the palanquin jolted. The king instructed his palanquin-bearers to walk at a uniform pace. The palanquin continued to jerk. Finding that his instructions were not having the desired effect, the ruler identified Bharata as the one responsible and reprimanded him. Sarcastically, he told Bharata, "Oh, you have carried the palanquin a long way all by yourself; you are not well-built and age has made you feeble."

Taking pity on the king, Bharata taught him the Truth. He said, "Stoutness pertains to the body, not to me. Your body is a modification of *pṛthvī* (earth). It is borne by the palanquin which again is a modification of *pṛthvī*. The body of the bearer too is made of *pṛthvī*. The palanquin rests on the shoulder which is held up by the trunk; the trunk transfers weight to the feet; the feet rest on the ground. Where then is the question of my supporting any load? Notions such as distance to be traversed or a destination to be reached are not based on reality. Consciousness alone is real. All else is a mere appearance." The king realized the greatness of Bharata and profited greatly from the sage's didactical, poignant discourse. Bharata lived his life without giving least room to attachment and, on death, attained disembodied liberation. Bharata's mind was the cause of his rebirths and also of his getting the knowledge of Truth and, hence, liberation.

The *Maitrāyaṇī-upaniṣad* declares, "The mind is of two kinds, pure and impure. It is impure when with desire; it is pure when devoid of desire... The mind indeed is responsible for the bondage and liberation of humans. When attached to objects, it brings about bondage. When devoid of the thoughts of objects, it leads to liberation... Just as fire subsides into its basis on the exhaustion of fuel, the mind subsides in its source, the *Ātman*, on the cessation of thoughts... The mind must be restrained in the heart, on the *Ātman*, till it is destroyed... The bliss that accrues for the mind that has been cleansed of dirt by *samādhi* and which is fixed on the *Ātman* cannot be described in words."

## 52. Renunciation of Everything

In the *Dvāpara-yuga*, there lived a king named Śikhidhvaja who ruled over Mālava. He was learned and endowed with good qualities such as generosity, kindness and bravery. His queen was Cūḍālā, the daughter of the king of Saurāṣṭra. She was thoroughly chaste and an ideal mate for her husband. They loved each other dearly and their mutual affection waxed with the passage of time. They lived together in great joy.

Years rolled on. Their youth passed and they became old. In due course, they realized that all worldly objects and joys are transient and that there is no worldly object on acquiring which the mind gets permanent relief from sorrow. Cogitating deeply, they concluded that knowledge of the *Ātman* alone can confer complete freedom from the virulent disease of transmigratory existence. So, with all their being, they strived to acquire such knowledge.

Cūḍālā listened to the import of the scriptures from wise people and then reflected on what she had heard. She thought, “Who am I? The body is inert. I, who am conscious, cannot be the body. The senses that are associated with the body are inert like it, impelled as they are by the mind, just as a stone is moved by a stick that strikes it. So I am not the senses. Nor am I the mind, which too is basically devoid of consciousness; it is, after all, moved by the intellect just as any inert object is. The intellect, activated by egoism, is certainly inert and I cannot be the intellect.”

Thinking deeply in this fashion, she came to the conclusion that she was non-dual consciousness, the Supreme *Brahman*. Focussing on the Truth, her intrinsic nature, she acquired enlightenment. She became dispassionate and untroubled by the pairs of opposites such as pleasure and pain and heat and cold.

Śikhidhvaja noted that Cūḍālā looked glorious. He asked her, “How is it that you look as if you have regained your youth?” She replied, “I have abandoned the cosmos that is neither real nor totally non-existent. I am contented without worldly enjoyments and neither rejoice nor feel irritated. I revel in my Self that is absolute and infinite. Hence, I am radiant.”

The king, however, did not comprehend the significance of her words. Hence, he derisively told her, “You prattle like a child. You are in the midst of royal pleasures. Where is the question of your having abandoned anything? You are confused. O beautiful one,

you are sporting with words. Enjoy yourself.” He laughed and left for his afternoon bath.

Cūḍālā felt sorry for Śikhidhvaja but recognized that he would not heed advice from her about self-realization. Though she had transcended desires and was constantly contented, one day, she casually decided to acquire supernatural powers. Observing the requisite restrictions, she practised *prāṇāyāma* and meditation. She awakened her *kuṇḍalinī*. Finally, she acquired all the eight renowned *yoga-siddhis*, such as the power to become minute or large. Spiritual practitioners should not be enamoured with *siddhis*



and should view them as distractions and obstacles in their *yogic* path. However, as Cūḍālā was already enlightened, she had nothing to gain or lose by them and their acquisition did not in the least cause her to deviate from her establishment in the Supreme.

Though she tried hard to awaken her husband from his slumber of ignorance, he did not concern himself with her words, taking her to be just his very loving but unenlightened wife. He performed much charity, undertook pilgrimages and also practised austerity marked by severe dietary restrictions and fasting. Nevertheless, he continued to remain ignorant of the Truth and troubled by afflictions. He began to strongly feel that his enjoyments, power and duties were impediments in his quest. So he decided to renounce them.

He told Cūḍālā in private, “I have ruled this kingdom for long and experienced various enjoyments. Now, prompted by dispassion, I propose to proceed to the forest. Joys, sorrows, prosperity and adversity do not torment a man who has renounced and lives in a forest. Dwelling there, I shall be happy and free from all concerns. You should not thwart my noble course of action and, instead, ought to attend to the kingdom.” Cūḍālā conveyed to him that giving up the kingdom at that time was inadvisable. But he remained firm in his resolve. At night, when Cūḍālā was asleep, he moved out of her presence. He told his attendants that he was going alone on a patrol.



He proceeded to a distant forest and built a hut of leaves. He dwelt there performing *japa* and worship. Cūḍālā located him with her Yogic powers but, deciding that the time was not ripe for her to help him, left him alone and attended to the kingdom. Time passed. Desirous of uplifting him and knowing that he would not take her advice seriously, she transformed herself at the appropriate time into a young Brahmin boy, radiant with Tapas and approached him in this form. Śikhidhvaja rose and duly venerated her. She told him that her name was Kumbha and that she was the son of the celestial Sage Nārada. He felt greatly impressed with her.

She told him that to attain realization, he should renounce everything. Śikhidhvaja responded that he had renounced his kingdom, his palace, wealth and even his dear wife. He then asked, “Does this not constitute total renunciation?” Cūḍālā as Kumbha, responded, “Though you have renounced your kingdom and the like, that does not constitute total renunciation. You still have attachment.” At this, the king said, “I, at present, am fond just of this forest. Therefore, I shall now give up attachment to it.” He succeeded in what he proposed to do. Then he remarked, “I have completely renounced.” Cūḍālā continued to object and said, “Even by abandoning your fondness for trees, streams and mountains, you have not accomplished renunciation of everything.” The king then gave up his utensils and the hut in which he was dwelling. Again Cūḍālā was dissatisfied. So Śikhidhvaja discarded his deer skin, *rudrākṣa* beads, bowls, etc., and stood naked.

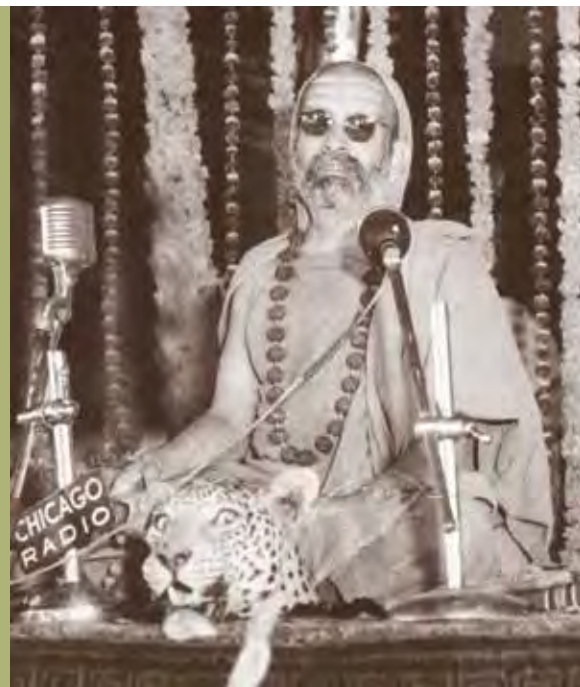
Once more, Cūḍālā objected that he had not renounced everything. The king thought that as he had only his body left, to achieve complete renunciation, he ought to discard it. He readied himself to commit suicide but was stopped by his wife. She told him, “Even if you give up this body, you would not have achieved complete renunciation. On the other hand, if you give up that which is the activator of this body and which is the seed of all births and activities, only then you would have renounced everything.” The king asked for clarification. Cūḍālā explained that it was the renunciation of the mind that was most important. It was the mind that manifested as everything. The mind comprised *vāsanās* or tendencies and the seed of the tree of the mind was egoism. “Investigation into the nature of one’s own *Ātman* is indeed what annihilates the seed of the mind,” emphasized Cūḍālā.

Guided by her, the king succeeded in implementing her advice and became enlightened. She left him and came back to him after a while. She tested him severely but he remained firmly rooted in the non-dual reality. Having accomplished her purpose as Kumbha, she revealed her identity to him and successfully persuaded him to return

to the kingdom. He then began to rule but without any attachment and without being affected in the least by adversity and prosperity. He and his wife remained totally rooted in the Supreme.

### 53. Illusoriness of the World

Vidyānidhi was a *brahmacharin* who studied *Vedānta* under an aged *mahātman*. His *Guru* and he were the only occupants of the *Guru's* small cottage situated at a secluded, scenic spot on a hill, close to a stream. One night, Vidyānidhi lay down as usual just outside the entrance of his *Guru's* room. His *Guru* had retired for the night a little earlier. In a few minutes, Vidyānidhi fell asleep. Shortly thereafter, he was awakened by the sound of his *Guru* moaning softly. He opened the door and entered to see if his *Guru* was in need of anything. He found his preceptor clutching his abdomen and obviously in great pain.



Vidyānidhi: O Lord, may I fetch the *vaidya* from the village?

*Guru*: No. Why trouble him by making him travel five kilometres at night? In any case, pain is only for the body-mind complex. I am the unchanging and unaffected witness.

Vidyānidhi: I know that you are unmoved by pleasure and pain, but I am unable to bear your suffering. I beseech you to at least let me fetch some medicines for you.

The *Guru* could see that Vidyānidhi was highly worried and on the verge of tears. So he specified an *Āyurvedic* preparation and permitted Vidyānidhi to meet the *vaidya* and fetch it. Immediately, Vidyānidhi set out. The moon was clearly visible and the village

could be reached by just walking along the side of the stream. Hence, Vidyānidhi did not take any source of light with him. He walked briskly.

After he had journeyed for half an hour, he felt a sharp pain in his right foot. He found that a cluster of thorns had penetrated his sole. He sat down and carefully pulled them out. The pain started to decrease. However, owing to the continuing discomfort, he remained seated for a few minutes. He then got up thinking, “My master is unwell. It is wrong on my part to delay procuring the medicine for him. In any case, the moon will set in three hours and I must be back before that to avoid having to travel in the dark. How I wish I could fly like a bird. I would then be able to reach the village and return in minutes.”

He arrived at the physician’s house in the village in half an hour. In response to his knock, the physician’s teenaged son opened the door. Vidyānidhi told him that he had come to fetch a particular medicine for his *Guru*. The boy and his father were devotees of the *Guru*. So the boy immediately woke his father up. Vidyānidhi described his *Guru*’s condition and named the medicine he had come to fetch. The *vaidya* said, “I do not have any of it left. But I shall prepare it now. Wait for about half an hour.” The physician then started his work. Vidyānidhi sat down. As he felt sleepy, he closed his eyes.



He found himself back on the path. As he walked, he felt himself rising from the ground. In moments, he was coursing through the air. As he effortlessly descended to reach the ground near the cottage, he realized how different the hermitage looked when viewed from above. He went to his *Guru*. At that moment, he felt a tap on his shoulder. Abruptly, he found himself seated at the *vaidya*’s house. The *vaidya*’s son told him, “You had fallen asleep. Father told me not to wake you up until he had finished preparing the medicine. It is ready now.”

Vidyānidhi collected the medicine, thanked the *vaidya* and his son and left. From the position of the moon, he inferred that he must have spent an hour

at the village. He increased his pace. As he moved on, he mused, "My dream at the *vaidya's* place was clearly based on my waking-state experience of the recent past. I had wistfully thought of being able to fly back to my *Guru* with the *Ayurvedic* preparation and fly is what I did in my dream." He returned to the hermitage a little before the moonset. When he approached his *Guru*, he found that his master was still in great pain. He administered the medicine. In a few minutes, his *Guru* told him, "The pain is almost gone. You have put up with much inconvenience for my sake. Now go and lie down." Vidyānidhi returned to his mat and quickly fell asleep.



He woke up well before dawn as was his wont. He peeped into his *Guru's* room and found his master peacefully asleep. In a short while, the *Guru* came out. Vidyānidhi respectfully asked him, "O Lord, please may I know how your health is today?" "It is good," replied the *Guru* with a smile and moved on.

That afternoon, the *vaidya* came to pay his respects to the *Guru*. On seeing him, Vidyānidhi said, "The medicine acted quickly on our *Guru*." "What medicine are you talking about?" asked the *vaidya*, looking perplexed. "I am referring to the medicine you prepared and gave me last night when I came to your place," explained Vidyānidhi, wondering how the *vaidya* could have forgotten. "It is impossible for you to have met me last night. I have not been in my village for the past one week. I returned only a couple of hours ago," stated the *vaidya*. "Are you unwell?" he continued. Vidyānidhi remained silent, feeling thoroughly confused.

At the earliest opportunity, he asked his *Guru*, "O Master, as you know, with your permission, I went last night to fetch a medicine from the *vaidya* to relieve you of your abdominal pain. The *vaidya*, however, now says that he was not at his house last night." "My child, I had no abdominal pain and did not ask you to meet the *vaidya*," said the *Guru*. "Tell me in detail what you think happened." Vidyānidhi obeyed and described everything. The *Guru* burst out laughing.

He then explained, “My child, yesterday I was teaching you the *Vedāntic* position suitable to advanced spiritual aspirants that the world of the waking state is on par with the world of dreams. You had several doubts and I told you that I would provide you clarifications today. By God’s grace, you have had a dream that makes my task easy.

“You went to sleep. Now, you think that you woke up on hearing me moan in pain. But that was just the starting point of your dream. Your dream ended with your returning to your bed. Such were the unusual commencement and termination of your dream that, even after waking up, you have been unable to differentiate your dream from your waking state. As you can see, you have had a first-hand experience that the world of the waking state is akin to the world of a dream.

“In your dream, you did not feel pain before coming into contact with the thorns but felt it when the thorns penetrated the sole of your right foot. You grasped and pulled out the thorns. Thereafter, the pain gradually subsided. Similar is the experience you have when awake. Why then should you not regard the thorns of the waking state to be false like those of the dream state?

“In your dream, a moon in the sky provided you the light for your journey. Further, in the course of your forward and return trips, you saw that moon in different positions. You even estimated the passage of time on the basis of the moon’s movement. You found yourself advancing along the stream when you walked but not when you sat down. You can encounter all this in an identical fashion in the waking state. Why then should you not regard the moon, passage of time, space and the effect of movement in the waking state to be on par with those in a dream?

“You believe that dreams are based on real experiences of the waking state and that when you wake up from a dream, you revert from a false world to a real one. Now, in the course of your dream last night, you had a second dream that apparently had for its basis your experiences of the main dream. Further, when you woke up from the second dream, you regressed to the main dream. Is not the relationship between your waking state and your main dream on par with the relationship between your main dream and the second dream? Why then should you not regard your waking state to be false like the main dream?

“In the course of your dream last night, the *vaidya* and his son apparently saw you sleeping in their house when you had your second dream. They could have certified that you had not flown back to your cottage as experienced by you in your second

dream. Why then, should you not regard the people of the waking state who can observe you when you sleep and dream to be on par with the *vaidya* and his son of the main dream?”

Finally, the *Guru* asked Vidyānidhi, “Have the doubts that you expressed yesterday evening at the end of the *Vedānta* class now got resolved?” “My doubts have vanished. I am now in a position to accept that the world of the waking state is as unreal as the world seen in dream,” responded Vidyānidhi.

The *Guru* said, “My child, it is only when you realize the non-dual Truth that you will have the unshakeable experience that the states of waking, dream and deep sleep are illusory and that their substratum, pure consciousness, alone is real. Your present understanding is only a step in this direction. Unless a person is free from desires, he cannot cognize the waking state to be on par with the dream state. Strive on in the spiritual path. By God’s grace, success shall be yours.”



In His *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad-bhāṣya*, Bhagavatpāda has explained, “The *Veda* deems the experience of the waking state to be but a dream,” and, “In dreams, worlds that do not exist are falsely superimposed as being a part of the *Ātman*. One must understand the worlds in the waking state too to be like that... Since, in the waking as also the dream state, the gross and subtle worlds, comprising actions, their factors and their results, are merely objects apprehended by the perceiver, therefore, that perceiver, the *Ātman* characterized by consciousness, is distinct from its objects, the worlds seen in those states, and is spotless.”

## 54. Vision of Unity

Sage Ribhu was a mind-born son of Brahmā, the Creator. By his very nature, he was firmly rooted in the non-dual Supreme and was a repository of scriptural knowledge. He had a disciple named Nidāgha. Taught by Ribhu, Nidāgha mastered the *śāstras*. He, however, did not attain steady repose in the non-dual Truth. At the end of his studies, he took leave of his *Guru* and settled down at Vīranagara, on the banks of the river Devika, as a householder. He led a pious, charitable life, firmly observing *grhastha-dharma*. Years passed.

Ribhu was sure that Nidāgha, whom he had not met for long, continued to be unenlightened. The sage felt great compassion for his learned, dear disciple and made up his mind to personally go to Vīranagara to uplift Nidāgha. Nidāgha had completed his rituals and was standing at the door of his house, eagerly hoping that some guest would arrive whom he could honour and feed, when he espied Ribhu. As the sage had disguised his identity, Nidāgha did not recognize him. However, he respectfully invited Ribhu to his house and washed his guest's feet.

Having duly honoured Ribhu, Nidāgha requested him to have food. Ribhu agreed but asked, "Tell me first, what items of food you will serve me?" Nidāgha gave him an impressive list. However, Ribhu responded that he did not find the items appropriate for his consumption. He then specified what he wished to be given; his list primarily comprised sweet items such as *pāyasa* and *halwa*. Nidāgha instructed his wife to prepare the dishes concerned with the best of ingredients available. Soon, Ribhu was served a meal consisting of all that he had asked for.

After Ribhu had finished eating, Nidāgha asked him with great humility, "O holy one, has the meal sated you? Are you feeling at ease?" He also respectfully expressed his desire to know where his guest dwelled, where he was coming from and where he was headed.

Ribhu said, "He who experiences hunger attains satisfaction after a meal. Never have I been hungry. So how can there be satiation for me? When the fire of digestion consumes the food ingested, hunger crops up. Likewise, when the water available in the body gets depleted, thirst arises. Hunger and thirst are thus bodily attributes. They do not pertain to me, who is not the body. Peacefulness and satisfaction belong to the mind and not to me, who is not the mind. Thus, your questions about satiety and tranquillity are inapplicable to me.

“I am the *Ātman* that is omnipresent, being all-pervasive like space. So there is no question of my dwelling at a specific place, coming from somewhere, or proceeding towards some destination. By virtue of differences in bodies, you, I and others appear disparate, but are really not so. You and I are not the limited, distinct beings we seem to be; we are only the non-dual *Ātman*.



“What is considered delicious becomes inedible with the passage of time and causes displeasure. What is tasteless can change into something tasty. Thus, no object is intrinsically delicious or unpalatable. There is no eatable that continues to be delicious in the past, present and the future. Further, the various items of food such as rice, wheat, jaggery, milk and fruits are all only modifications of *Pṛthvī*.

“Thinking in the manner mentioned by me, you should make your mind same-sighted. Being ever same-sighted is the means to get the knowledge of the non-dual Truth and become liberated from the cycle of transmigratory existence.”

Hearing Ribhu’s words of wisdom, Nidāgha said, ‘O Lord, be propitious to me. You have come for doing good to me. Kindly tell me who you are.’ Ribhu said, “I am Ribhu, your *Guru*. I came here to teach you the Truth. Know that all that is there in the universe is intrinsically the Supreme. In reality, there is no diversity whatsoever; there is just the non-dual *Ātman*.” Nidāgha prostrated before Ribhu and worshipped his *Guru*. Having blessed his disciple, the sage departed.

Years later, motivated by his overflowing mercy, Ribhu came once again to Vīranagara to grace his disciple; he knew that Nidāgha had still not attained steady abidance in the Supreme. Ribhu observed that the king of the region was entering the town with great pomp. Nidāgha was standing aloof, holding *darbha* grass and sacrificial faggots obtained from the forest in his hands. The sage approached Nidāgha in the guise of



an ignorant person and prostrated. Ribhu then asked, “O holy one, why are you standing here alone?”

Nidāgha: The king is entering. The streets being crowded, I am waiting here.

Ribhu: You appear to be well-informed about the happenings here. Kindly tell me who among the people seen here is the king and who are the rest?

Nidāgha: The one riding the huge elephant is the monarch. The rest are his attendants and followers.

Ribhu: You simultaneously indicated the king and the elephant. Please explain clearly which among the two is the elephant and which one is the king.

Nidāgha: The elephant is below and the king is the one above. Who indeed is not familiar with the relation of the rider and the mount?

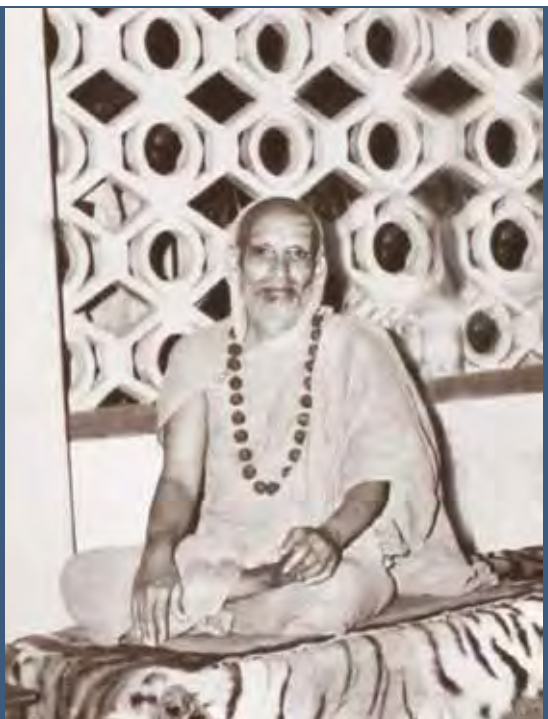
Ribhu: You spoke of below and above. Kindly clarify what is meant by the words below and above.

Nidāgha felt exasperated. He quickly mounted Ribhu’s shoulders and sat with his legs astride them. He then said, “Now, like the king, I am above, while you, like the elephant, are below.” Without the least irritation or hesitation, Ribhu asked, “O great Brahmin, you stated that you are like the king and that I am like the elephant.

If so, who, intrinsically, are you and who, intrinsically, am I?”

Ribhu thus turned Nidāgha’s mind to the instruction that he had given years earlier that, intrinsically, everything is the Supreme and that there is actually no diversity whatsoever. Nidāgha jumped down, fell at Ribhu’s feet and held them in his hands. He said, “O Lord, you are undoubtedly my revered *Guru*, Sage Ribhu.”

Ribhu compassionately said to him, “As a student, you served me with great sincerity. Out of love for you, I have come here to instruct you about the Truth. In everything, realize the non-dual *Ātman*.” Nidāgha became enlightened and Ribhu left.



## 55. Lessons from Śuka's Life

**M**aharṣi Veda-Vyāsa once performed intense austerities and worshipped Lord Śiva with all his heart. He prayed to the Lord to grace him with a son endowed with the firmness of the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and space. Pleased with him, Śiva manifested before him and said, "You shall have a son of the kind you desire. Possessed by greatness, he will be as spotless as space and the other elements. He will be firmly rooted in the Supreme and will attain great fame."

After obtaining the boon of his choice, Vyāsa took up a pair of sticks of the Shami tree and rubbed them against each other to produce fire. As he was doing so, he beheld the *apsarā* Gṛtācī who quickly assumed the form of a parrot and came near him. A spark of life from the sage came into contact with the sticks in his hand and from them emerged Śuka, ablaze with spiritual splendour. Goddess Gaṅgā personally bathed him with her waters. From the sky, there fell a staff and a deer skin for the divine boy's use. Subsequently, Lord Śiva came there with Goddess Uma and performed Śuka's *upanayana*.

By the grace of the Lord, right from his birth, Śuka was endowed with wisdom and was conversant with the *Vedas*. However, the *Vedas* must necessarily be learnt from a preceptor. Hence, after his *upanayana*, Śuka approached Bṛhaspati as a student. Having quickly learnt the *Vedas* and the *śāstras* at the feet of the *Guru* of the Devas, he returned to his father.

Śuka's *brahmacharya* and control of the mind and senses were impeccable and he was dispassionate to the core. He had direct knowledge of the non-dual Truth but mistakenly imagined that there was still much to be learnt and done by him to attain the highest. He requested his father to teach him about how he could attain liberation.

Vyāsa instructed his son in depth. Nonetheless, he found that his enlightened son, who had become an adept at *Yoga*, continued to feel that he was ignorant. Hence, Vyāsa told him, "Go to king Janaka. He shall make known everything about *Mokṣa* to you." As Śuka readied himself to leave for Mithilā, Vyāsa said, "Do not use your *yogic* powers and transport yourself there by air. Walk and approach Janaka with humility.

Accordingly, Śuka trekked the long distance on foot. He was not distracted in the least by the numerous beautiful sights he encountered on the way. Finally, he reached Janaka's palace in Mithilā. The guards at the gate, however, rudely denied him permission to enter. Without a murmur of protest, Śuka stood silently near the entrance. Seeing that

the boy was free from anger and indifferent to the hot sun, one of the guards appreciated his greatness and escorted him reverentially to a chamber within the palace.

Janaka's minister received Śuka there with joined palms and led him, through another chamber, to a delightful garden with ponds, many plants prettified by flowers and numerous fruit-bearing trees. Several exquisitely-beautiful damsels were there. The minister ordered them to attend to Śuka and left. The belles washed his feet, duly honoured him and offered him tasty articles of food. After Śuka had eaten, they showed him everything of interest in the garden. They were skilled in music, dance and dalliance and did all they could to entertain him.

However, Śuka's mind-control and dispassion were so profound that just as the disrespect he was shown at the palace gate did not irritate him, the garden and the efforts of the belles did not elate him. Even-minded, he sat on a seat offered to him and began his evening *sandhyā-vandana*. He then went into deep meditation. By the time he emerged from it, a third of the night had passed. He slept for the second third of the night. Thereafter, he got up and again absorbed himself in *yoga* till dawn. A little later, Janaka approached Śuka accompanied by his priest, minister and the members of his family. The king offered the holy boy a jewelled seat and then worshipped him. Śuka experienced neither joy nor discomfiture. He paid his respects to the king and explained the purpose of his visit. Among the questions he posed were, "How is emancipation from transmigratory existence obtained? Is knowledge or *tapas* the means? If a *brahmacārin* obtains knowledge and freedom from the pairs of opposites such as likes and dislikes, is it necessary for him to get married?"

Janaka, in the course of his sagacious reply, said, "It is only by means of knowledge and direct realization of the Truth that one becomes liberated. Such understanding and realization cannot be acquired without the guidance of a *Guru*. Knowledge is the boat that carries one across the ocean of *saṁsāra* and the *Guru* is the boatman. He, whose mind



has become immaculate by virtue of the cleansing of his senses and recourse to righteousness in many births, procures liberation in his *brahmacarya-āśrāma* itself. Having become enlightened and liberated in the *brahmacarya-āśrāma*, he has no use at all for married life.

“Beholding one’s *Ātman* in all beings and all beings in the *Ātman*, one should live without being attached to anything. He who views all beings, praise and censure, pleasure and pain, gold and iron and life and death with equanimity reaches the Supreme.”



Janaka added, “I see that all this knowledge that I am communicating to you is already there in you. You are fully conversant with all that needs to be known about liberation. Your knowledge, attainment and power are far superior to what you imagine them to be. In spite of directly realizing the Truth, a person does not attain the highest if he doubts his experience or entertains a fear that he will not become emancipated. When such misconceptions are dispelled, he promptly attains the Supreme. You have already apprehended the Truth. Your mind is steady and tranquil. You are free from desires and are truly same-sighted. I and others like me behold you to be established in indestructible freedom.” On hearing Janaka’s words, Śuka’s doubts and vacillations ceased; he became a *jīvanmukta*.

He took leave of the king and flew to where his father was in the Himalayas. Out of compassion for people, Vyāsa codified the unified *Veda* into four. He entrusted the spreading of the *Ṛg*, *Yajur*, *Sāma* and *Atharva Vedas* to Sumantu, Vaiśampāyana, Jaimini and Paila. The four great disciples of Vyāsa left for the plains and became householders; Śuka, who had been taught by Vyāsa along with them, remained a celibate and stayed on with his father, reciting the *Vedas*. To Śuka is attributed the narration of the *Bhāgavata* to Parīkṣit.

One day, the celestial Sage Nārada met Śuka when the latter was alone and spoke to him at length about *mokṣa*. In the course of his advice, Nārada said, “Abandon *dharma* characterized by the performance of scripturally-ordained actions, such as sacrifices, and give up *adharmā*, typified by the performance of scripturally-prohibited actions,

such as killing. Discard truth and falsehood. Having dispensed with these, renounce the mind by means of which you relinquish all these. Give up *dharma* by ceasing to make any *sañkalpa*, resolve. Abstain from *adharma* by dispassion. Restraining speech by the mind, desist from uttering either verity or untruth. Renounce the mind by ceasing to identify with it and by realizing that you are pure, non-dual consciousness.”

Śuka reflected on what Nārada had told him. He decided that he would display his *yogic* powers to the world and then cast off his body through *yoga* and attain disembodied liberation. Nārada expressed his approval. Śuka proceeded to where his father was. On learning his son’s intention, Vyāsa said, “My dear son, stay with me today so that I may gratify my eyes by beholding you for some more time.” However, Śuka was so dispassionate and keen on disembodied liberation that he did not tarry.

He ascended the summit of a mountain and sat there for some time in *samādhi*, revelling in the supreme bliss of *Brahman*. After emerging from that state, he walked round Nārada and took leave of the celestial sage. He then rose into the sky. As he flew, *ṛṣis* and the celestials gazed at him in wonder. He requested the presiding deities of nature, “If my father were to follow me and repeatedly call after me by name, please respond on my behalf.” The deities who presided over the seas, mountains, rivers, etc., loved him so much that they promptly agreed to do what he desired.

As he coursed through the sky, he beheld a pair of contiguous mountains in his path. Without slowing down, he smashed his way through them. Many bewitching *apsarās* were sporting unclad in the Gaṅgā when he flew over them. However, his dispassion and absorption in the *Ātman* were so obvious to them that they felt no shame and did not make any move to cover their nudity. Śuka rose higher in the direction of the sun and, terminating his astounding *yogic* show, cast off his body and attained absolute disembodied union with the non-dual Supreme.

Meanwhile, impelled by his love for Śuka, Vyāsa supernaturally transported himself to the spot from where his son had taken off. The *Mahaṛṣi* retraced Śuka’s aerial path and soon reached the mountains split by Śuka. On encountering him, the *ṛṣis* described to him the wonderful feats of Śuka. Vyāsa missed his son so badly that he began to lament and loudly called out to Śuka. From everywhere, there came the response, “*Bho!*”

Having witnessed the evidence of the glory of his son who had now truly become the soul of all, Vyāsa sat down. When the naked *apsarās* sporting in the Gaṅgā espied him, they became agitated. Filled with shame, some plunged deep into the waters. Some ran into the groves while some quickly covered themselves with their clothes.

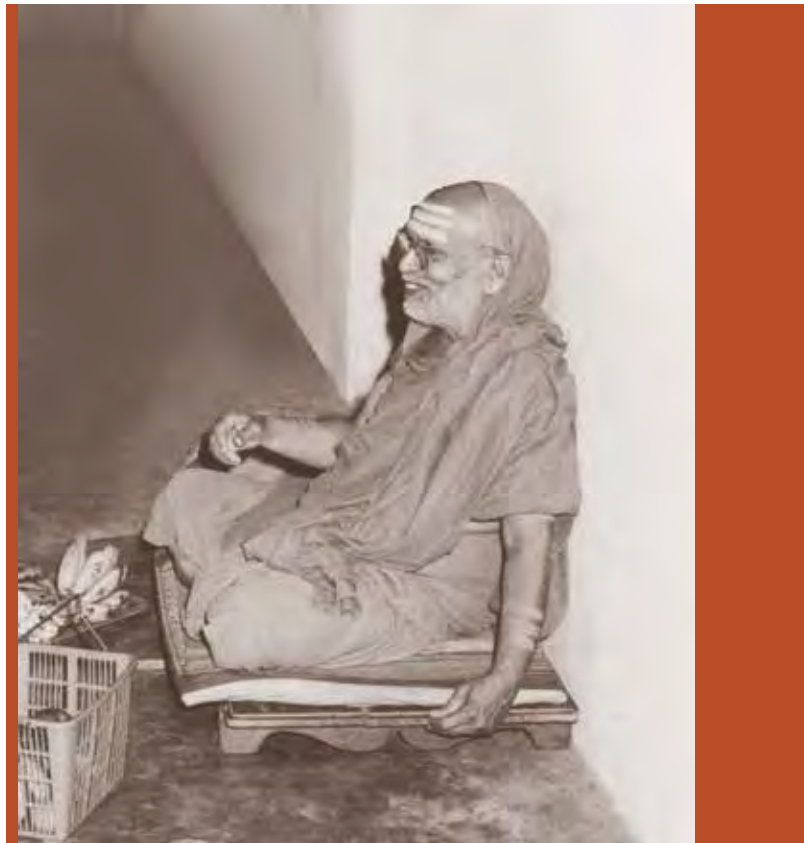
Recalling that the belles had not minded remaining undressed in Śuka's presence, Vyāsa felt proud of his son but ashamed of himself.

Lord Śiva manifested before Vyāsa who was burning with grief at the loss of his son. Consoling the sage, He said, "You had prayed to me for a son who would be like the elements. You obtained, by your *tapas*, the son you wanted. By My grace, he was mentally spotless and spiritually glorious. He has attained the highest state. Why then do you grieve? His fame will remain undiminished till this world lasts. By my grace, you will henceforth be constantly accompanied by a Śuka-like shadow that will be visible to you." The Lord then vanished. Vyāsa beheld a shadow of his son and this filled him with joy.

Śuka was born with the knowledge of the Truth. Such a birth is possible but is extremely rare. A person who passes away while on the verge of getting enlightened may effortlessly become a *Jīvanmukta* in his next birth. The *Upaniṣads* speak of Sage Vāmadeva obtaining, by virtue of his past, direct experience of the Truth even while he lay in his mother's womb.

Śuka knew the *Vedas* without being taught. Nevertheless, he went to Brhaspatī as a disciple to learn them. This is because it is imperative that the *Vedas* be learnt from a preceptor. Children who are regularly exposed to *Vedic* chanting may be in a position to recite *Vedic-mantras* without being formally taught. They do not, however, become exempt from the rule regarding *Vedic* chanting.

When approaching a *mahātman* for guidance, one must do so with humility and respect. Though Śuka had the power to quickly transport himself to Janaka's presence by air, he



undertook, in accordance with Vyāsa's advice, a strenuous journey by foot to Mithilā and waited there patiently for an opportunity to meet with Janaka.

Doubts and misconceptions can prevent a person from benefitting from his first-hand experience. The following two examples emphasize this.

When a person was reorganizing and cleaning his house, he accidentally came across a pouch. His father was the one who had concealed it years ago. Though his father had wanted to inform his son about it, he had fallen seriously ill before actually doing so and died without recovering from the ailment. The son opened the bag and found 50 glittering diamonds in it. They would have fetched him a good price and, with the amount, he could have lived in reasonable comfort.

However, he thought, "My father did not speak to me about them. So they are unlikely to be diamonds. Presumably, they are pieces of glass. If I take them to a diamond merchant, he is likely to make fun of me for being unable to differentiate between precious diamonds and worthless pieces of glass." Because of his doubts and misapprehension, he put the pouch back where he had found it and continued to struggle to make ends meet.

A boy wanted to turn on a light in his room and so moved his hand to the pertinent switch. The moment he touched it, he got an electric shock. As he jerked back his hand reflexively, he banged his elbow against an article on his desk. He, who had never received an electric shock before, thought, "My friends have told me that they have experienced a tingling sensation on being struck on the funny bone of the elbow and that the cause is pressure on a nerve passing over it. Almost certainly, the sharp sensation in my arm was caused by the blow I received on my elbow." Failing to identify what he had directly experienced, he touched the switch again. This time, the consequence was disastrous.

Not only in worldly but also in religious and spiritual matters, doubts and misconceptions can cause great harm. Lord Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna, "Neither this world nor the next nor happiness is there for one who has a doubting mind." A man who is beset with doubt about the existence of life after death is unenthusiastic about acting according to the scriptural injunctions and securing an exalted realm. Because he is not certain that there is no life after death, he is unable to unhesitatingly revel in a materialistic life. Thus, he suffers a double loss.

Śuka's life reveals how doubts and misconceptions about the *Ātman* can block spiritual success. Though Śuka had realized the non-dual Truth, he failed to have a conviction

regarding it and so did not become a *jīvanmukta*. It was only when Janaka set his uncertainties and misunderstanding at rest that he attained the highest.

Dispassion, equanimity and mind-control are vital for a spiritual aspirant. Marriage is not only not obligatory but also useless for a *brahmacārin* who is pure-minded, dispassionate and keen on liberation from transmigratory existence. These points can be gleaned from the life of Śuka.

A person must conduct himself reverentially towards his *Guru* even after becoming a *jīvanmukta*. Nārada gave detailed spiritual advice to Śuka and thus played the role of a *Guru*. Hence, Śuka, a *Jīvanmukta* par excellence, worshipped Nārada and took leave of the celestial sage before casting off his body and attaining disembodied liberation.



Attachment unsettles the mind of even the great. Vyāsa was undoubtedly a very great sage and a knower of the Truth. Yet, because of his intense attachment to Śuka, he was plunged into grief when Śuka left him for good. As for Śuka, he was an epitome of dispassion and did not have the least hesitation to renounce everything, including his body. True detachment does not make a person callous. It is only out of consideration for his father's feelings that the dispassionate Śuka requested the presiding deities of nature to respond on his behalf to his father's call.







## CHAPTER 23

# Cogent Elucidations

This chapter contains some of the sacred expositions of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin, the 35th Pontiff of the Sri Sringeri Sharada Peetham over a period of time and compiled by me. During the 1970s, He had taught the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Brahmasūtras* and the *Taittirīya-upaniṣad*, with *Śāṅkara-bhagavatpāda's bhāṣya* thereon. Some of the sections of this chapter are based on His classes. On several occasions, He had explained scriptural passages and devotional verses to me, in private, either completely of His own accord or in response to my queries. These teachings of His Holiness also figure in this chapter.

As our most compassionate *Guru's* disciples are well aware, His explanations consistently bore the stamp of His direct experience of the Truth, His complete mastery of *yoga*, His unparalleled erudition in the *śāstrās*, His razor-sharp intellect and His thorough understanding of the requirements of the listener. His very presence was so potent that disciples' doubts would get dispelled even before they were posed. While His words can be reproduced in print, no book can ever provide the reader, even an inkling of the remarkable effect of His presence, glance, smile and voice.



## 1. Eight Great Qualities

Mahaṛṣi Gautama has spoken of eight '*Ātma-guṇas*' or personal qualities that every individual should cultivate. They help a man to enjoy mental peace and happiness. They also give rise to virtue and so their benefits are not confined to the present life. Further, if people strive to cultivate these, the world will become a happier place.

The first such quality is "Compassion towards all beings." God has nothing whatsoever to achieve for Himself, but still on account of His compassion and desire to uplift mankind, has taken on many incarnations. When we have been given the capacity to help others, it is but proper that we should do so. After all, God Himself has shown us the way. The desire to relieve the sufferings of another is what is termed compassion. Compassion occurs naturally in some persons, while in some others, it arises on account of the company of great ones who are certainly very compassionate. In the *Gītā*, while listing the traits in devotees which render them dear to God, Kṛṣṇa first mentions absence of hatred, friendliness and compassion.

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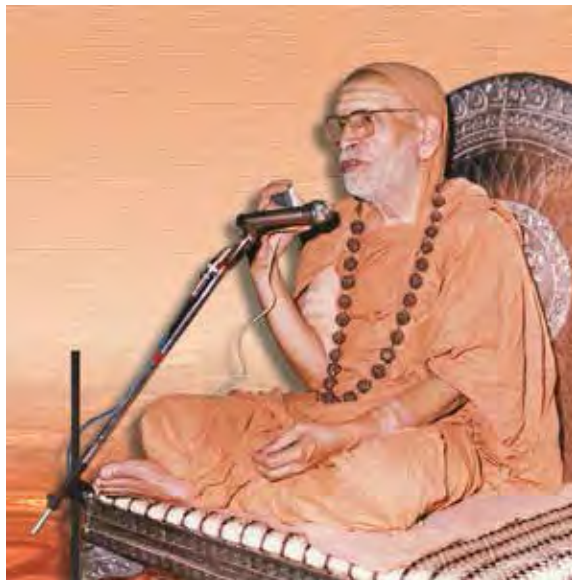
In the *Yoga-sūtras* also, compassion towards one who is suffering is enjoined to get peace of mind. Aversion, pride and the like agitate the mind. Suppose one cultivates the feeling, "I never want to be unhappy. The same is the case with others. Their suffering is on the same footing as mine. So, let none have misery." Then one's aversion and pride will get checked and the mind will become calmer than it would have been otherwise. The development of compassion acts as a remedy for anger too and it is well known that anger severely perturbs the mind.

The second quality is "Forbearance." Normally, when one hears that which is unpleasant or encounters an unfavourable situation created by another, one feels angry and seeks vengeance. If one is strong enough, one directly retaliates. If not, one seeks to avenge oneself on the sly. Acting thus does not constitute the behaviour of a noble one.

Even though one may be in a position to take action, still one must forgive the wrongdoer. One must not harbour malice. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, we read, “Rāma does not, by virtue of His self-control, recall even a century of wrong acts committed against Him by another. On the other hand, He is satiated even with a single favour done to Him.”

What is the point in being intolerant and angry? A person only loses his own mental peace by doing so. Suppose a man is slighted or censured by another. He may get angry. Who is the loser? Anger is like an ungrateful entity. It burns the very person who gives room to it. Instead of getting angry, the slighted or censured person could very well have analysed whether any actual shortcoming of his had been pointed out. If so, he could remedy that personal fault and be grateful to the person who brought it to his notice. On the other hand, the censure may have been unfounded. If so, this man could think, “It is said that making others happy is a form of worship of God. So, if this man is deriving some joy in condemning me, then I am lucky. After all, without taking any effort, I am able to worship God by giving him some happiness. He has done me a great favour.”

The third quality is, “Not cavilling.” Generally people who are not dexterous or successful, find faults with others who are competent, prosperous or famous. The censure is basically to hide one’s shortcomings; the comments are not constructive. This is a bad practice, for we should appreciate good qualities in others and not assume or search for faults. In the *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa declares His willingness to expound the Truth to Arjuna who “does not cavil.” Śaṅkara has



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said in his *Prabodha-sudhākara* that a person who hears about the condemnation of another incurs sin. What need be said about the sin incurred by a man who actually engages in nit-picking?

Suppose a man were to cultivate an attitude of friendliness towards happy people. Then he would only derive happiness in their success. For instance, does not a father feel joy on the success of his son? Likewise, why will not a man feel happy if he regards another in a friendly light? It is said, “The petty-minded think, ‘This one is my own. This one is not.’ For the broad-minded, the whole world is one family.” How can the prosperity of another agitate the mind of a person who looks upon everyone as a member of his dear family? In fact, such an attitude conduces to peace of mind by eliminating jealousy and the like that are disruptive of mental tranquillity.

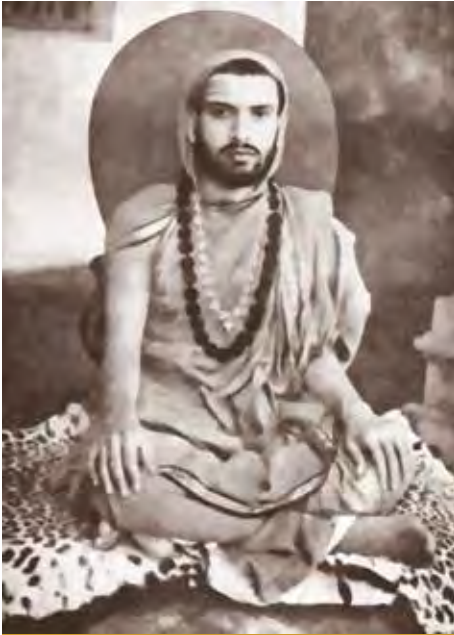
The fourth quality is, “Purity.” If we were to encounter a person who wears filthy clothes and who has not bathed for many days, his obnoxious smell makes us want to move away. On the other hand, the stinking one is hardly aware of anything abnormal. Likewise, some are in the habit of spitting in public places. Such practices are repulsive and unhygienic too. Hence, one must bathe daily and observe hygiene. Cleanliness is an important ingredient of purity.

The fifth essential quality is, “Freedom from laziness.” Many persons give reasons for not being in a position to carry out their tasks. No employer would be pleased with an indolent worker. A student who keeps putting off reading, fares badly in his studies. When a person sincerely engages himself in the prompt performance of his duties, his mind gets far less opportunity to engage itself in idle or harmful thoughts. Thus, it is in everyone’s interest to eschew laziness and cultivate zeal.

The sixth noble quality is, “Auspiciousness.” When we meet some, we note that their words as also facial expressions are not pleasing. This is undesirable. We should speak and conduct ourselves in a manner which is pleasant. For instance, on seeing an elderly or a great person rather than saying, “Sit down”, rudely, one should politely offer a seat and invite the person to sit. Proper speech is not just pleasing to hear but is also factual. Manu has said, “Speak the truth. Utter that which is pleasant. Do not verbalize a distressing truth. Do not say anything that is gratifying but false. This is the eternal *dharma*.” The Lord taught Arjuna, “Speech that causes no pain and is true, agreeable and beneficial, and the practice of studying the scriptures constitute austerity of speech.” Such austerity of speech purifies a person.

The seventh ordained quality is, “Absence of niggardliness.” The tendency to hoard and not part with anything in charity is the result of greed. Kṛṣṇa has spoken of desire, anger and greed as the triple gates of hell. Hoarding will never benefit us and when we die, we cannot take our wealth with us.

Nīlakanṭha Dīkṣita has humorously advised, “If you are keen that even after death you should not be parted with your wealth and that you should carry it with you in a bundle



Nīlakanṭha Dīkṣita has humorously advised, “If you are keen that even after death you should not be parted with your wealth and that you should carry it with you in a bundle on your head then give it to the deserving”.



on your head, then give it to the deserving.” Currency notes cannot be taken to the next world. On the other hand, if a miser converts them into virtue by offering charity, he need not fear that he will lose them after death. After all, virtue will accompany him to the next world.

The scriptures prescribe giving of gifts to the deserving as an antidote for greed. So, charity, apart from bringing about happiness in others, greatly conduces to the spiritual well-being of the donor. A person who loses some money feels unhappy. But he feels happy, not sad, when he voluntarily gives the same amount to a poor student who is not in a position to pay examination fees. Charity can thus make not only the donee but also the donor happy.

A person was advised by a holy man to gift a vegetable a day and told that he would attain great merit by doing so. The poor man strictly followed the advice. After death, he was reborn in a royal family and grew up to become a king. He was able to recall what he had done in his past birth. So, he continued to gift a vegetable a day. Surprisingly, after death, he was reborn as a beggar. The man was unable to comprehend the reason and so sought the advice of the holy man who had earlier blessed him. From the sage, he learnt that prior to becoming a king he had been very poor and so

a gift of a vegetable a day was sufficient to give him a lot of virtue. On the other hand, as a king he was endowed with affluence. So, thereafter, the gift of just a vegetable a day was quite insufficient to earn him merit of any consequence. The person realized that the extent of charity needed to earn a certain degree of merit depends upon one's financial status.

The last of the eight qualities is, "Absence of attachment." Most of our problems are due to our worldly desires. It is said in the *Pancadaśī*, "He who is attached gets tied down in the world. The unattached one experiences joy. Therefore, attachment should always be given up by one who desires to be happy." It is perfectly possible to work efficiently and to fulfil all one's duties without attachment. In fact, attachment impairs efficient functioning. Commonly, surgeons do not perform surgeries on their close relatives. If there were to be no risk of attachment clouding or impairing performance, such would not have been the case.

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## 2. Stages of Devotion

Madhusūdana Saraswatī, the famous author of *Advaita-siddhi*, was a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa. His being an *Advaitin* par excellence did not in any way stand in his way of composing soul-stirring verses on Kṛṣṇa.

He has spoken of three stages of devotion. The first stage is the one where the devotee feels "I am Yours" with regard to God. In other words, the devotee dedicates himself to God. A special characteristic of a true servant of God is that he longs for nothing from God in return for his devotion and service.

Here the following instance comes to mind. To prove Prahāda's view that God is present everywhere and also in a pillar pointed at by Hiraṇyakaśipu, the Lord emerged from the pillar in the form of Narasiṃha. Lord Narasiṃha slew Hiraṇyakaśipu but continued to be very fierce. The *devas* were afraid of approaching Him and so was Goddess Lakṣmī.

Hence, Prahlāda, who was but a young boy, was asked to pacify the Lord. Prahlāda consented and fearlessly walking upto the Lord, who was seething with fury, prostrated before Him. Immediately, the Lord calmed down and moved by compassion, He rose from the throne He was occupying and placed His hand on the boy's head. Being pleased with His devotee, the Lord asked Prahlāda to seek a boon. Promptly, Prahlāda replied that he desired nothing from the Lord.

There is a scintillating verse in the *Bhāgavatam* wherein we have Prahlāda telling the Lord, "He who desires anything from God is a trader and not a servant of God." The story brings out two aspects. One is that a true servant of God knows no refuge other than God. This is why Prahlāda felt no fear in approaching Lord Narasimha. The second aspect is that the true servant of God desires nothing from God. In fact, he does not even pray for *mokṣa*.

In a verse in the *Śivānandalaharī*, Śaṅkara tells the Lord: "Tell me why You are not redeeming me from this wretched worldly state. If the answer be that it pleases You that I should wallow thus, then I have achieved all that has to be achieved." When God is pleased what else is there to long for?

The second stage of devotion spoken of is the feeling "He is mine" with regard to God. Here the devotee is positively concerned about ensuring God's welfare. It



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is not as though God is in need of the devotee's care. In spite of this, He allows Himself to be even controlled by the devotee on account of the devotee's love.

The *Bhāgavatam* contains the explicit declaration of *Bhagavān*, "I am subservient to My devotee like one under the control of another." Yaśodā's love for Kṛṣṇa is an illustration of devotion of the form, "He is mine." To her, Kṛṣṇa was her darling child and not the Lord. Kṛṣṇa seems to have relished her motherly love so much that He deliberately withdrew from her the awareness that He was none other than the Supreme. Though omnipotent, He even allowed Himself to be tied to a mortar by Yaśodā.

The third stage of devotion is the feeling "I am He" with regard to God. In other words, *Advaitic* realisation is the highest stage of devotion. A reason is that while others are willing to brook at least some minute separation from God, a devotee of this class cannot bear even that. When can separation be totally obliterated? Obviously when one realizes that one is not different from the Supreme. In the *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa Himself indicates that the knower of the Truth is not different from Him.

### 3. Prostrate, Surrender and Become Blessed

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A devotee prayed to the compassionate Lord to forgive two terrible sins of his. What were they?

The devotee spelt out that in none of his previous births he had done *namaskāra* to God. This was a very grievous sin. How did he know that he had never saluted God at any time? The answer is simple. *Namaskāra* to God, according to the devotee, automatically ensures freedom from rebirth. Had he saluted God in any previous birth, he would not have been born. The fact that he had been born showed that such a holy act as prostrating before God had not been performed earlier.

In the present birth, he was now offering his *praṇāms*, and that precisely was the cause of his second fault.

On account of his paying obeisance to God, he would certainly not be born again. Thus, there would be no occasion for him to salute God in future. His inevitable failure to do *namaskāra* to God in any future birth was his second sin! These two sins should be pardoned; this was the prayer.

The prayer illustrates how important one should consider offering salutations to God. Normally, most of us prostrate before God daily but are most casual about the act. This is not correct. We must regard the opportunity given to us to offer *namaskāra* to be most valuable and to be due solely to God's grace. God has taken care of us even from the time when we lay helplessly in the wombs of our mothers. The least we can do by way of gratitude is to salute God with all our being.



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Will God accept us, for we cannot truly claim to be leading a life much different from that of any animal? We spend much of our energy and time earning our bread and a large chunk of the remaining time in sleep. How then can we claim to be far different from animals unless we are strongly devoted to God and lead a spiritual life?

In his *Śiva-bhujāṅga-stotra*, Śaṅkara poses this query to Śiva and then tells the Lord to accept him even if he be on par with an animal. Why? Is not Nandi the vehicle of Śiva? Surely, if Śiva can accept Nandi, a bull, there should be no problem in His accepting an animal-like devotee. How indeed could Śiva complain about the devotee being animal-like, when He had made an animal itself His own.

It is one thing to be on par with an animal and another to be sinful. What if the devotee be full of faults? Would the Lord then accept him? Śaṅkara tells Śiva in the verse under consideration that even in such a case Śiva should extend His love. Why? Had not Śiva placed Candra on His head even though the latter had violated the promise given by him to view all his wives alike and had even committed the sin of eloping with his preceptor's wife? Decidedly, if Śiva could place on His head one who had

such faults, He should have no reason to reject a devotee merely because of the devotee's blemishes.

Let the devotee be on par with an animal and be sinful too and yet be qualified to be accepted by God. But then should not the devotee's supplication be free from all traces of hypocrisy? Should not the devotee at least be free from double standards? Here again Śaṅkara disagrees, for he tells Śiva, "If you are opposed to 'two-tongued ones', then how is it that You keep a fork-tongued snake as a neck ornament? If You can adopt a snake, then why not me?"

In conclusion, Śaṅkara reminds Śiva that no matter what a person's condition might have been, he inevitably becomes blessed on being received by the Lord. The implication of the prayer is that God's compassion is limitless and so He will accept us, all our faults and limitations notwithstanding, if we offer ourselves to Him. Thus, we will do well to salute God and surrender ourselves to Him. The rest will be taken care of by God.

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#### 4. The Nectar of Devotion

People have a natural capacity to love. Affection requires an object and when that object is God, it gets the appellation *bhakti* or devotion. Nārada defines *bhakti* as extreme love of God. He who attains such devotion no longer longs for anything and is ever fully satiated and happy. While attachment to wife, wealth, etc., causes bondage, attachment to God liberates. A sense object sometimes gives joy and sometimes sorrow. It is not always available and has several faults. On the other hand, God is ever captivating, constantly available and totally free from blemishes. Further, what or who can be as loveable as God who is the repository of all good qualities? So bewitching are His glories that even sages who have realized the Truth and have nothing to achieve go into raptures on thinking of Him.

Though intrinsically formless, the kind Lord does appear in various forms to grace His devotees and to enable people to easily contemplate on Him. The scriptures describe several marvellous forms of the Supreme. We read in the *Devī-māhātmyam* of the

*Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa*, “You are gorgeous, lovelier than all that is beautiful and absolutely stunning. Greatest of the great, You are verily the Supreme Goddess.”

A devotee wanted to pray, “O Bhavāni, please bestow on me, Your serf, a compassionate glance.” So he began with the words “*Bhavānitvam*.” So eager was the Goddess to fulfil Her devotee’s wish that She did not realize that the devotee’s pause after “*tvam*”, meaning “You”, was only the interval between successive words. Taking the request as complete, She immediately granted him “*Bhavāni-tvam*” or the state of being Bhavānī; that is, She made him one with Herself. Śankara has stated this in his *Soundaryalaharī*.

The Lord’s mercy extends to all. Did not Rāma tell Sugrīva when the latter voiced concern about accepting Vibhīṣaṇa, “To anyone who seeks refuge in Me but once, saying, ‘I am Yours’, I grant fearlessness”? A sincere devotee has no cause for any worry, for he has surrendered his body and mind to God and left everything in God’s hands. Overpowered by love for devotees who have surrendered, Kṛṣṇa declared to Uddhava, “With a view to purifying Myself by the dust of the feet of the sage who longs for nothing, bears enmity to none and is equanimous, I always follow him.” What a remarkable proclamation by the perfect Lord of the cosmos!

While it is said that a true devotee is in God’s loving care, it would be wrong to infer that a devotee ought not to have any hardship. The Lord is, after all, not only most compassionate but also perfectly just. If a person had committed major transgressions in earlier births, allowing him to go scot-free, without any punishment in the form of suffering, would be a travesty of justice. A judge who refuses to penalise murderers on the ground of kindness would be doing a great disservice to society. He can, of course, take mitigating

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circumstances and repentance into consideration to reduce the punishment awarded to a person found guilty of a crime. Likewise, God, being just, does award punishment even to devotees, but, being kind, reduces the penalty to the extent possible. Just because a mother scolds her child, does it mean that she does not dearly love her offspring?



God is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent and an ocean of mercy. Hence, there is just nothing that the devotee has to make known to God which is not already known to Him. Further, if the devotee says, "I want this; I want that," how can he be said to have full faith in the gracious dispensation of the Divine One? This apart, even when faith is inadequate, it would be appropriate to avoid praying for anything. It goes without saying that the will of God is infallible. It is also well known that people feel happy when they obtain what they desire and unhappy when they do not. So, he who attunes his will to that of God can never have any reason for dissatisfaction. How can

suffering make a devotee grieve and lament if he cultivates the attitude that the pain too is in his best interests as it has been ordained by his dear God? At any rate, grief and lamentation do not reduce suffering; they only make it worse.

The path of devotion is special in that one begins to experience peace and joy even prior to one's having made much headway. Further, sharpness of the intellect, scholarliness, prowess, age, physique, social status, occupation, wealth, etc., are not of consequence. God, being most loveable, there is no reason why anyone cannot cultivate

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devotion. By associating with and thinking in positive terms about a person, another develops a liking for him. Likewise, devotion to God can be developed by repeatedly thinking of God and His glories. To think of Him is not difficult, for one can mentally keep chanting His name and dedicate all actions and thoughts

to Him. The company of holy devotees is highly helpful in developing devotion, for, in them, we see surrender and peace. On the contrary, bad company produces the opposite effect and turns one's mind away from God and towards sense objects.

At first, when a person tries to fix his mind on God, he may not find his mind cooperative and he may not derive much joy in doing so. There is no reason, however, for despair. The budding devotee can change the situation to his advantage by giving God a detailed report of the antics of his mind. What difficulty is there in mentally telling God, "My mind refuses to think of You. See the way it rebels"? Such a conversation with God is itself a way of thinking of Him.

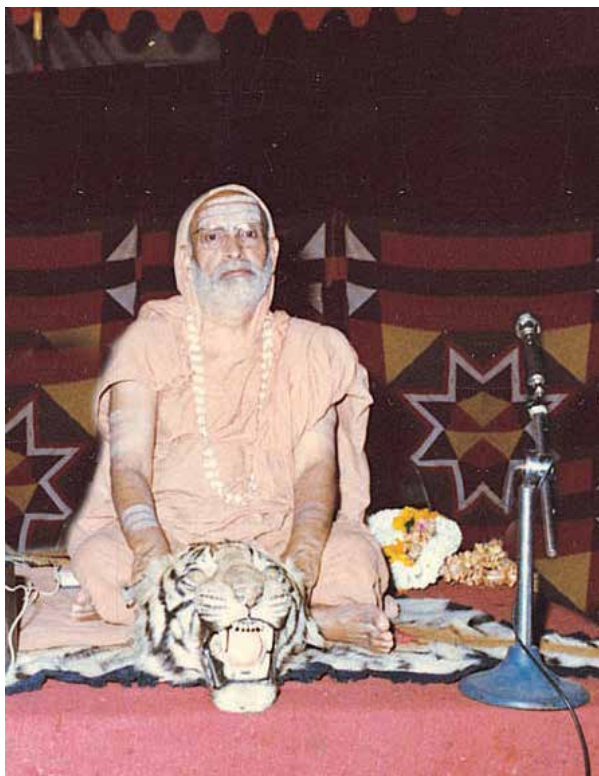
Even when a person is able to briefly fix his mind on God, he experiences peace. This is because, at least for that short duration, he is free from concerns and is like a baby in the arms of its mother. The sense of peace and joy comes rather easily in the presence of great devotees. The nice feeling itself provides an impetus to the budding devotee to think further about God. It is, nonetheless, necessary for him to recognize that in the initial stages there is the danger of the mind forgetting about God for long. Hence, without giving room to inadvertence, he must diligently strive to think of God often.

In a verse in his *Śivānandalaharī*, Śaṅkara has portrayed the stages in the growth of devotion. In the first stage, the devotee somehow approaches God, just as the seed of the *aṅkola* tree manages to get to the tree and attach itself to the trunk. Thereafter, the effect of grace, which was there even earlier, begins to be clearly felt. God holds on to the devotee, just as a magnet attracts and holds

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a needle. The devotee feels the pull of God. In the third stage, the devotee and God are close to each other like a man and his chaste wife. The love is strongly mutual. Next, just as a creeper adds to the beauty of a tree, the devotee adds, as it were, to God's glory. Indeed, devotees like Prahlāda were ornaments of God. In the final stage, the devotee merges with God just as a river flows into and becomes one with the ocean.



Kṛṣṇa has compassionately taught how devotees of different capabilities should practise devotion. There is nothing in the world that is distinct from God. So a mature aspirant is advised to fix his mind and intellect on God as the Cosmic Person; everything is viewed as a part of God's body, which is the universe. To the aspirant who is unable to view everything as related to God, Kṛṣṇa teaches repeated fixation of the mind on some chosen form of God. Suppose a person is unable to meditate thus, he is instructed to be intent on works for the Lord. The devotee should engage himself in hearing about God, glorifying Him, worshipping His idol, etc. Finally, even

if the aspirant is unable to be absorbed in such tasks, there is an easier option that is available to him.

The Lord says that the aspirant should, with regulated mind, dedicate all his actions to Him and give up desire for the results of all the acts. Normally, a person acts motivated by longing for the results. Such functioning is productive of bondage. The spiritual aspirant, motivated by his love of God, acts for the sake of God, without attachment to the results. Just as a fruit can be offered to God during worship, the devotee offers the fruits of actions to God. He acts with the feeling, "I do this for God"; he does not go a step down and hold, "I do this so that God may be pleased." He views success and failure with equanimity; here success includes acquisition of mental purity.

Acting as he does for the sake of God, the devotee abstains from misdeeds. He acts with firmness and enthusiasm. After all, his devotion makes him put forth his best. Treating the scriptures as the directives of God, he faithfully carries out the scripturally-prescribed duties that are pertinent to him. How can one who disobeys the commands of God, and neglects his religious duties be a true devotee? Thus, detachment from the fruits of actions does not imply inefficiency or negligence. On the contrary, the devotee's performance is superior to that of a worldly man; unlike the latter, the former is not bogged down by anxiety, frustration, etc.

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The Lord proclaims, "Fix your mind on Me. Be My devotee. Worship Me. Prostrate before Me. (Conducting yourself in this fashion, offering all ends, means and needs to Me), you shall come to Me alone. Truly do I promise thus to you, for you are dear to Me." Who indeed would not want to surrender himself to God who is so very loving and loveable!

## 5. Fundamental Tenets of the *Gītā*

What is the philosophy expounded by Lord Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna? Does the Lord declare that liberation can be attained only by the realization of one's true nature or does He opine that actions are also directly responsible for liberation? Is it the view of the Lord that there are many *Ātmans* and a real world or does the Lord hold that the *Ātman* is really none other than the Supreme and that the world is not absolutely real? To answer these queries, it is obviously imperative that we turn to the *Gītā* itself.

The Lord points out to Arjuna the immortality of the *Ātman* and its total distinction from the body and bodily attributes. "The *Ātman* is not born nor does it die nor does it cease to be. It is unborn, eternal, unchangeable and ancient. It is not killed when the body is killed." Such unequivocal declarations that the *Ātman* is distinct from the body are commonly found in the *Gītā*.



The Lord has equally clearly asserted that the *Ātman* is untainted by any bodily activity and that it is devoid of action. For instance, He has said, “Having no origin and bereft of qualities, this imperishable *Ātman*, though dwelling in the body, neither acts nor is tainted.”

What is it then that acts? The Lord has clarified in various places by utterances such as, “The *guṇas* of nature perform all activity. The one whose understanding has been clouded by egoism feels, ‘I am the doer’.”



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From such pronouncements, it is patent that the *Ātman* is actionless and totally untainted. How indeed is it possible for such an *Ātman* to really suffer bondage? The Lord’s declarations would be readily meaningful if bondage is not real and is caused by ignorance.

The Lord says, “He sees truly who sees that all actions are done by nature alone and that the *Ātman* is actionless.” The view that true knowledge destroys ignorance and results in liberation is explained by Kṛṣṇa by words such as, “He who has faith and is intent upon knowledge and has restrained the senses obtains true knowledge. Having attained knowledge, he immediately attains peace.”

Does not the grace of God confer liberation? Does not Kṛṣṇa aver, “They who seek refuge in Me alone cross this *Māyā*”? Yes, indeed the Lord has said that He confers liberation to devoted ones. But it must be seen how He does so. He Himself has clarified, “Out of mere compassion for them I, dwelling in their mind, destroy the darkness born of ignorance by means of the luminous

lamp of wisdom.” Thus, the Lord has shown that knowledge is the means to liberation. Such knowledge destroys the fruits of all actions. The Lord has said, “Just as fire reduces fuel to ashes, so too does the fire of knowledge burn up all actions.”

Certainly, it cannot be said that the very Lord, who declares the opposition of action and knowledge, forgets His teachings and proceeds to say that liberation results from a combination of these. He has consistently taught that actions are meant for one who has not attained realization and that for the realized one there is just ‘abidance’ in *Ātman*. He clarifies, “For the holy man who tries to attain *yoga*, action is said to be the means. For the same man when he has attained *yoga*, quietude is said to be the means.”

By taking it as axiomatic that, “The end of that which is born is certain,” the Lord has pointed out that all that has a beginning must have an end. If a real liberation were to be brought about by action then by virtue of having a beginning, such a liberation must also have an end. Hence, liberation cannot be brought about by action. Action’s contribution is the purification of mind. Kṛṣṇa makes this clear when He says, “Sacrifice, gift and austerity are the purifiers of the wise.”

As regards multiplicity of *Ātmans* and their relationship with the Supreme, the following words of the Lord illustrate His position. He says, “He who has been made steadfast by *yoga* sees the same everywhere and sees the *Ātman* as abiding in all beings and all beings as abiding in the *Ātman*.” The use of the singular for the *Ātman* suggests that in reality there is no multiplicity of *Ātmans*. As regards the relationship of the *Ātman* with the Supreme, the Lord Himself has said, “O Gudākeśa, I am the *Ātman* seated in the hearts of all beings” and “Understand Me to be the *Kṣetrajñā* (individual Self).”

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## 6. True *Advaitins* and Pseudo-*Advaitins* are Poles Apart

It is well known that *Advaita* philosophy recognizes *Brahman* alone as the ultimate reality and holds that the world is illusory, with no existence apart from *Brahman*. *Avidyā* or ignorance is responsible for the mistaken notion that one is the body or mind and that duality is a fact.

The individual soul is actually not different from the Supreme. Strictly speaking, a true *Advaitin* is one who has realized as a matter of experience that one is the Supreme *Brahman*. Others who hold the *Advaita* philosophy as right are also called *Advaitins* but the usage is somewhat figurative.

Those who have directly realized the Truth are called *jñānins*; they are liberated even while alive. Such persons are most uncommon. Kṛṣṇa points out in the *Gītā*, “He who knows that Vāsudeva is all is very rare to find.” Unegoistic, such sages do not flaunt their wisdom.

On the other hand, there are many who have not acquired such realization but who talk and behave as if they have attained liberation. We even find that they are not very regulated in their conduct. When questioned, they say, “After all I am not the body or the mind. I neither act nor am I affected by action. Further, the world is only unreal. So, why should I bother much about what the body and mind are engaged in doing?”

There is a story in this regard. It seems one person was expounding *Advaita* philosophy to a group of students and in the course of his discourse pointed out that the world is unreal. Suddenly, a wild elephant chanced to come running that way. The disciples ran helter skelter; the teacher was no exception. Unfortunately, the teacher slipped and fell into a pit. After the elephant went away, the students discovered their teacher in the pit, shouting for help. They approached him and asked, “Sir, you were just telling us that the world is unreal. Why then did you run, gripped by fear, when the elephant charged? Further, why are you now shouting for help?” The helpless teacher thought for a moment, and said, “Please help me to come out and I shall explain.” Accordingly, he was pulled out.

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He resumed his seat at the place where he was teaching and, without batting an eyelid, declared, “I stand by what I said. The world is unreal. The elephant that charged was unreal. You saw me flee in terror but my flight was unreal. You noticed that I had fallen into a pit and was screaming for help. All that was unreal. Finally, your helping me out too was unreal.”

Maybe the explanation shows that the so-called teacher was shrewd but it does

not alter the fact that he was being hypocritical. One should be true to one's conscience. One may deceive others by high-sounding talk on *Advaita*, but it will not be of any use if one does not mend one's ways. It is said, "He who is attached to worldly comforts but still says that everything is *Brahman* is actually one who has fallen from *karma* and also from *Brahman*. Such a person must be discarded like a lowly one." Because such a man fails to realize the Truth and procure liberation, it is said that he has fallen from *Brahman*. Because of his putting up a show that he is realized, such a man does not perform the ordained duties sincerely. Hence, there is the declaration of his having fallen from *karma*.

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Why then does one act as if one is aware that the world is unreal even though one does not possess such realization? One reason is self-delusion. Another is that one wants to get a good name. Nīlakṛṣṇa Dīkṣita has humorously written, "Always keeping the rosary in the hand, occasionally opening one's eyes and declaring that everything is *Brahman* are sure ways of creating a good impression!"

Such pseudo-*Advaitins* are not a rarity these days. They will do well to bear in mind the declaration of the *Kaṭha-upaniṣad*, "One who has not desisted from bad conduct, whose senses are not under control, whose mind is not concentrated and whose mind is not free from hankering for the result of concentration cannot attain the *Ātman* through knowledge." It is clear that true knowledge can dawn only after the mind has been rendered very pure by the practice of spiritual discipline.

## 7. Essential Prerequisites for Knowing the Supreme

The very first of the *Brahma-sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa is, "Hence, deliberation on *Brahman* should be undertaken thereafter." The word "thereafter" reveals that enquiry into the real nature of the Supreme must be done only after some requirement is met. The prerequisite is not an understanding of the rites detailed in the *Karma-kāṇḍa* of the *Vedas*. On the other hand, it comprises the "*sādhana-catustayam*" or the four-fold spiritual means.

Even if a man were to study *Vedāntic* texts for long, master them and become an exponent who delights scholars and common people, if he lacks the *sādhana-catustaya*, he will not get direct experience of the Truth. He will, for all his scholarliness in *Vedānta*, remain trapped in the cycle of transmigratory existence. On the other hand, he who equips himself with *sādhana-catustaya* and strives, under the guidance of a sage, can get realization of the Supreme and, so, liberation.

The first member of *sādhana-catustaya* is “*viveka*” or discrimination. The aspirant should differentiate between the eternal, which is *Brahman*, and the transient, which is all else. Only he who knows “this is eternal; this is transient” will tend to withdraw his mind from the transient world. The world is to be viewed not merely as subject to destruction but as quite illusory. Indeed, who would desire an object which he firmly regards as being illusory? It is inadequate to see sense objects as transient because people are commonly found to seek worldly pleasures though knowing that these enjoyments are not ever-lasting.

The second element of *sādhana-catustaya* is “*vairāgya*” or dispassion and this, as seen earlier, stems from discrimination. When some close relative or friend dies, a person

may experience disinterest in the world. However, such indifference soon fades away. It is only the steady dispassion born of discrimination that conduces to the realization of the Supreme. The aspirant should carefully cultivate dispassion till he finds all worldly and heavenly objects of enjoyment, inclusive of his body, to be as unappealing as the droppings of a crow.



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The third constituent of *sādhana-catustaya* is a hexad of qualities. The first member of this hexad is “*śama*” or mind-control. This is characterized by the mind

remaining fixed on its objective. In the absence of strong dispassion, the attention of the mind would keep getting diverted to sense objects. On the other hand, he who repeatedly perceives the shortcomings of sense objects, such as that they are transient, require expenditure and effort to acquire and that they even turn insipid, ceases to be attracted to them. His mind quits being diverted by them. Thus, dispassion is the basis for steady mind-control.

Mind-control facilitates “*dama*” or withdrawal of senses from their respective objects. In the *Kaṭha-upaniṣad*, the sense-objects have been likened to roads, the senses to horses and the mind to the reins. So, the senses can be kept under check by a mind that is preoccupied with its objective; mind-control leads to restraint of sensory activity. It should not, however, be supposed that an aspirant should first pay attention only to controlling the mind, while ignoring the activities of the senses. As the Lord points out in the *Gītā*, the senses are powerful and can unsettle the mind. While avoiding sense-objects provides a situation conducive to gaining control over the mind, firm restraint of the senses even in the presence of beautiful sights, tasty objects, etc., can be effected only by a regulated mind.

Sense-control is the precursor of “*uparati*” or self-withdrawal. The withdrawal is from sense enjoyments and from bondage-fostering activity. If one is immersed in worldly activities and in the performance of religious rites, how can one uninterruptedly and intensely strive to know *Brahman*, which is devoid of all attributes and is the subtlest of the subtle? The limit of withdrawal occurs when one is totally oblivious of the world, inclusive of the body, and is immersed in *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, the acme of *yoga*.

The fourth element of the hexad under consideration is “*tītikṣā*” or forbearance. True forbearance is marked by the tolerance of all afflictions without the institution of remedial steps and without worry and lamentation. When self-withdrawal is at its peak, the mind does not cognize heat, cold, etc. However, when apprehension of heat, cold and the like does occur, they are endured. Normally, when people are unable to remedy some unpleasant experience, they worry and lament. The spiritual aspirant who is endowed with true forbearance is different. A mind that is tainted by anxiety, lamentation, etc., is unfit to successfully enquire about the Truth.

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“*Śraddhā*” or faith is the firm acceptance of the words of the *Guru* and the scripture as true. Even in a worldly matter, a person does not think in accordance with the words of another when he lacks faith in the latter. Such being the case, what need be said about the importance of faith in matters that cannot be ascertained by means of sense-perception? Intense faith in the *Guru* and the scripture is vital to know the Truth. Further, it is only he whose mind is focused, whose senses are restrained, who has withdrawn himself and who is forbearing who can obtain a firm conviction of the form, “It is indeed so”, when taught, “*Brahman* alone is the reality; all else is illusory. You are actually the Supreme.”

Extreme faith in the *Guru* and the scripture leads to freedom from doubts and distractions. Hence, the aspirant is able to unswervingly establish his intellect on *Brahman*, which is devoid of all qualities. This kind of steady establishment of the intellect characterizes “*samādhāna*”, the sixth member of the hexad. In the stage of “*śama*” too, the mind is fixed on its objective, *Brahman*, but such focus is accomplished with effort; further, doubts are not fully resolved. Thus “*samādhāna*” is not identical with “*śama*” but is the latter’s culmination or fruit.

We finally come to the fourth and last constituent of the *sādhana-catuṣṭayam*. This is “*mumukṣutva*” or yearning for liberation. When a person whose mind is tainted by worldly tendencies hears an exposition of *Vedānta*, he may feel a desire for freedom. However, such a desire is fleeting and hardly persists beyond the time of listening. It does not lead to liberation and is classed as *mumukṣutva* of the inferior type. When the hearing of scriptural texts leads to discrimination and thence dispassion, a person gives up preoccupation with worldly matters and approaches an enlightened *Guru* for earnest enquiry. *Mumukṣutva* of the middling kind then develops in this person as he listens to his *Guru*. This too is insufficient.

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When the man achieves uncompromising dispassion, his mind becomes focussed. Flooded by the *Guru*’s grace, he longs for nothing but liberation. He cannot brook any delay in becoming free and is on par with a man who rushes towards water to put out a fire on his head. His *mumukṣutva* is of the well-developed kind. Being pre-eminently qualified, he quickly attains direct experience of the Truth and becomes liberated, even while alive.

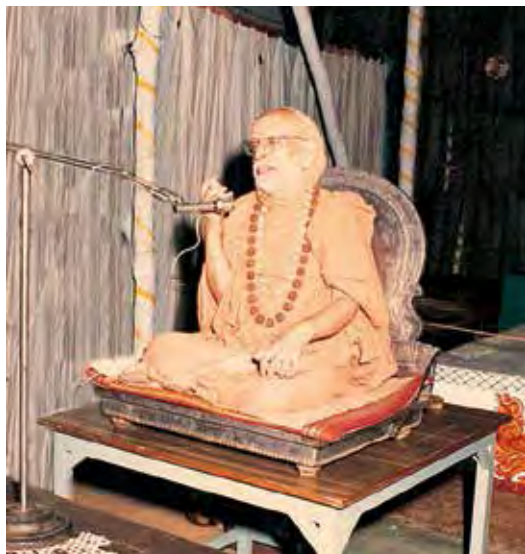
## 8. The Source of All Evil

Arjuna asks Lord Kṛṣṇa, “O Vārṣṇeya! Impelled by what does a man, even though reluctant, commit sin as if he were forced?” Arjuna is perplexed because he finds that not only those who wish to do evil but also those who wish to abstain from unrighteousness appear to commit sin. It is as if man is being forced to err akin to a servant ordered by a king to perform some task.

The Lord wishes to point out to Arjuna the source of all evil. He says, “It is desire and it is anger, born of the *guṇa* ‘*rajas*’, all devouring and sinful. Know that to be the foe here.” The enemy of the whole world is desire from which evil comes to all beings. When desire happens to be obstructed by some cause, then it gets transformed into anger. Hence, anger is a modification of desire.

Everything in the world is comprised of the three *guṇas* of nature, namely *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. *Sattva* is responsible for a peaceful, happy disposition, *rajas* for an overactive, attached nature and *tamas* for sloth, etc. Desire, according to the Lord, is born of *rajas*. An alternative interpretation of the Lord’s words is that desire itself is responsible for the rise of *rajas*. When desire manifests, it arouses *rajas* which impels man to act. Desire is declared by the Lord to be very sinful because it is only when one is impelled by desire that one commits sin. For that reason, it is man’s enemy in this world.

The Lord is competent indeed to declare things in their true perspective. Thus, Śaṅkara, when commenting on this portion, explains the meaning of the word *Bhagavān*. He says that the Lord is called *Bhagavān* because He is the one in whom ‘*bhaga*’ abides. According to the *Viṣṇu-purāṇa*,



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*bhaga* means the six attributes of perfect mastery, might, glory, splendour, dispassion and salvation. The *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* also says, “He is called *Bhagavān* who knows the origin and the end, the coming and the going of beings and what is wisdom and what is ignorance.”

The Lord illustrates how desire is our foe. He gives three examples which convey the gradations in the covering of knowledge by desire. He says, “Just as fire is enveloped by smoke, a mirror is covered by dirt, and just as the foetus is enclosed by womb, so too is knowledge covered by desire. Covered, O son of Kuntī, is knowledge by this constant enemy of the wise in the form of desire, which is greedy and insatiable.” Fire covered by smoke is able to burn. A dirty mirror is unable to produce a clear reflection until it is cleaned. As for the foetus, it remains completely unseen and confined.

The wise man knows, even before suffering the consequences, that he has been led by desire to evil ways. So he feels miserable. Hence, desire is the enemy of the wise. On the other hand, the ignorant regard desire, at the time of their thirsting for objects, as a friend. It is only when suffering results, but not before, that an unwise person realizes that he has been rendered miserable by desire. Desire is ever insatiable and greedy. It is said, “Never is desire satiated by enjoyment just as fire is not put out by pouring ghee into it.”

Next, Kṛṣṇa points out where this enemy resides, for this would render killing the foe easy. He says, “The senses, the mind and the intellect are said to be its seats. Veiling knowledge through these, it deludes the embodied soul.” How is one to conquer desire? The advice given is, “Therefore, O great amongst the Bharatas, restrain the senses first and cast off this sinful thing which is destructive of direct and indirect knowledge.”

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*'s second chapter itself, the Lord had indicated that the senses are dangerous, for they forcibly carry away the mind of even a striving wise man. So, to conquer desire, it is essential that the senses be restrained. That much alone is not sufficient. The mind and intellect too are, after all, the seats of desire. Therefore, according to the Lord, one must comprehend the *Ātman*, which is superior to the intellect, attain spiritual absorption by means of the purified mind and thus slay desire. When one knows that one is not the body-mind complex but is the *Ātman*, which is

changeless and of the nature of pure consciousness, one ceases to desire anything phenomenal.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* it is said, “A man who desires transmigrates. But the man who does not desire is never reborn. He who is without desires, who is free from desires, the objects of whose desires have been attained, and to whom all objects of desire are but the *Ātman* - such a man’s organs do not depart (on his death and proceed to another body). Being but *Brahman*, he gets merged in *Brahman*.”

Here, we have an account of how desirelessness is attained. When a man realizes that the *Ātman* alone exists and that there is nothing apart from It, then he attains all

objects of desire. After all, for him, there is no object of desire distinct from the *Ātman* that is himself. As all objects of desire have been obtained by him, desires leave him. Normally, gratification of a desire produces only temporary silencing of that desire; longing rises again, with force. In the case of the knower of the *Ātman* the fulfilment of desire is constant. Thus, it is appropriate to say that desires leave him. As desires have quit, he is desireless.

It is only by realizing the *Ātman* that the problem of desire can be completely solved. Else, desire can be checked but its seed remains. That is why the Lord specifies establishment in the *Ātman* as the way to slay desire. Restraint of the senses is an important step towards this end.



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## 9. Three Impure Tendencies

It is important for one who is seriously striving to attain realization of *Brahman* to eliminate not only desire, anger and greed but also, three types of impure *vāsanās* or mental tendencies. This triad of *vāsanās* comprises *loka-vāsanā* or mental impression relating to the world, *śāstra-vāsanā* or mental tendency pertaining to the scripture and *deha-vāsanā* or latent mental imprint concerning the body. These *vāsanās* prevent the dawn of direct experience of the Truth. Thus, it is declared in the *Muktikā-upaniṣad*, “True knowledge never dawns in a person with *loka-vāsanā*, *śāstra-vāsanā* and *deha-vāsanā*.”

*Vāsanās* are the mental seeds owing to which feelings, such as of desire, crop up quickly without being preceded by any deliberation. A boy who has had the misfortune of being chased by a bull abruptly feels fear on encountering another bull at some other time. The *vāsanā* engendered by the initial experience is activated by the sight of the second bull and it agitates the boy’s mind with fright. Countless *vāsanās* abide in the mind, implanted and nurtured by the thoughts and experiences of the present and previous lives. Good *vāsanās* aid spiritual progress while the bad ones are antithetical to it. A bad *vāsanā* can be rendered impotent by assiduously cultivating a *vāsanā* of the opposite kind. So a spiritual aspirant should neutralize the impure *vāsanās* that plague him by developing appropriate pure *vāsanās*.

*Loka-vāsanā* pertains to a fixation of the form, “I shall always conduct myself in such a way that people do not censure me and, instead, they praise me.” This *vāsanā* is an obstruction to a spiritual aspirant because it demands what cannot be achieved. There will always be at least some persons who disapprove of us or of what we have done.

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Sītā was the exemplar of chastity. She even underwent an ordeal by fire to confirm Her purity. Yet, the people of Ayodhyā cast aspersions on Her and censured Lord Rāma Himself as being swayed by desire in accepting Her at Lanka. If such be the fate of spotless Divinities like Rāma and Sītā, what need be said about the fate of others? Hence, it has been stated, “There is no available means by which one can satisfy all people.

So a man should ever do what is right for him.” The texts on liberation advise the spiritual aspirant to treat praise and censure alike; he should rid himself of *loka-vāsanā* by realizing the futility of attempting what it entails.

Some points need to be noted with reference to the eradication of *loka-vāsanā*. It does not imply that the aspirant nonchalantly dismisses the views of others. He may certainly utilize the observations of others for self-improvement; what he gives up is elation and displeasure when appreciated and depreciated respectively. Conquest of *loka-vāsanā* should be attempted in the context of other spiritual disciplines. For instance, it would not be beneficial for a boy who avoids bad company primarily because he wants to earn a good name at home to blindly check this aspect of *loka-vāsanā* without taking other steps. Further, one who tries to maintain an image of being a rebel, who does not care about what others say, is also under the grip of *loka-vāsanā*; conservation of that image is essential to him.

*Śāstra-vāsanā* is of three types; obsession with study, preoccupation with many subjects and marked squeamishness with regard to observances specified in the scripture. The *Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa* contains a narrative that can serve to illustrate the first kind of *śāstra-vāsanā*. Bharadvāja, the *Veda* says, seriously applied himself to the study of the *Vedas* for three successive births. In his fourth life too, he wished to strive unremittingly. Taking pity on him, Indra explained the impossibility of learning all the *Vedas* and then taught Bharadvāja about *Brahman* with attributes. While Bharadvāja’s study of the *Vedas* was not wrong, it was his obsession with mastering all the *Vedas* that was the problem. To get rid of this type of *śāstra-vāsanā*, the aspirant should impress upon himself that it is impossible to know a subject in its totality.

Addiction to the study of many subjects is also bad. The story of Durvāsa encountered



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in the *Kāvaṣeya-gītā* is pertinent. Durvāsa, it is said, once came to the assembly of Lord Mahādeva to pay his respects. He arrived with a cart-load of books. Nārada made fun of him by comparing him to an ass burdened with a great load on its back. Irritated and cured of his obsession, Durvāsa dumped his books into the sea. Thereafter, Mahādeva initiated him into the knowledge of the *Ātman*.

One should realize that the Supreme cannot be known by being preoccupied with books on a variety of topics. Thus, the *Kaṭha-upaniṣad* declares, “This *Ātman* is not attained through much study, through the power of grasping the meaning of the texts or through much mere hearing.” Likewise, in the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad*, we read that in spite of mastering a wide variety of subjects, Nārada was not free from grief as he had not realized the *Ātman*. To attain that sorrow-eradicating knowledge, he approached Sanatkumāra as a disciple. It has been said, “What is the point in vainly chewing the filthy rag of talk about sacred treatises? Wise men should, by all means, seek the light of consciousness within.”

Sincere practice of scripturally ordained rituals is essential for a person who has not progressed to the stage wherein he can dispense with rituals. However, undue fastidiousness with respect to religious observances, which characterizes the third type of *śāstra-vāsanā*, is an impediment. In the *Yoga-vāśiṣṭha*, we encounter the story of Dāsura which is relevant here. Dāsura, on account of his intense fastidiousness, was unable to locate a single spot in the whole world adequately pure for him to perform his religious rites.

Śrī Vidyāraṇya, who has elaborately dealt with the destruction of *vāsanās* in his *Jīvanmukti Viveka*, points out that *śāstra-vāsanā* leads to pride of learning. This is a reason, in addition to the impossibility of consummating the needs of *śāstra-vāsanā*, for the *śāstra-vāsanā* being labelled as impure.

Finally, we come to *deha-vāsanā*. This is of three kinds, the worst being marked by the identification of the *Ātman* with the body. Such identification is wrong because this view is opposed by the scripture and because it is the cause of misery. Unfortunately, it is almost universally prevalent. Being difficult to uproot, it must be assiduously tackled by cultivating the right notion that the *Ātman* is distinct from the body.

Sincere practice of scripturally ordained rituals is essential for a person who has not progressed to the stage when he can dispense with rituals. However, undue fastidiousness with respect to religious observances is an impediment.



The second type of *deha-vāsanā*, is characterized by concern with the acquisition of bodily grace. Motivated by the *vāsanā* of this kind, people strive, for example, to beautify themselves by the use of cosmetics and to purify themselves by bathing in rivers like the Ganga. Cleanliness, per se, is laudable and is listed among the eight noble qualities that all should acquire. In the *yoga-śāstra*, it is described as an important prelude to the practice of meditation. What is problematic is the false belief that the body can really and consistently be made gracious or pure; this leads to effort to accomplish what is impossible.

Charm and sweet smell, for example, belong to the cosmetic and not to the body, which is an assemblage of fat, flesh, bones, etc. A pretty attire does not make the body different. Consumption of pepper to make the voice melodious is not necessarily effective nor is the effect undecaying. A bath makes the body externally clean but only for a short while. As for scriptural means, such as a bath in the Ganga, to attain purity, it must be noted that there are powerful scriptural passages to the effect that the body is ever impure.

The third form of *deha-vāsanā* is related to the second kind; it is characterized by the persistent effort to rid the body of flaws. Striving to eradicate disease comes under this head. The problem is that diseases cannot be always kept at bay nor can all ailments be cured. As for the body, the scripture is emphatic that it is, by its very nature, the repository of what is unclean. Thus, in the *Maitrī-upaniṣad*, we have, “O Lord, this body is malodorous, insubstantial and a compact mass of skin, bones, sinews, marrow, flesh, blood, semen, mucus, tears, rheum, urine, excreta, bile and phlegm. What sense is there in gratifying one’s desires in that?”

At this juncture, it is necessary to emphasize that the spiritual aspirant should be clean and ought not to be negligent of health. A sick, dirty body does not favour the practice of spiritual discipline. The aspirant should, however, get rid of his longing to appear attractive and give up preoccupation with health and freedom from bodily defects. It is noteworthy that in the *Yoga-sūtras* it is specified that one who is established in purity develops dispassion towards the body. Even normally, it is one who bathes regularly who notices the foul odour of dry sweat and the like, while a person who is habitually filthy is unlikely to do so. Thus, it is the clean person who is better equipped to recognize the innate impurity of the body.

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## 10. God, the Universe's Cause

We encounter two types of causes: the material cause and the efficient cause. The first is responsible for the substance of which the effect is made, while the other is only instrumental in producing the effect. For instance, the material cause of a pot is mud, while its efficient cause is a potter. We see the world and with regard to it there arises the question as to what constitutes its material cause. Is God that material cause or not? This issue has been dealt with by Bādarāyaṇa in the *Brahma-sūtras*. The *Vedāntic* position is that *Brahman* is not only the efficient but also the material cause of the universe.

Some objections have been raised against this stand. In the *Upaniṣads*, statements are found to the effect that God reflected prior to manifesting the cosmos. A potter thinks of a pot and then proceeds to make it. God too deliberated and then produced the universe. Thus, being similar to the potter, God should be regarded as only the efficient cause of the universe. In the world, we do not find any instance of a material cause reflecting and then generating an effect.

Another reason adduced is that the scriptures declare God to be the Lord of all. In the case of lordly beings like kings, only efficient causality is perceived and not material causality. Indeed, no king served as the material with which a palace or a road was constructed.

Yet another reason is that the world has many shortcomings. If an effect be tainted, then impurity must be there even in its material cause. So, if God were the material cause of the universe, He would not be free from defilements. Not only is the proposition that God is flawed unappealing, it is refuted by the scripture. For instance, the *Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad* explicitly states that the Supreme is unchanging and taintless. Hence, God cannot be affirmed to be the material cause of the cosmos.

The *Vedāntic* position is that *Brahman* is not only the efficient but also the material cause of the universe.

On the basis of arguments of the form listed, it has been contended that God is the efficient but not the material cause of the world. Declaring the true view of the *upaniṣads*, Bādarāyaṇa aphorises, “*Brahman* must be the material cause as well so as not to contradict the proposition and the

illustration.” We shall now consider this *Brahma-sūtra* further.

In the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad*, we read of the sage Uddālaka Āruni querying his son Śvetaketu, “Did you ask about that teaching through which the unheard of becomes heard, the unthought of becomes thought of and the unknown becomes known?” On comprehending the efficient cause of an object, the object does not become known. On the other hand, as the effect has no existence apart from its material cause, knowledge of the material cause does make the effect known. So the proposition of Uddālaka relates to the material cause of the universe. As the *upaniṣad* explains in depth that by knowing *Brahman*, everything becomes known, the Supreme must be the material cause. Else, the proposition would get contradicted.



In the other *upaniṣads* too, we find a similar basic premise. Thus, in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, there is the proposition of Yājñavalkya, “My dear, all this becomes known when the *Ātman* is seen, heard of, reflected on and meditated upon.” In the *Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad*, the student Śaunaka asks his *Guru* Angirasa, “What is that on knowing which all this becomes known?” In all these cases, the basic premise would get falsified if God were only the efficient cause.

Reverting to the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad*, we find Uddālaka giving several illustrations that clearly reference a material cause. For instance, he says, “By knowing a clod of mud, all objects made of mud become known. All modification has speech as its support and is merely a name. It is true only as mud.” When mud is known, all products of mud, such as pots, can be regarded as known, for a pot has no existence apart from mud and is basically a name given to a particular shape of mud. Another illustration of Uddālaka is, “By knowing a piece of gold, all things made of gold become known.” All such illustrations would become inappropriate if the Supreme were just the efficient cause.

Thus, the *Brahma-sūtra* in question points out that the proposition and the illustrations of the scripture will be contradicted unless the Supreme is the material



From the *upaniṣads* it can even be comprehended that *Brahman* does not undergo any actual change to become the universe. On the other hand, remaining perfect, It appears as the world due to *Māyā*.



cause of the universe. The *sūtra* specifies by the words “material cause as well” that God is the efficient cause too. Indeed, if the universe were to have an ordainer other than God, it would be impossible to have knowledge of everything just from the knowledge of the Supreme and as such the proposition and illustration would not be apt. Further, the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* explicitly declares that prior to the manifestation of the universe, there was just

the Supreme, one alone, without a second. The Supreme’s deliberation followed by creation is also spoken of. Thus, the Supreme is the efficient cause too.

An objection considered earlier was that nowhere in the world do we find a material cause that deliberates and generates an effect. This is inapplicable in the case of the cause of the universe which can be known from the *Vedas* alone. From the *upaniṣads* it can even be comprehended that *Brahman* does not undergo any actual change to become the universe. On the other hand, remaining perfect, It appears as the world due to *Māyā*, just as a rope, not apprehended correctly in dim light, appears to be a snake or a crack in the ground.

## 11. God is Neither Partial Nor Cruel

There is tremendous inequality in the cosmos. The *devas* are said to enjoy great felicity in heaven and are endowed with powers of the kind that men are not. Humans constitute a middling class while animals lie lower than man in creation. The capacity of a worm, for instance, is less than that of even a fool. Apart from the fact of inequality, there is great suffering too. All animals and humans are subject to death and the inhabitants of heaven have to return to the world of mortals on the exhaustion of the stock of virtue that enabled them to enter heaven in the first place. Even young, innocent babies are, sometimes, seen to be in great suffering. Disease, infirmity, etc., are sources of misery to people.

The *Vedāntic* conclusion is that *Brahman* is the material and efficient cause of the universe. Thus, God ought to be the one who creates this cosmos with its great inequality and its sufferings. Would not such a God be partial by virtue of His ordaining inequality? Further, would not God be cruel by being the ordainer of great misery? Surely, a partial and cruel God is no true God at all. This conclusion follows from the proposition that God is the efficient cause of the universe. As it is thoroughly unacceptable, God could not have been the ordainer of the universe. This is one of the objections considered and rebutted in the *Brahma-sūtras* by Bādarāyaṇa.

Bādarāyaṇa aphorises, “Partiality and cruelty are not there in God owing to His consideration of other factors, for the *Vedas* so show.” If God had created this world arbitrarily, without taking any factor into consideration, He would have been open to the charges of partiality and cruelty. However, God is blameless since this unequal creation is brought about by Him in conformity with the virtues and vices of various beings. God is like rain. Rainfall is the common cause for the growth of a variety of crops such as paddy and barley. However, the differences between crops stem from the disparity in the seeds. It is not rain that makes a barley seed sprout into a crop different from paddy. Like rain, God is the common cause for the birth of the Devas, humans, etc. But it is the great merit acquired by the *deva* in an earlier birth that results in his being born a *deva*; a man is so born because of his having earlier earned merit as well as demerit.

How is it known that God creates in accordance with the virtues and vices of beings? The aphorist points out, “for the *vedas* so show.” For instance, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* teaches, “It becomes virtuous through good deeds and vile through evil acts.” In the *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord tells Arjuna, “In whatever way people worship Me, in the same way do I consummate their desires.”

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The aphorist next presents another objection and answers it. “If it be contended that this is impossible for want of any distinction in work prior to creation, we reply ‘No’, because of the world being beginningless.” Prior to the origin of the cosmos, there could have been no *karma*, virtuous or vile in accordance with which God could



have created a world of inequality and suffering. The *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* says, “In the beginning, O good looking one, all this was but the Truth, one alone without a second” and thereby rules out differences. So, if God were the ordainer of the Universe, He must be the one responsible for the inequalities at the start of creation. At best, He can rely thereafter on the good and bad acts of persons to reward or punish them in their subsequent lives. Thus, God must be guilty of partiality and cruelty by virtue of His having introduced inequality and suffering at the very start of creation.

The *Vedāntin* answers this objection by saying that the problem mentioned does not arise, for the transmigratory state is beginningless. There is nothing like the absolute starting point. Every cycle of creation is preceded by another cycle which provides the requisite disparity in the merit and demerit of creatures.

How is it known that the transmigratory state has no beginning? Bādarāyaṇa answers, “This is logical and it is met with in the scriptures.” Suppose the cosmos with its unequal inhabitants had an absolute starting point. Its emergence must then have been capricious. God could not have been responsible for the inequality. This is because He operates, as seen earlier, on the basis of the past *karma* of creatures and there could have been no *karma* prior to the origin of the universe with beings. *Avidyā* too could not have been the cause of inequality as, without the involvement of past *karma*, it is, per se, homogeneous. Hence, a universe with an absolute starting point could have come into being only by chance.

If events can occur capriciously, then it should be quite possible for beings to have happiness or misery for no rhyme or reason. A man’s good and bad deeds could go unrewarded and unpunished respectively. Further, if chance occurrences are possible, there is nothing to preclude the accidental rebirth of liberated souls. All this is

unacceptable and absurd. On the other hand, everything would fall into place if the transmigratory state were beginningless. The relationship between the condition prior to and after the start of each cycle of creation could then be on par with a seed and a sprout.

God is not guilty of partiality or cruelty because He creates in accordance with the past merit and demerit of each creature. There is no first creation prior to which there was no merit or demerit for God to consider.

The scriptures too declare transmigratory existence to be devoid of a starting point. For instance, the *Ṛg Veda* teaches, “The Lord devised the sun and the moon as before.” In the *Gītā* we read, “Its form is not perceived here as such neither its end, nor its origin, nor its continuance.” The teaching of the *Purāṇas* also is that the past and future cycles of creation are without number.

To conclude, God is not guilty of partiality or cruelty because He creates in accordance with the past merit and demerit of each creature. There is no first creation prior to which there was no merit or demerit for God to consider. There is thus no flaw in the *Vedāntic* conclusion that *Brahman* is the material and efficient cause of everything.

## 12. No Total Change of *Brahman* into the World

In his *Brahma-sūtras*, Bādarāyaṇa has presented and refuted several objections to the *Vedāntic* conclusion that *Brahman* is the material and efficient cause of the universe. One such objection is tersely stated by Bādarāyaṇa as follows: “There shall arise the eventuality of wholesome transformation or of the violation of *Upaniṣadic* statements about partlessness.” If *Brahman* is to be the material cause of the cosmos, then either the whole of *Brahman* must become the world or a part of the Supreme must undergo modification. Both these options are unacceptable.

The first alternative is untenable because the *Upaniṣadic* instruction about the realization of *Brahman* would become purposeless. After all, if *Brahman* wholly becomes the world, then no Supreme transcendent of the cosmos would remain to be known. As for *Brahman* in the form of the world, it is already being perceived and so scriptural advice in this regard is not required. The *Upaniṣadic* declaration that in deep sleep, the individual soul becomes absorbed in the Supreme would get falsified, for there

would be no *Brahman* other than the cosmos into which such absorption could take place. This apart, the teaching that *Brahman* is unborn would have to be discarded.

The second alternative too is inappropriate. Only if *Brahman* has parts can a portion of the Supreme become the world and the rest remain transcendent. Requiring *Brahman* to have parts would imply negation of the numerous *Upaniṣadic* passages to the effect that the Supreme is partless and admits no distinctions. Moreover, no entity that has parts can be eternal. So, if *Brahman* has parts, it cannot be eternal as taught by the scripture.

Bādarāyaṇa commences the *Vedāntin's* reply with the aphorism, "But there is no complete transformation on the authority of the *upaniṣads* and on account of *Brahman* being known from the *upaniṣads* alone." The fundamental contention of the *Vedāntin* is that his position is not defective as it is based on the *upaniṣads*. *Brahman* can be known from the *upaniṣads* alone and not by mere logic. It is said, "Do not argue about those things that are beyond thought. The characteristic of a thing beyond thought is in its being other than what lies within the realm of *prakṛti* or nature." A supersensory entity such as *Brahman* can be truly comprehended only through the scripture. As for the *upaniṣads*, they unequivocally state that *Brahman* is partless and devoid of modifications as also that the Supreme is the material and efficient cause of the universe.

That the manifestation of the cosmos does not obliterate *Brahman's* transcendence is, for example, clear from the following statement of the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad*: "His glory extends that far. The all-pervading Being is higher than that. All things are covered by one foot of His. The imperishable three-footed One is established in His own Self." Had *Brahman* been fully transformed into the world, the same *upaniṣad* would not have said with regard to deep sleep that the individual soul then becomes absorbed in the Supreme.

*Brahman* can be known from the *upaniṣads* alone and not by mere logic. A supersensuous entity such as *Brahman* can be truly comprehended only through the scripture.

Here, the opponent may object that even the *Veda* cannot teach what is patently self-contradictory by saying that the partless *Brahman* changes partially into the world. The *Vedāntin* readily responds that there is nothing incongruous about the scriptural teaching. This is because the *upaniṣads* intend to show that while *Brahman*, in Its real

aspect, is changeless and transcendent, variety is imagined on It through *avidyā*. For instance, the moon is one but appears to be multiple to a man afflicted by diplopia or polyopia. Since the differences of name and form are conjured by *avidyā*, the partlessness of *Brahman* is not affected. At the same time, *Brahman* seems to be partially transformed into the world.

The *veda* does not aim at establishing any real transformation of *Brahman* into the world. Indeed, no fruit would accrue to a person by knowing about such a transformation. The *upaniṣad* would not teach that which confers no benefit. The texts about transformation actually have another aim and that is to show that there is nothing whatsoever apart from *Brahman*, which is transcendent of all phenomenal processes. Such a correct knowledge of *Brahman* has the invaluable fruit of freeing one from transmigratory existence.

Bādarāyaṇa continues the *Vedāntin's* response with the aphorism, "Because in the individual soul also, as in the case of *devas*, etc., diverse creation occurs. Similarly, in the case of *Brahman*." In the dream state, without any change of nature in the individual soul, there appears the multifaceted world of dreams. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* says, "There are no chariots nor animals to be yoked to them nor paths there. But he creates chariots, animals and roads." The *Devas* are said to be able to display diversity without undergoing personal modifications. In the world too, a magician, may by means of hypnotism, cause another to see several objects without himself being personally affected in any way. Similarly even in the case of *Brahman*, there can be diverse creation without *Brahman* actually undergoing transformation and loss of partlessness.

To conclude, the *Vedāntin's* position that *Brahman* is the material cause of the universe and yet partless and immaculate is not defective. It is based on the scripture, which is the authority in such matters. *Avidyā* is what makes the non-dual Supreme appear as diverse. Supportive illustrations too are available.

The *Vedāntin's* position that *Brahman* is the material cause of the universe and yet partless and immaculate is not defective. It is based on the scripture, which is the authority in such matters. *Avidyā* is what makes the non-dual Supreme appear as diverse.



## 13. The Greatest Secret

Kṛṣṇa, in the course of His advice to Arjuna, extols the sacred doctrine and then reveals it. He says, “To you who do not cavil, I shall now declare the greatest secret which is knowledge coupled with direct experience, having known which you will be liberated from transmigratory existence. This is the sovereign knowledge, the sovereign secret and the sovereign purifier. It is directly realizable, unopposed to *dharma*, very easy to perform and imperishable.” This eulogy is intended to make the hearer interested and focused.

The Lord then proceeds to directly expound the sacred doctrine. He says, “In My unmanifested form I pervade the entire world. All beings dwell in Me but I do not dwell in them. Nor do beings dwell in Me. Behold My divine *Yoga*! Sustaining all beings, but not dwelling in them - such is My Self which is the cause of all beings.”

At the first sight, the teaching of the Lord appears to be full of contradictions. How? The Lord declares that everything is pervaded by Him and that all beings dwell in Him and immediately follows this up by saying that neither does He dwell in beings nor beings in Him. Surely, the Lord would not speak thus in riddles unless the nature of the teaching demands such an exposition.

The Lord declares that everything is pervaded by Him and that all beings dwell in Him and immediately follows this up by saying that neither does He dwell in beings nor beings in Him.



If we take the world to be real then the contradiction cannot be properly resolved. On the other hand, consider a rope mistaken, in semi-darkness, to be a snake. Can the apparent snake be visualised in the absence of the rope? No. Can there be any portion of the snake where the rope is not there? Here again the answer is, “No.” Since the snake has no existence apart from the rope and since whatever portion of the

snake is seen the rope is also there, it would not be wrong to say that the snake is entirely pervaded by the rope. Further, as the rope is the substratum of the illusory snake it can be said that the snake dwells in or has as its substratum, the rope. No doubt such statements can be made but are they true when examined with greater insight? No, for neither does the rope really pervade the snake nor does the snake really rest on the rope. This is because there is no real snake at all. Only if the snake

were to be real could a real pervasion take place.

Similar is the case with the *Ātman*. The *Ātman* being the substratum of everything, without which nothing can exist, it can be said that everything rests in the *Ātman*. On the other hand, if one were to view the scene with greater insight it would be impossible to assert that the *Ātman* really dwells in all beings or that all beings really dwell in the *Ātman*. The Lord took recourse to such a mode of exposition to drive home the point that the *Ātman* alone really exists and that the world is illusory.



Adducing His seemingly inexplicable, contradictory statements, the Lord clarifies, “Behold My divine *Yoga*.” Even earlier, the Lord had spoken of this *Māyā* of His by saying, “Indeed this *Māyā* of Mine, composed of *guṇas*, is hard to surmount.” So, there need be no doubt that in the opinion of the Lord the world appears only on account of *Māyā*.

The Lord has taken recourse in other places too to the mode of exposition followed here. For example, in chapter 13, He has said about the *Ātman*, “Shining by the functions of all the senses and yet without senses, unattached and yet supporting all, devoid of qualities.”

In the verses taken up for consideration we found the Lord saying, “My Self is the cause of beings.” Does this mean that the Lord has an *Ātman* distinct from Him? No, He Himself has declared later, “I am the *Ātman*.” Hence, here the Lord has merely resorted to common parlance in making such an utterance. Certainly, no one can say that the Lord is ignorant. Even a knower of the Self may use the word “I” like an ordinary ignorant person. In the *Pancadaśī*, it is explained that when the knower of the Truth says, “I go” etc., he refers to the body but when he says, “I am the conscious Self” he refers to the changeless *Ātman*.

The *Ātman* being the substratum of everything, without which nothing can exist, it can be said that everything rests in the *Ātman*.



## 14. *Māyā* - The Great Enigma

Some raise objections against the *Vedāntic* position that on account of *Māyā* or *avidyā*, *Brahman* appears as the world just as, in dim light, to the one who fails to perceive correctly, a rope appears as a snake. We shall consider the major objections and the answers to them.

**Objection:** For a rope to be mistaken for a snake, it is essential that there exist a perceiver distinct from the rope and the snake. Since no entity apart from *Brahman* is admitted by the *Vedāntin*, the rope-snake example is inappropriate.

**Answer:** This is not so. An example cannot match what is meant to be illustrated in all its aspects. If it did, it would be indistinguishable from the original and would not be just an illustration. In the present case, the analogy serves to indicate how something may be mistaken for something else and not to indicate the presence of a distinct perceiver.

**Objection:** A snake must exist if a rope is to be mistaken for a serpent. So also, the world must exist apart from *Brahman* if *Brahman* is to be mistaken for it.

**Answer:** If one entity is to be mistaken for another, say a rope for a snake, it is necessary that one have a knowledge of the superimposed entity, such as the snake. This, in no way, implies that a real snake must exist, for the knowledge of the snake may be false knowledge. For instance, a person may see a monster in a dream. It is possible for him, after waking up, to mistake a tree in dim light to be that monster and to flee in terror. This mistaken cognition requires a knowledge of the monster but does not demand the reality of the monster. Since *saṁsāra* is beginningless, it cannot be argued that at the very beginning there was only *Brahman* and no possibility of any knowledge of an earlier world, real or false, which could serve as the basis for the subsequent misconception of *Brahman* as the world.

Since *saṁsāra* is beginningless, it cannot be argued that at the very beginning there was only *Brahman* and no possibility of any knowledge of an earlier world, real or false, which could serve as the basis for the subsequent misconception of *Brahman* as the world.





**Objection:** For a superimposition like that of a snake on a rope to occur, it is essential that the entity on which something is superimposed be distinct from and visible to the perceiver. For instance, the rope must lie in front of a person, who can see it, for the person to mistake it for a snake. In the case of *Brahman*, the *Vedāntin* holds the Supreme to be the inner Self of

everybody. As *Brahman* is never separate from or visible to anyone, a world, real or false, cannot be superimposed on the Supreme.

**Answer:** It is not a rule that the object on which we superimpose something else be perceivable by us. For instance, *ākāśa* is invisible; it does not fall within the ken of our five senses. Yet, ignorant people impute a blue colour or a spherical shape to it and make statements such as, “The sky is blue.” It is also not true that we can only mistake something distinct from us to be something else. For instance, does not a person mistake himself to be the body and say, “I am tall”?

**Objection:** Is the *Veda* real or not? If it is, *Brahman* cannot be non-dual as claimed by the *Advaitin*. If it is unreal then it is meaningless for the *Advaitin* to base his philosophy on it and declare that destruction of *avidyā* and consequent liberation can be effected by knowledge generated by the scripture.

**Answer:** Even an unreal entity can produce a true effect. For instance, the fear that arises in a dream in which one is chased by a tiger can cause one to wake up and perspire. The cold sweat and the waking up are real but the tiger is not. Thus, though not real, the *Veda* can produce true-knowledge. This apart, the *Advaitin* does not assert that the world is unreal from the *vyāvahārika* or empirical standpoint. To the extent that the world is empirically real, so is the *Veda*. Knowledge produced by the *Veda* too has empirical validity and is adequate to destroy *avidyā*.

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**Objection:** The *Advaitin* does not give a logically impeccable, direct answer to the question, “Why is *Māyā* present?”

**Answer:** The fault lies in the question, which is illogical. Suppose a man dreams that he is flying through the air. If, in the dream, he were to pose the question, “How is it that I, who am a man and not a bird, am able to generate an upward thrust and achieve flight?”, he would not get an appropriate answer. If he were to make the enquiry after waking up, he would merely conclude that he never actually flew. That is, he would not have directly explained his flight either while dreaming or while awake. Similar is the position with regard to the question about *Māyā*. If one were to realize the Truth, *Māyā* would vanish and the query, “Why is *Māyā* present?” would be meaningless. On the other hand, if a person were to be under the spell of *Māyā*, the world would appear real to him and not illusory. So, he too cannot answer satisfactorily.

**Objection:** We see the world and scientists are studying it. How then can its reality be negated?

**Answer:** Cannot one have a dream in which one is a physicist working along with several other researchers in a laboratory? Just because such scientific investigation is carried out and some conclusions arrived at in the course of the dream, it does not follow that the dream-world is real. The dream-world, with its scientists, their experiments and their findings and developments, does get negated when one awakens, but not before that. The *Vedāntin* does not deny the empirical validity of the world and of scientific analysis. Any negation is only from the standpoint of the Absolute. Further, it is certainly untrue that scientific findings contradict the principal import of the *Veda*. The province of science does not infringe on that of *vedānta* whose concern is with *Brahman*, which is supersensory.

**Objection:** The status of *Māyā* or *avidyā* is unclear. If *avidyā* is just lack of knowledge, then how can it make *Brahman* appear as the variegated cosmos? On the other hand, if it be some positive entity, how can *Brahman* be non-dual and totally devoid of attributes? Also, how can a positive, beginningless entity cease to be on the dawn of knowledge?

**Answer:** *Māyā* or *avidyā* is not mere absence of knowledge; it is not *asat* or non-existent. When the *Vedāntin* says that *avidyā* is a positive entity, he does not mean that it is *sat* or real like *Brahman*. Thus, *Brahman*'s non-duality is not compromised. The term ‘positive’ is used with respect to *Māyā* to differentiate it from *asat*. *Māyā* is not *asat* as its effects are seen nor is it *sat* as it is negated by knowledge; it is not simultaneously *sat* and *asat* either.

That *Māyā* or *avidyā*, though without a beginning, can be negated is concluded by the *Vedāntin* on the authority of the *upaniṣads* and not by mere logic. For instance, the *Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad* declares, “The birthless one, *Māyā*, is engaged to bring about the enjoyer, the enjoyable and the enjoyment.” In the very next *mantra* of the *Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad*, we encounter the clear teaching, “From repeated meditation on the Supreme, by union with and contemplation on the Truth, there comes about at the end, the cessation of *Māyā* in the form of the universe.”

“From repeated meditation on the Supreme, by union with and contemplation on the Truth, there comes about at the end, the cessation of *Māyā* in the form of the universe”.



Being neither *sat* nor *asat*, uncaused and yet subject to eradication, it achieves the inconceivable by making the non-dual *Brahman* appear as the world and individual soul. Indeed, *Māyā* is the most mysterious paradox.

## 15. *Ātman* is Self-effulgent Consciousness

In the *Jyotir-brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, the *Ātman* is taught to be of the nature of unchanging, self-effulgent consciousness. To indicate the mode of imparting and receiving the teaching and to eulogise knowledge, the *Upaniṣad* resorts to a story involving a disciple, emperor Janaka, and his *Guru*, sage Yājñavalkya. Janaka initiates the dialogue by asking his *Guru*, “What serves as the light for a person?” Śaṅkara has compassionately conveyed the teaching of the *Jyotir-brāhmaṇa* in a simple, single verse; this is his composition, “*Ekaślokī*.”

The *Ekaślokī* describes the conversation between a *Guru* and his disciple. Unusually, it is the teacher and not the student who poses the queries. By a series of questions, each following a reasoned

In the *Jyotir-brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, the *Ātman* is taught to be of the nature of unchanging, self-effulgent consciousness.





reply from the disciple, the *Guru* leads the disciple to the realization that the *Ātman* is the ultimate light. Since the disciple is induced to think deeply, he is not troubled by inattention, doubts and lack of conviction at any stage of the instruction process.

Imitating Janaka, the *Guru* asks, “What is your light?” The import of the question is,

“What light enables you to perceive objects and to engage in activity?” The disciple responds, “During the day, the sun serves as my light.” Once the sun has set, human activity does not automatically cease. At night, people resort to lamps. Not only man-made sources of light but also natural sources facilitate perception and activity. For instance, on a full-moon night people can find their way home. Thus, the disciple continues, “At night, lamps, etc., serve as my light.”

It is not the intention of the *Guru* to just get the disciple to give this obvious, commonplace answer. Hence, he probes further by saying, “That may be so. What is the light that enables you to perceive the sun and lamps?” The sun, moon, stars and lamps are luminaries but they themselves are objects of perception. Sounds may be present but one who is deaf will not be able to hear them. Thus, sounds are not self-revealing. Likewise, the sources of light spoken of by the disciple are themselves in need of being revealed by another “light.”

The disciple thinks about the question and concludes that it is by means of his organ of sight that he apprehends any external source of light. His senses are present unimpaired even in the absence of external factors. For instance, when one enters a dark room just because one does not perceive objects, it does not mean that one has lost one’s power of sight. After all, one apprehends darkness. On the other hand, when the organ of sight does not function, none of the external sources of light such as the sun can enable one to see; they themselves remain unseen. Thus, the disciple answers, “The eye.”

The *Guru* leads the disciple further by asking, “At times when the eye is closed, etc., what is your light?” One can sense whether the eyes are open or closed. Also one can comprehend that one is able to see clearly or that one’s vision is significantly impaired. Thus, the eye itself is an object of apprehension. When one is quite inattentive, though the eyes are open and there is adequate light, one does not cognise objects, the sun and the state of the eyes. On the other hand, one is able to think when the eyes are closed. Analysing thus, the disciple answers, “The intellect.”

The teacher decides to clinch the issue by taking the disciple one step further. He queries, “What is the light by which the intellect is perceived?” People are aware of the presence and absence of their thoughts. Thus, the mind itself is an object of cognition. Just as the sun cannot reveal itself and the eye cannot perceive itself, the intellect too does not, on its own, apprehend itself. After all, a thing cannot be the subject and object simultaneously. It cannot even be assumed that each thought is revealed by another thought. This is because if a thought were required to generate awareness of another thought, then yet another thought would be required to grasp the thought that has for its object the first thought. Thus, there would be the fallacy of infinite regress.

An alternative interpretation of the teacher’s words is also possible. The teacher’s query can even be taken as, “When the intellect is not seen, what is your light?” When one is in deep sleep or in *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, the acme of *Yoga*, thoughts are not present. Still there is awareness. Thus, on waking up from sleep one recognises, “I slept happily. I did not know anything.” This recognition could not have arisen if awareness were totally absent during sleep. In the interval between thoughts too, awareness is there.

Thinking deeply over his *Guru*’s query, the disciple answers, “I am there.” After all, it is he who perceives the rise and fall of thoughts as also a state of thoughtlessness. The disciple realizes that he must be of the nature of awareness. Appreciating the disciple’s understanding, the *Guru* presents the conclusion, “Therefore, you are the ultimate light.” Suppose the one who illumines the intellect were not self-effulgent. Then another perceiver would be required to reveal that illuminer of the intellect. To reveal the second perceiver, a third perceiver could be needed. There would be infinite regress. Thus, what apprehends the functioning of the mind is self-effulgent consciousness. The disciple cannot but be that self-effulgent consciousness. Not merely on account of intellectual understanding but also from direct experience, the disciple asserts, “Yes I am, O Lord!”

Be it the waking state,  
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the *Ātman* is the unchanging  
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Be it the waking state, the dream state or the state of deep sleep, the *Ātman* is the unchanging self-effulgent witness; only what is apprehended changes. Thus, in connection with deep sleep wherein consciousness seemingly ceases to be, Yājñavalkya teaches Janaka, “The knower’s function of knowing can never be lost as It is imperishable. However, there is no second thing separate from It which It can know.” A rough example is that of a man with

normal eyesight entering a dark room. In *nirvikalpa-samādhi* too, duality is not apprehended; the *Ātman*, however, shines clearly on Its own without the thick veil of *avidyā* that marks dreamless sleep. To conclude, the *Ātman* is unchanging, self-effulgent consciousness.

## 16. Liberation of Sages with Divine Missions

Can one who has realized the Truth be reborn? In view of the unequivocal assertion of the *upaniṣads* that knowledge of the Supreme is the cause of liberation, this query would appear to be dispensable. It would perhaps be on par with wondering whether or not the hunger of a man who has begun eating a full meal will be appeased. The question, however, is pertinent because in the *Ramāyāṇa*, *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas* we come across stories of knowers of the Truth being reborn.

In the *Ramāyāṇa*, we read, for instance, that the great sage and mind-born son of Brahmā, Vaśiṣṭha, lost his body due to a curse of King Nimi. Vaśiṣṭha sought Brahmā’s help and, in accordance with Brahmā’s advice, acquired a new body by being born of Mitra-Varuṇa. There is no room for doubt that Vaśiṣṭha was completely enlightened.

The *Mahābhārata* informs us that Apāntaratamas, an ancient seer and teacher of the *Vedas*, was directed by Viṣṇu to take birth at the junction of the *Dvāpara* and *Kali yugas* as Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana, commonly known as Vyāsa. There is also an account of the exalted Sanatkumāra acceding to the wish of Rudra and being reborn as Skanda. Likewise, it is recounted that sage Bhṛgu and others were reborn at the sacrifice of Varuṇa. Apāntaratamas, Sanatkumāra and Bhṛgu were decidedly knowers of *Brahman* that is devoid of all attributes. More than

one birth of the celestial minstrel Nārada has been described. Supportive evidence is available in the *mantra* and corroborative portions of the *Vedas* themselves.

From the various accounts, it can be seen that some sages acquired new bodies after the fall of their original ones; some others retained their bodies but, by their powers of *yoga*, simultaneously entered multiple bodies. These sages are described by the *Smṛtis* as possessed of the realization of the full import of the *Vedas*.

In the light of all this, the prima facie position is that knowledge of *Brahman* devoid of all attributes sometimes results in liberation from transmigratory

existence and sometimes it does not. Rebutting the prima facie view, Bādarāyaṇa aphorises, in his *Brahma-sūtras*, “For those with a mission, there is corporeal existence till the completion of the mission.” We can now consider the implication of this *sūtra* in the light of Śaṅkara’s commentary on it. Realization of the Truth never fails to confer liberation. A Vedic rite such as *Jyotiṣṭoma* causes the sacrificer to attain heaven only after the sacrificer’s death, which may occur long after the completion of the rite. So, there is at least some occasion for a man of inadequate faith to fear whether the result of a rite will accrue or not. On the other hand, there is no such scope in the case of knowledge of the Supreme as it produces an immediately-experienced, direct result. Thus, on realizing the Truth, one becomes liberated even while alive. Persons like Vaśiṣṭha were not exceptions.

Knowledge burns away the seeds of *karma* or action. The *Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad* declares, “When the Supreme that is both high and low is seen, the knot of the heart gets torn, all doubts cease and all one’s actions become dissipated.” In the *Bhagavad-gītā* too, we find the Lord stating, “O Arjuna, just as fire reduces fuel to ashes, the fire of





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knowledge burns away all actions.” After the dawn of realization, no bodily or mental activity of the sage leads to the acquisition of merit or demerit that must be exhausted by taking a future birth. This is true even of knowers like Vaśiṣṭha. Knowledge ensures that the store of actions of the past birth that would normally have begun to bear fruit only in

future births becomes thoroughly infructuous. All that remains is *prārabdha-karma*, the actions of the past that have already started yielding results. The *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* thus teaches, “His delay is only as long as his body does not fall. Then he merges into *Brahman*.” On the *prārabdha-karma* getting exhausted, the body of the one liberated while alive ceases to function and the sage attains disembodied liberation. The norm is that *prarabdha-karma* ends with the very life in which one attains mature knowledge.

There is definitely no difference between knowers of the Truth, such as Vaśiṣṭha, who are entrusted by God with special missions and other knowers of the Truth as far as total untaintedness by physical and mental activity and liberation even while alive are concerned. However, a special feature in the case of the former class is that corporeal existence lasts not till the fall of the body in which realization of the Supreme dawns but till the mission ends. It is as though a person like Vaśiṣṭha is a knower of the Truth with an extraordinary *prarabdha-karma* that gets fully exhausted only when the divine mission undertaken ends. At the end of the God-entrusted task, disembodied abidance as *Brahman* occurs just as it does in the case of a normal knower on the fall of his body.

Great ones such as Apāntaratamas are allotted by God the holy task of bringing about the well-being of the world by propagation of the *Vedas*, etc. Hence, their corporeal state is regulated by their mission itself. These sages are divine and for the task undertaken they move from one body to another with perfect liberty just as a man moves from one house to another. Whatever residual *karmas* or actions have begun to fructify they shed once and for all in the various lives. All through, they retain complete memories of their true identity. Being masters of the materials needed

to produce bodies, they create new bodies for themselves and possess the bodies one or more at a time.

It is stated in the *Mahābhārata* that an exponent of *Brahman* named Sulabhā wished to have a discussion with the emperor Janaka. So, she set aside her body and entered that of Janaka. Having finished her discussion with him, she again took possession of her body. This story furnishes an example of how a great one may freely move from one body to another.

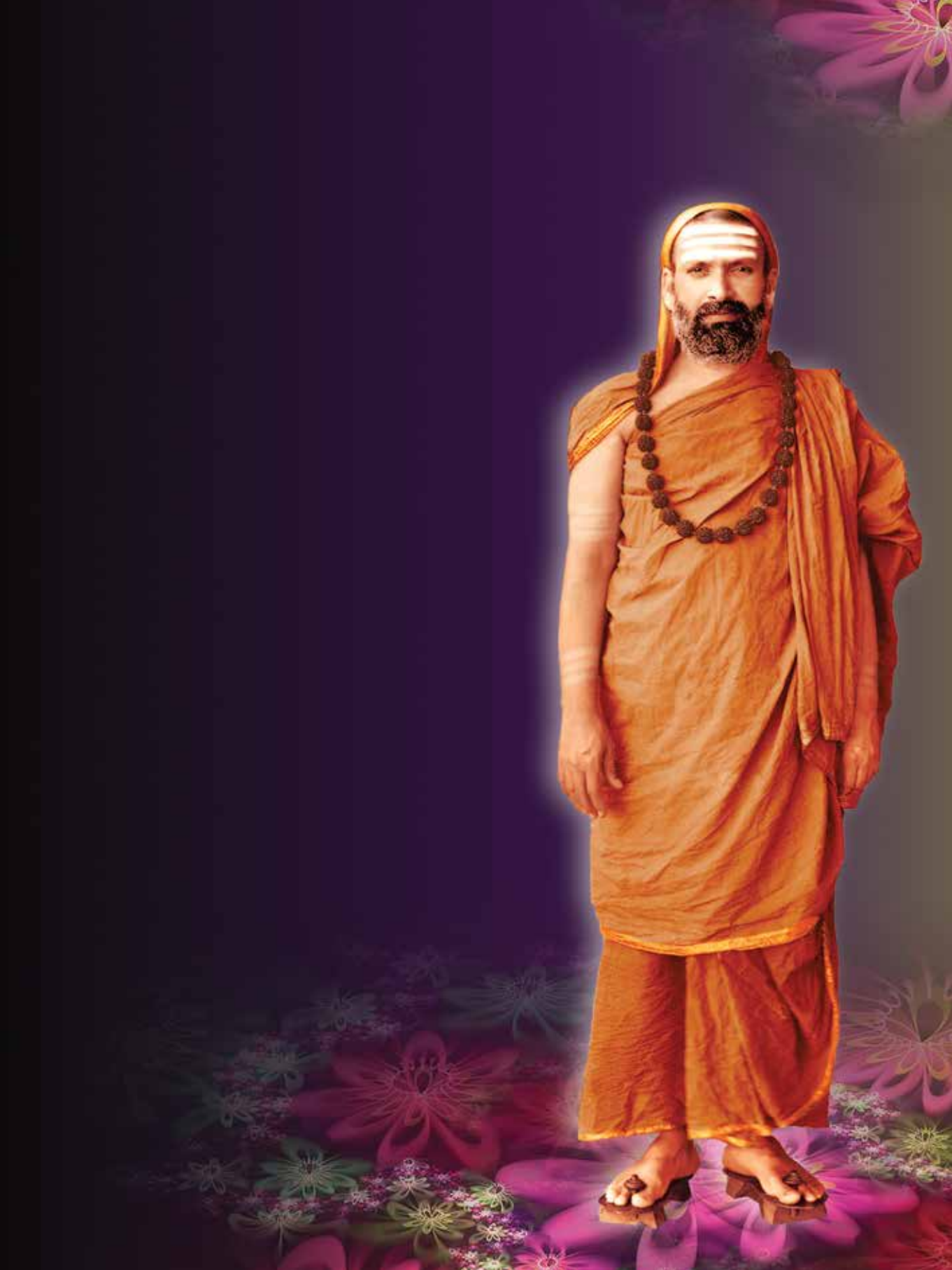
Sages such as Vaśiṣṭha cannot be placed on par with *Jāti-smaras*, who are persons with the special capacity to recollect their past lives. This is because the sages have complete enlightenment, are fully independent in their movements and remember their identities under all circumstances. Accordingly, even after taking birth through Mitra-Varuṇa, Vaśiṣṭha continued to be portrayed by the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* as being Vaśiṣṭha, the mind-born son of Brahma.

To conclude, there is no exception to the rule that realization of the Truth gives rise to liberation.



To conclude, there is no exception to the rule that realization of the Truth gives rise to liberation. In the case of normal knowers of the Supreme, there is total disembodiment after death. On the other hand, persons entrusted with holy missions by God continue to have corporeal existence till the completion of their special tasks. Thereafter, they attain disembodied abidance as *Brahman*.





## CHAPTER 24

# From His Pen

This chapter contains the translations of three of the twelve immensely beneficial treatises penned in Kannada by His Holiness. The first and third essays were written by His Holiness prior to His setting out on His first tour, in March 1956; the second was written a little later.

As is very characteristic of His Holiness, He has not penned a single phrase that is superfluous, inaccurate, improvable or not pregnant with import. Each uplifting treatise is densely packed with information and the ratiocination that is found therein is trenchant and clinching. Yet, the essays are so easy to understand



that one may even forget that, time and again, complex scriptural topics are being presented and that too without dilution; such is the amazing style of His Holiness. If this is not fully reflected in the English translations or there are any other shortcomings in them, the responsibility rests with me; as for the originals, they are impeccable.

## 1. Worship of Īśvara

People desire to escape death. But experience shows that this desire is not fulfilled. The Lord has said: *“For anyone who is born, death is definite and for the one who dies, rebirth is certain. Hence, with regard to what is unavoidable, you ought not to grieve.”*

We have been born now. The Lord speaks of rebirth. If there is to be a rebirth in future, death must occur first. The exit of the *prāṇas* (life-breaths) from the body is said to be death. While we do not want our *prāṇas* to leave the body, in whose case will there actually be no departure of the *prāṇas* from the present body and entry into another body? The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* says: *“The enlightened one’s prāṇas do not depart from the body,”* and, *“They dissolve into him alone.”*



In the case of a *jñānin*, the one who has realized the Supreme, the subtle body comprising the mind, organs and the *prāṇas* does not depart from the gross body and proceed to another body. Instead, the earth, water, fire, air and *ākāśa* that constitute the body dissolve into their respective universal forms. The *Veda* asserts that there is

If people are to fulfil their desire for freedom from death, it is imperative that they acquire *jñāna*, the realization of the Truth. For this, it is necessary that they secure the means for the dawn of realization.

no death for a *jñānin*: “It is only on knowing Him that one transcends death.” He who is without death cannot have any rebirth. Statements such as, “Birth, death and dwelling in the mother’s womb occur again and again,” are not applicable to a *jñānin*. So, if people are to fulfil their desire for freedom from death, it is imperative that they acquire *jñāna*, the realization of the Truth. For this, it is necessary that they secure the means for the dawn of realization.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* teaches: “The *Ātman*, my dear, should be realized, heard of, reflected on and firmly meditated upon.” Thus, the proximate means to realize the *Ātman*, which is none other than *Brahman*, are *śravaṇa*, the hearing of the Truth from the *Guru* and the scripture, *manana*, reasoning in accordance with what has been taught to resolve all doubts and *nididhyāsana*, steadfast, one-pointed concentration of the mind on the *Ātman*. A tetrad of qualifications is needed for one to engage in *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. These are *viveka*, discrimination, *vairāgya*, dispassion, *śamādiṣṭka-sampatti*, a valuable set of six beginning with mind control, and *mumuṣutva*, the desire for freedom from transmigratory existence. The hexad referred to comprises *śama*, the control of the mind, *dama*, the control of the senses, *uparati*, withdrawal from activities, *titikṣā*, forbearance, *śraddhā*, faith, and *samādhāna*, focus. If the four qualifications are not present in a person, his attempt at *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* will not bear fruit in the form of the dawn of the realization of the Supreme. Just as *upanayana* (investiture with the sacred thread) is a prerequisite for a person to perform a *Vedic-yāga*, these four qualifications are needed here. However, they are uncommon.

What is one who is not yet qualified to engage in *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* to do? It is said: “Since our mind has not withdrawn from the world in its entirety, we cannot practise *śravaṇa* and *manana*. However, the anguish caused by sense-objects is unbearable. To end it, we practise the worship of God’s feet.” *Bhakti* is what should be resorted to.

### The Nature of Devotion

By nature, we are emotionally involved with something or the other. It is said: “A child is engrossed with play. A lad dotes on a maiden. An aged one is given to worrying. But none is

The proximate means to realize the *Ātman*, which is none other than *Brahman*, are *śravaṇa*, the hearing of the Truth from the *Guru* and the scripture, *manana*, reasoning in accordance with what has been taught to resolve all doubts and *nididhyāsana*, steadfast, one-pointed concentration of the mind on the *Ātman*.

What is one who is not yet qualified to engage in *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* to do? *Bhakti* is what should be resorted to.

*attached to the Supreme Brahman.*” It is patent that we are not free from attachments at any time and that it would be well-nigh impossible for us to give up fondness altogether. However, what we can do is to turn our fondness towards the Lord; if we do so, we will benefit greatly. Fondness is a *vṛtti* of the mind; it needs an object and cannot subsist without one. The emotional pull towards children is called ‘*vātsalya*’, that towards the wife is named ‘*ratī*’ and that towards the revered is termed ‘*bhakti*’. Nārada has defined *bhakti* thus in his *Bhakti-sūtras*: “*Bhakti is of the nature of supreme love*

*for God.*” A devotee with this ‘*parama-prema*, supreme love’ just cannot exist without God; he who can manage for even a moment without love for God does not have this *parama-prema*. Such is the characteristic of consummate *bhakti*. A devotee with this *bhakti* attains God and transcends dotage and death.

According to the *Taittirīya-upaniṣad*, the intrinsic nature of God is as follows: “*Brahman is absolute existence, pure consciousness and unlimited by space, time and objects.*” The Supreme is, thus, *nirguṇa*, bereft of qualities. The good qualities of an entity engender fondness for that entity. As God is without qualities, how is one to love Him? The Supreme, though intrinsically devoid of qualities, appears with wonderful qualities that thoroughly facilitate devotion. The Lord has said: “*Though I am without birth, have, by nature, a power of knowledge that never wanes and am the Lord of beings, by subjugating My Prakṛti, I take birth by My own Māyā.*” The *Veda* teaches, “*He that is unborn manifests in many ways.*” Thus, it must be accepted



A devotee with ‘*parama-prema*, supreme love’ just cannot exist without God. He attains God and transcends dotage and death.

The Supreme, though intrinsically devoid of qualities, appears with wonderful qualities that thoroughly facilitate devotion.

that God incarnates. His incarnations are His captivating sports. Why does the Lord incarnate? He does so for the sake of benefitting beings. It is said: *“Having compared the weights of helpfulness to others and abidance in absoluteness and concluded that helping others is the weightier of the two, the Lord incarnated ten times.”* It is also said, *“Fie upon the life of one who helps none. May animals live; even their skins are useful.”* The life of the person who helps none is a sheer waste; an animal is much better than him, for it is useful even after its death. As for the Lord, He is the embodiment of kindness.

Here is an example from the *Mahābhārata* of His kindness. Kṛṣṇa was in His palace at Dvārakā. At that time, in Hastināpura, in keeping with Duryodhana’s instruction, Duśśāsana dragged Draupadī from her private quarters to the hall and started disrobing her to shame her. Being greatly devoted to Kṛṣṇa, she cried out to Him for succour: *“Alas! O Kṛṣṇa! O Resident of Dvārakā! O Delighter of the Yādavas! Where are You? Why are You ignoring me, who have attained this state, with nobody to protect me?”* The Lord’s heart melted. He did not give thought to any possible inconvenience. He did not wait to inform anybody. He immediately went to Draupadī and saved her honour in an extraordinary manner. Yet, such was His compassion that He was not satisfied with what He did for her and later stated, *“Sobbing, ‘O Govinda’, Draupadī invoked Me, who was afar. So My debt to her is great and does not leave My heart.”*

Referring to the captivating qualities of the Lord, the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* points out, *“Even sages who revel only in the Ātman and are free from all bonds (or, have given up even the study of texts) are devoted to God without any expectation whatsoever. Such are the excellent qualities of God.”* A prayer of Bhagavatpāda is, *“What am I to make known to You, who are skilled in giving devotees with what they lack and preserving what they have, who are intent on bestowing all good on devotees, who impart knowledge about the means to desired seen and unseen ends, who pervade everything from within and without, who are omniscient and are merciful? O Śambhu! I constantly bear in mind that You are my inmost self.”* The Lord’s lovely nature is indeed of the kind portrayed in the verses referred to.

Faithfully listening to the exposition of works, such as the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, that highlight the greatness of God is called ‘śravaṇa’.



Intense, steady love for God is the *bhakti* specified earlier. A name for it is ‘*sādhya bhakti*, accomplished devotion’. There are nine devotional practices that lead to it. We call even these as *bhakti*; this term is used in the scripture to refer to accomplished devotion and, secondarily, to the means to it. Prahlada said, according to *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, “Hearing about the greatness of the Lord, praising Him, thinking of Him, waiting upon Him, worshipping Him, paying obeisance to Him, being His servant, looking upon oneself as His friend and dedicating oneself to Him – if devotion to God, which has these nine forms, is practised by a person without any expectation right from the moment he is taught about it, that I deem to be the best learning.”



‘*Kīrtana*’ refers not only to the singing of *bhajans* but also to the performance of the *japa* of a *mantra* into which one has been initiated. If we keep engaging in *kīrtana*, we will become freed from worldly bonds.

Faithfully listening to the exposition of works, such as the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, that highlight the greatness of God is called ‘*śravaṇa*’ (the first of the nine means). Such hearing engenders affection towards God. We, however, squander our precious time now on worthless matters. By doing so, we are not going to attain any good in this world or the next. On the contrary, if we turn to works about God such as the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, we would not only develop devotion to the Lord but also learn about how to lead our lives meaningfully and about the actual insipidity of worldly pleasures.

Various spiritual practices have been specified in the scriptures for us to attain what is truly good. While it is difficult in the *kali-yuga*, the present age, for people to duly resort to these,

The third means is 'smaraṇa, keeping God in mind'. One could contemplate on Īśvara; the term 'smaraṇa' covers contemplation on God.

one of them, 'kīrtana' (the second of the nine means), is indeed easy and effective. Chanting the names of the Lord is included in this. The *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* points out, "What a person attains in the *kṛta-yuga* by meditation, in the *tretā-yuga* by the performance of sacrifices and in the *dvāpara-yuga* by worship, he attains in the *kali-yuga* by chanting the names of the Lord." As the *yugas* passed, human ability kept decreasing and, hence, people resorted to simpler and simpler means. However, what has to be finally achieved has not changed and we must never lose sight of it.

'Kīrtana' refers not only to the singing of *bhajans* but also to the performance of the *japa* of a *mantra* into which one has been initiated. According to the *Manu-smṛti*, "A *brāhmaṇa* attains perfection through *japa* itself. There is no doubt regarding this. He may or may not engage in rites and such else. He who is the friend of beings (as *japa* does not involve causing injury to anyone) is said to be connected with the Supreme." It is said in the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, "There is, O king, a great merit in the *kali-yuga*, a storehouse of defects. One gets freed from attachment and reaches the Supreme just by praising God." From this it is apparent that if we keep engaging in *kīrtana*, we will become freed from worldly bonds. However, though engaging in *kīrtana*, we should never be negligent of our scripturally-ordained duties. If we do not do our duties, our chanting of the Lord's names and *mantra-japa* will not duly fructify.

Dereliction of duties is regarded as a 'nāmāparādha', an offence relating to the chanting of the Lord's names. It is said: "(1) Finding fault with noble persons. (2) Preaching the greatness of God's name to the wicked. (3) Regarding Śiva and Viṣṇu as distinct from one another. (4-6) Lack of faith in the words of the Vedas, śāstras and the Guru. (7) Having the delusion that what has been taught about the greatness of God is not factual. (8-9) Indulging in what is forbidden and giving up what is prescribed as obligatory by the scriptures under the belief that as the divine name is there, these acts of commission and omission do not matter. (10) Equating the chanting of the names of Śiva and Viṣṇu with other dharmas. These are the ten nāmāparādhas, offences relating to the chanting of the Lord's names." It is said, "The Lord should be constantly praised (by the chanting of His names) by one who is humbler than a blade of grass, is more patient than a tree, gives respect to others and is free from egoism."

*‘Pāda-sevana’* is serving the lotus feet of the Lord’. Īśvara’s idols should be worshipped as specified in the scriptures. *Pūjā* should not be performed to those idols in which *‘prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā’*, the invocation of the presence of God’ has not been done.

The third means spoken of is *‘smaraṇa*, keeping God in mind’. A teaching contained in the *Yoga-sūtras* is: *“Repetition of Om (the name of God) and meditation on what it signifies (result in the practitioner’s mind becoming one-pointed).”* Lord Kṛṣṇa has averred: *“To those persons who are ever attached to Me and who, becoming non-different from Me and meditative, worship Me everywhere, I provide what they lack and preserve what they have.”* According to the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, *“With peacock feathers as a diadem and karṇikāra flowers behind his ears, wearing a yellow vestment and donning the Vaijayantī garland, Kṛṣṇa, who had the form of an expert dancer, whose praises were sung by the gopis and who was filling the stops*

*of His flute with the nectar of His lips, entered Vṛndāvana, rendering it lovely with His footprints.”* One could contemplate thus on Īśvara; the term *‘smaraṇa’* covers contemplation on God.

The next form of *bhakti* that is spoken of is *‘pāda-sevana*, serving the lotus feet of the Lord’. Waiting upon the Lord’s manifestations and bathing in holy rivers such as the Gaṅgā, which is said to have come from the feet of God, and the Yamunā, in which Kṛṣṇa sported, are included in this form of devotion.

Noting that Īśvara is present everywhere, prostrations can be submitted to Him at any time, physically, verbally or mentally. This is admitted as *‘vandana’* in devotional literature.

*‘Arcana, worship’* is the next form of *bhakti*. Īśvara’s idols should be worshipped as specified in the scriptures. *Pūjā* should not be performed to those idols in which *‘prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā*, the invocation of the presence of God’ has not been done. It is said: *“Idols in which prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā has not been performed remain without sanctity. There is no godhood in just gold and the like.”* A person fondly identifies with his picture. God is especially present in an idol of His in which *prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā* has been performed.

A question may arise: Why should *pūjā* be done to an idol even though God is omnipresent?

A veterinarian may prescribe that something be mixed with ghee and given to an ailing cow. It will not do if it is given to the cow unmixed with ghee on the ground that ghee is only a product of milk and plentiful milk is already present within the cow. Likewise, though God is present everywhere, He confers special blessings when He is worshipped in a duly consecrated idol. What is to be done if there is no idol with us or we lack the capacity to do idol-worship ourselves? My *Guru* (Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhārati Mahāsvāmin) has said that one could well go to a temple and worship God there.

Worshipping the Lord is actually very easy. The Lord has said, “*Whoever offers a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water to Me with devotion – that devout offering made by the pure-minded person, I accept.*” The *Mṛtyuñjaya-mānasapūjā-stotra* (Hymn on the Mental Worship of Śiva), *Devī-mānasapūjā-stotra* (Hymn on the Mental Worship of Devī), etc., have been composed to bless us with guidance on worshipping God mentally, even without any physical item of worship.

‘*Vandana*, prostration’ is spoken of next. It does form a part of *pūjā*. Nonetheless, noting that Īśvara is present everywhere, prostrations can be submitted to Him at any time, physically, verbally or mentally. This is admitted as ‘*vandana*’ in devotional literature. Seeing the cosmic form of the Lord, Arjuna offered his prostrations to God, saying, “*Prostration to You in the eastern direction and in the western direction. O All! Prostrations to You on all sides.*”

The next form of *bhakti* is ‘*dāsyā*, viewing oneself as God’s servant’. The Lord has declared, “*The Veda and the smṛti are My*



‘*Dāsyā*’ is viewing oneself as God’s servant. We should treat the *śruti* and the *smṛti* as His commands and carry out with faith what is prescribed for us. Further, we should dedicate everything to God.

‘*Sakhya*’ is viewing oneself as God’s friend. When we persist with such devotion, our attachment to Īśvara becomes stronger and stronger.

'Ātma-nivedana' is the complete offering up of oneself to God'; it culminates in the knowledge that we are not separate entities but are none other than the Supreme.

We should dedicate everything to God and be without any worry. If we do so, the Lord Himself will fully take care of us; He will provide us what we lack and preserve what we have. He will give the realization of the Supreme too.

commands." Hence, we should treat the *śruti* and the *smṛti* as His commands and carry out with faith what is prescribed for us. Further, we should dedicate everything to God in keeping with His instruction, "O son of Kuntī! Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you give and whatever tapas you perform – do all that as an offering to Me." A prayer for *dāsya* is, "O Paramaśiva! You may roam about in the crematorium or in a place beyond the world or in Kailāsa or on the peak of the Meru Mountain. But please keep Me near You and make me a servant of Your servitors."

The next form of *bhakti* that has been spoken of is 'sakhya, viewing oneself as God's friend'. When we persist with such devotion, our attachment to Īśvara becomes stronger and stronger. We do not fear a close friend; for his part, he wants and helps us to be happy. This is seen even in the relationship of friendship between a devotee and God.

Lastly, we have 'ātma-nivedana, the complete offering up of oneself to God'; it culminates in the knowledge that we are not separate entities but are none other than the Supreme. After a river merges

with the ocean, it has no distinct identity of its own; that which was the river becomes the ocean and the ocean alone remains. One who attains absolute merger with the Supreme thereafter remains as just the Supreme.

The Lord has emphatically said in the *Bhagavadgītā*, "O scion of the Bharata dynasty! Seek refuge in Him with all your being. By His grace you will attain supreme peace and the eternal abode." Moreover, the view of the sages is: "Always thinking about It, talking about It, teaching each other about It, and being completely intent upon It - the wise regard this as the practice of the knowledge of the Supreme."

We should dedicate everything to God and be without any worry. If we do so, the Lord Himself will fully take care of us; He will provide us what we lack and preserve what we have. He will give the realization of the Supreme too. The deathlessness that we desire would then be ours. Attaining God is alone the ultimate attainment and the highest good.

## 2. Demonstration of the Need for the Śāstra

### Introduction

In Īśvara's creation, man has attained absoluteness. In what? It is not in size; an elephant is much bigger than him. Nor is it in strength, for many a beast is mightier than him. Could it be in unhappiness? No; it is not as though people can endure the acme of torment. Any claim that man's joy is what is unsurpassed would be summarily dismissed as incredible. As a poet aptly put it, *"O deer! You neither beguilingly panegyryze the opulent nor feast your eyes repeatedly on their visages. You do not lend your ear to their supercilious pronouncements or rush to them with any expectation. Instead, you sate yourself with tender grass when hungry and yield to sleep when drowsy. Do divulge to me what austerities you practised and where to become so contented."*



Is man's perfection in the possession of wealth? No. It is pertinent to consider what exactly constitutes wealth. Nīlakaṅṭha-dīkṣita has clarified, *"Wealth is certainly not the same thing for all. What is wished for by a person is that man's wealth. While different objects constitute the wealth of*

There are two kinds of knowledge to be acquired, the higher and the lower. Among the two, *'aparā-vidyā'* or lower knowledge throws light on what leads to happiness and sorrow in this world and in the next. He attains fullness on account of that knowledge which provides the answers to queries such as, "Am I the body or distinct from it?"

*the common folk, destitution is the wealth of the wise.*" What is dear to anyone is one's wealth. Hence, what dearth of wealth is there for a deer that grazes freely in a lea that is green with luscious grass?

The higher knowledge terminates delusion once and for all. This knowledge should be attained through recourse to *vicāra* or enquiry.

What then is the basis of man's fullness? Knowledge. Like humans, animals experience happiness, unhappiness, desire and anger. However, unlike humans, they are ineligible to access completely the storehouse of knowledge. It may be objected that they are quite knowledgeable, possessed as they are of understanding that encompasses food, wandering, sleep and the like.

That animals possess such awareness is true but were the treasure-house of knowledge to contain merely what they discern then a human, such as the objector, would be on the same footing as them. However, there do exist superior grades of knowledge that are acquirable by man but not by them.

The *Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad* points out, "*There are two kinds of knowledge to be acquired, the higher and the lower.*" Among the two, '*aparā-vidyā*' or lower knowledge throws light on what leads to happiness and sorrow in this world and in the next. Just as engineering and medicine promote common good, the means taught by the *Veda* in the course of its delineation of '*aparā-vidyā*' yield desired worldly and heavenly fruits. For instance, a scriptural instruction is "*Let one who wants rain perform the Karīrī sacrifice.*" Another injunction is, "*Let one who desires heaven perform the Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice.*" Just because animals lack such knowledge, man cannot be regarded as being superior to them. After all, '*aparā-vidyā*' conduces to the attainment of only impermanent joy. Were man's understanding of afterlife and more worldly matters than animals adequate, by virtue of its being expansive and multiplex, to demonstrate his pre-eminence, a heap of husk should, in view of its being large and constituted by many elements, be worthier than a piece of diamond! Familiarity with science does not make man the greatest. On the other hand, he attains fullness on account of that knowledge which provides the answers to queries such as, "Am I the body or distinct from it? If distinct, am I eternal or impermanent? Am I of the nature of bliss or sorrow? What is the relationship between this world that is perceived and myself?"

The *Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad* proceeds to teach, "*Then there is the higher knowledge by which the Immutable is realized.*" This knowledge does not arise in animals. Further, unlike the other forms of knowledge which give room to future follies, it terminates delusion

once and for all. The *Kaṭha-upaniṣad* avers, “On knowing It, one becomes freed from the grasp of death that comprises ignorance, desire and action.” This knowledge should be attained through recourse to *vicāra* or enquiry.

It is unfeasible to carry out the *vicāra* in question without a bedrock. In materialistic matters too, there is the practice of conducting an investigation on some basis. We have to depend on mathematics to compute the distance of the sun from the earth; it is futile for us to hope to make the measurement with a foot-rule. In like manner, we should understand the *Ātman* by means of the *Upaniṣads* and then personally realize It. Hence, Bhagavatpāda has given us the instruction: “Enquire into the import of the scriptural utterance about the identity of the individual soul with Brahman. Take recourse to logic that is in consonance with the view of the scripture.”

The *Ātman* cannot be determined purely through logic. This is because ratiocination lacks finality. A *Brahma-sūtra* begins as follows, “Since reasoning is inconclusive...” There is scope for what is shown to be right by us today through logic to be proven wrong tomorrow by another. A verse (of the *Vākyapadīya* approvingly) cited (in the *Bhāmātī*) by Vācaspati is, “Even what has been painstakingly demonstrated by adroit logicians is proved to be otherwise by defter dialecticians.” Our experience is in agreement with this verse. The following claim of Raghunātha Śīromaṇi (the author of the authoritative *Nyāya* work, *Dīdhiti*) adds to the case against the finality of mere ratiocination: “Even while I, Raghunātha, the master of ideas, proceed with my exposition, hosts of scholars must reverse their positions about whatever they had unanimously proclaimed to be right or flawed.”



The *Ātman* cannot be determined purely through logic. This is because ratiocination lacks finality. Hence, having the *Upaniṣads* as the basis, one should understand the *Ātman* with the aid of reasoning. By the direct realization of the *Ātman*, man attains the Supreme Brahman, which is not different from the *Ātman*.



Hence, having the *Upaniṣads* as the basis, one should understand the *Ātman* with the aid of reasoning. By the direct realization of the *Ātman*, man attains the Supreme Brahman, which is not different from the *Ātman* and is spoken of in the scripture as: “That Supreme Brahman is infinite; Brahman conditioned by this universe is also infinite.” Abidance as Brahman characterizes true absoluteness.

### Objection that the *Upaniṣads* are Unnecessary

Must we seek this absoluteness characterized by identity with the Supreme Brahman? Even if we do, why should we ascertain the import of the *Upaniṣads* by hearing them from a *Guru* and then reflect on it in order to achieve the goal? Such questions can arise.



We have been striving to get rid of all the three kinds of sorrows but till now our efforts have not been successful. Thus, there is a triad of miseries and man desires to eradicate it. Unhappiness can be eliminated in its entirety and the means described by the *śāstras* are potent to do so.

Everyone endeavours to attain what one likes and to avoid what one dislikes and terms unwanted. Though we have an aversion towards many objects and beings, such as poison and tigers, our distaste for them is not intrinsic. It is only because we fear the unhappiness they can cause us that we view them with disfavour. What we loathe by nature is just sorrow. We ever despise it and much of our efforts are directed towards getting rid of it. If sorrow were non-existent, the scripture that makes known the *Ātman* would have been superfluous. In spite of the existence of unhappiness, if man did not abhor it or did not wish to transcend it, then also the scripture would have been unnecessary. Moreover, if man were to want to be rid of sorrow but the annihilation of sorrow were impossible, then too the scripture would have been irrelevant. Such impossibility can be of two kinds. *Akāśa* (space) is, according to the *Tārkikas*, eternal by its very nature; as it is indestructible, there is no means by which it can be destroyed. If sorrow were eternal like *ākāśa*, obviously there would be no possibility of

ending it. The second kind of impossibility would prevail if sorrow were destructible but we were to have no knowledge of the means to eradicate it. Finally, even if sorrow were to be removable, the *Upaniṣads* would be unnecessary if what is revealed by them does not constitute the means to destroy unhappiness or, even if does, there are some other easier ways to do so.

## Reply to the Objection

None can say that sorrow is non-existent. Everyone is experiencing it and is also striving to be rid of it. The *śāstras* have categorised sorrows under three heads; *ādhyātmika*, *ādhibhautika* and *ādhyādvika*. *Ādhyātmika* misery, in its turn, is of two types; *sārira* or bodily and *mānasa* or mental. By bodily sorrow is meant the suffering due to diseases such as fever which result from the imbalance of wind, bile and phlegm. The grief caused by desire, anger greed, delusion, fear, jealousy and the like constitutes mental sorrow. Woes of these two kinds are termed *ādhyātmika* because they are rooted in the faulty functioning of the body and the mind. Pain that is caused by objects and beings such as poison, foes and snakes constitutes *ādhibhautika* sorrow. *Ādhyādvika* sorrow is that resulting from malevolent spirits and the like and from natural calamitous phenomena such as earthquakes.

We have been striving to get rid of all the three kinds of sorrows but till now our efforts have not been successful. Thus, there is a triad of miseries and man desires to eradicate it. Unhappiness can be eliminated in its entirety and the means described by the *śāstras* are potent to do so.

(Counter-objection:) Notwithstanding all this, recourse to the *śāstras* is unwarranted. The *śāstras* say that a person should free himself from sorrow by realizing the *Ātman*. They prescribe that to achieve such realization he should endow himself with discrimination, with dispassion, with the hexad of treasures, which are mind control, restraint of the senses, withdrawal, forbearance, faith and concentration, and with longing for liberation and that, so endowed, he should hear about the *Ātman*, reflect on it and firmly meditate upon it. The path shown by the scripture is tough. Why? The *Kaṭha-upaniṣad* states, “The self-existent Lord impaired the out-going senses. Hence, one sees external things and not the inner *Ātman*.” Arjuna told the Lord, “I consider the control of the mind to be as greatly difficult as that of the wind.” Hence, one should look for a simple route to freedom from unhappiness. There do exist well-known worldly cures for the three kinds of sorrows. They are easy to implement and do not require firm restraint of the senses and the mind.

It is said, “If honey can be got at an arka tree, what need is there for a person to go to a mountain in search of it? When the object desired has been attained, which wise man would strive to acquire it?”

It is not possible to procure and enjoy all that is desired and thereby get rid of unhappiness. Further, mental disquiet that is quelled by gratification stages a comeback.

Numerous are the treatments prescribed by eminent doctors to combat corporeal afflictions. Mental woes crop up because of the frustration of longings. If the mind is supplied all that it desires then *ādhyātmika* sorrows of the mental kind would be absent. If, taking a cue from demoniacal view, “This adversary has been slain by me and I shall exterminate other antagonists as well,” a powerful person were to subjugate those who stand in the way of his consummating

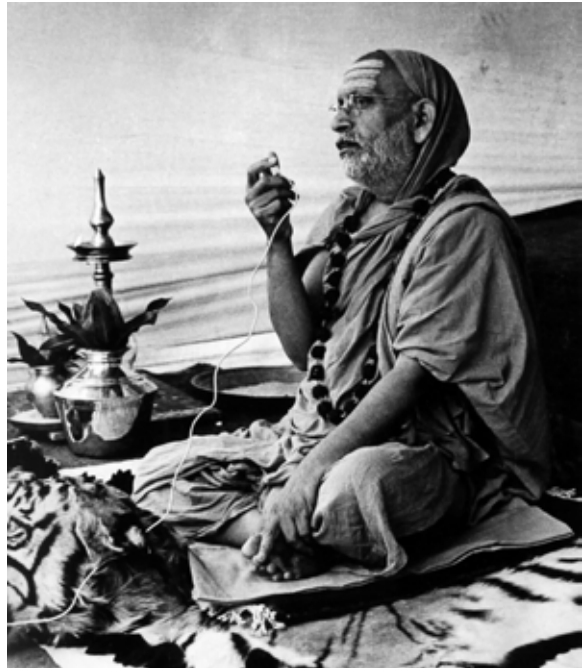
his wishes, he would cease to be subject to grief born of anger.

Having studied treatises imparting worldly wisdom and salutary deportment, a person can safeguard himself from potentially harmful objects and creatures and thereby avoid *ādhibhautika* sorrow. With regard to *ādhidaivika* sorrow, the distressing influences of evil spirits and the like can be put an end to by means such as the personal or commissioned chanting of suitable *mantras*. Thus, there are simple ways by which all kinds of sorrows can be nullified. One can totally get rid of unhappiness without strain by resorting to them. Hence, it appears that the scriptural texts that expound the Supreme are superfluous.

(Rebuttal of the counter-objection:) Patients are not always restored to health even when the administration of drugs and other aspects of the treatment are precisely what they ought to be. It is not possible to procure and enjoy all that is desired and thereby get rid of unhappiness. Further, mental disquiet that is quelled by gratification stages a comeback. The rule is, “*Never does desire subside through the enjoyment of desired objects. Instead, it only grows more and more as does fire because of clarified butter.*” By adopting the methods suggested, *ādhibhautika* and *ādhidaivika* sorrows may be warded off for a while but cannot be stamped out forever.

Therefore, though worldly means to tackle sorrow are relatively simple, they are impotent to consummate our wish that we never be unhappy. Such being the case, a desire for emancipation from transmigratory existence springs up in the discriminating.

Union with the infinite *Brahman* by the acquisition of knowledge is indeed what marks completeness and the absolute cessation of all sorrows. The way to get this knowledge has been clearly stated in the texts that reveal the Supreme.



Nīlakāṇṭha-dīkṣita has (with a touch of humour) said, “*The discrimination between that which is unceasing and that which is perishable is present in everybody with respect to ‘potness (a characteristic that is common to every pot)’ and a pot. True discrimination is, however, that which gives peace; everything else is but indiscrimination.*”

Another objection against the need for the *Upaniṣads* is, “It could be that the means prescribed by the scripture are unfit to permanently annul all sorrows.” The root cause of all sorrows needs to be ascertained before investigating the potency of the scriptural way to uproot them. *Ajñāna* or ignorance of one’s true nature is the fountain-head of sorrows and only the realization of the one’s non-difference from the Supreme can eradicate it; the details are not essential at this juncture. The right knowledge of one’s true nature is produced by the *Upaniṣads* and with its dawn, ignorance is annulled and sorrow is transcended in accordance with Nārada’s statement (in the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad*), “*The knower of the Ātman goes beyond sorrow.*”

Union with the infinite *Brahman* by the acquisition of knowledge is indeed what marks completeness and the absolute cessation of all sorrows. The way to get this knowledge has been clearly stated in the texts that reveal the Supreme. For instance, it is said, “*The Ātman, my dear, should be realized, heard of, reflected on and firmly meditated upon.*”

At the time of Bhagavatpāda’s advent, this *Vedic* creed had well-nigh withered away. In just 32 years, He weeded out erroneous schools of thought from the whole of India and made the scriptural position shine in all its glory. May Bhagavatpāda grace everyone to tread the spiritual path and attain absoluteness.

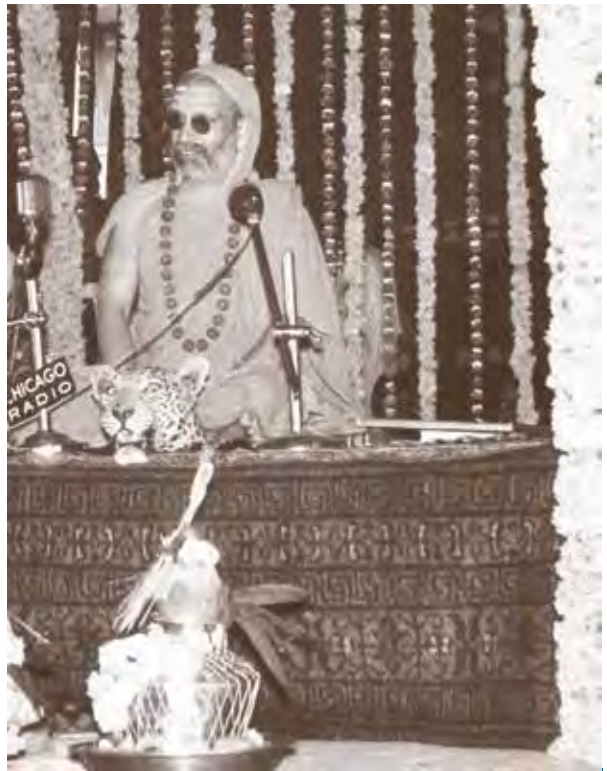
### 3. Direct Knowledge of the Ātman

#### Introduction

We have some abilities that are almost absent in the members of the subhuman species. One such is the power of *vicāra* or enquiry. Though feebly inherent in animals, it cannot wax to sublime heights in them. To it, we owe our distinction. Every potential has consequences and we are in a position to fittingly utilize our capabilities. Our intrinsic power of *vicāra* generally manifests in some way or the other at all times other than when we slumber. *Vicāra* is synonymous with deliberation. Reflection comes naturally to humans. However, we ought to ascertain what is truly worthwhile for us to ponder on.

We normally cogitate on purposeful as well as irrelevant mundane matters. Bhagavatpāda has cautioned, *“Man employs his ears to hearken to the disparagement of another done to the heart’s content by calumniators. The censured person does not perish as a consequence of that but he who lends his ears to slander pointlessly incurs much sin.”* Apart from considering the alleged or actual failings of others, we give thought to the domestic affairs and possessions of people. Nevertheless, nothing objective to which we bestow attention is dear to us at all times.

Each of us has unwavering affection only for himself or herself. The self that is ever dear is termed *Ātman* in the *śāstras*. Anything objective that is desirable now can become undesirable in the future and, likewise, what is currently distasteful can turn agreeable; the *Ātman*, however, is



*Vicāra* is synonymous with deliberation. Reflection comes naturally to humans. However, we ought to ascertain what is truly worthwhile for us to ponder on.

dear now and will continue to ever remain so. A sweetmeat that is routinely liked by a person is regarded as unwanted by him when he falls ill and loses his appetite. We might have cherished something in the past but dislike it now; on the other hand, we loved ourselves in the past and continue to do so to this day. In the normal course, we encounter three states; waking, dream and deep sleep. In all of them, one is dear

to oneself. Bhagavatpāda has said, *“An object continues to be dear to one as long as it gives one happiness and it is disfavoured for the duration that it causes unhappiness. An object is not always agreeable or disagreeable. Sometimes, that which is unwanted may become dear. Also, what is strongly liked can become undesirable. Hence, the Ātman towards which affection never wanes is always the most beloved.”*

The self that is ever dear is termed *Ātman* in the *śāstras*. Anything objective that is desirable now can become undesirable in the future and, likewise, what is currently distasteful can turn agreeable; the *Ātman*, however, is dear now and will continue to ever remain so.

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There is no point in pondering over what is thoroughly known. It is impossible to enquire about what is totally unknown. We know that we exist but have not understood what our fundamental nature is. To carry out such *vicāra*, a suitable means is vital.

The works of Bhagavatpāda constitute the means for us to perform *vicāra*; He has spelt out the nature of the *Ātman* therein.

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It is the height of foolishness for us, who are reflective by nature, not to attend to and enquire about ourselves. There is no point in pondering over what is thoroughly known, such as that consumption of food appeases hunger. It is impossible to enquire about what is totally unknown. We know that we exist but have not understood what our fundamental nature is. Therefore, let us enquire into it.

To carry out such *vicāra*, a suitable means is vital. In fact, without a means, no activity is possible. For instance, to walk, we need feet and to travel by air, we require an aircraft. He who has the capacity to manufacture a plane may do so, board that aircraft and,

through it, gratify his wish to course through the sky. Aircraft may be of various types and the cost of operating them may differ but for them to qualify as means of aerial travel, it is essential that they be capable of flying. He who is not in a position to make an aircraft can, nevertheless, consummate his desire to fly by means of one provided by another. Thus, a means is essential but it may be either our own or that provided

by another; through it, we can accomplish what we seek. The works of Bhagavatpāda constitute the means for us to perform *vicāra*; He has spelt out the nature of the *Ātman* therein. About the approaches adopted by the great to expound the Truth, Sureśvarācārya has said, “*Through whatever mode of exposition a person gets the knowledge of the inner Ātman, that is appropriate here; the mode is not rigidly settled.*”

### The Nature of the *Ātman*

Bhagavatpāda has taught, “*Know this, your Ātman, to be that which shines in the heart as self-effulgent, eternal bliss and which, witnessing egoism etc., that have various forms and modifications and uniformly shining within at all times as the innermost entity and as not objectified, manifests itself very clearly in the states of waking, dream and deep sleep.*”

Ignorance of one’s own nature is *avidyā*. *Avidyā* has two powers; the power of *āvaraṇa* or concealment and the power of *vikṣepa* or projection. These cause unhappiness and constitute transmigratory existence.

This teaching greatly surprises us for our experience is at variance with it. We are subject to pleasure, pain, death and rebirth. Numerous miseries, which are of the *ādhyātmika*, *ādhibhoutika* and *ādhidaivika* kinds, retain us in their grip. Hence, it seems that, like teasing a beggar by calling him an emperor, this verse twits us. Nonetheless, there is simply no question of *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, the text that contains it, having been penned to poke fun at us. Its author, Bhagavatpāda, was of the following kind: “*There dwell tranquil, great ones who move about effecting, like the spring season, what is beneficial to people. Having themselves crossed the dreadful ocean of transmigratory existence, they, without any motive, cause other persons too to cross over.*”

Unlike the example of a beggar being derisively called a monarch, there is another that is pertinent here. Owing to circumstances, a prince was growing up amidst foresters. One day, a palmist examined his palm and said, “You are a prince and shall become a sovereign.” These words appeared to be naughty at that time but subsequently their veracity became clear. The words of the verse about our true nature are also like that; so long as we are ignorant of who we really are, the words that readily appeal to us are only those that conform to our erroneous notions.

## The Reason for Becoming Different

Though being absolute existence, pure consciousness and supreme bliss, why do we experience the world? It is pointed out in the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, “Being thoroughly shrouded by *tamas*, even a man who is invariably sagacious, has scriptural knowledge, is skilled in analysis and is a perceiver of what is most subtle does not clearly comprehend the *Ātman* even upon being taught about It in various ways. He considers what is superimposed on account of delusion to be true and attaches himself to its qualities. Alas, formidable is the power of concealment of calamitous *tamas*.”

Ignorance of one’s own nature is *avidyā*. *Avidyā* has two powers; the power of *āvaraṇa* or concealment and the power of *vikṣepa* or projection. *Āvaraṇa* precludes correct knowledge of the *Ātman*. Because of *vikṣepa*, manifold forms can be seen in the *Ātman* that is veiled. The condition of being a *jīva*, a doer and an enjoyer, as also egoism, the feeling, ‘mine’ and so on appear in the *Ātman* owing to *vikṣepa*. These cause unhappiness and constitute transmigratory existence. Is there anything that can bring about the cessation of transmigratory existence? Is transmigratory existence terminable at all? Let us inquire into the matter.

## Illusoriness of Bondage; Knowledge its Terminator

There are just two kinds of entities in the world; the real and the false. Our comprehension too is of two kinds; *pramā* or valid knowledge and *bhrama* or false knowledge. It is the position of the Vedānta school that illusory silver originates and is seen when a mother-of-pearl is mistaken,

If the *Ātman*’s present bondage is real or natural, it cannot be terminated by knowledge. However, scriptural passages reveal that liberation from bondage is effected exclusively by knowledge.





in partial darkness, to be a piece of silver. A justification for this view is that the annihilator of that silver is just the right knowledge of the mother-of-pearl and not any bodily action or meditation. It is said in the *Svārājyasiddhi*, “*This bondage of transmigratory existence is indeed caused by avidyā. It is eradicated only by knowledge and not by actions, which are comparable to snares. Does at all a snake that one’s misunderstanding conjures up in a garland go away due to prostrations, incantations, drugs and other such means?*”

If the *Ātman’s* present bondage is real or natural, it cannot be terminated by knowledge. However, scriptural passages such as the following reveal that liberation from bondage is effected exclusively by knowledge. “*On knowing the effulgent One, all bonds are destroyed.*” “*On knowing Him thus, one becomes immortal here.*”

The means of valid knowledge are the *śāstra*, *yukti* or reasoning, the words of the *Guru* and one’s own experience characterized by inner certitude.

That which is real must exist always. However, the condition of being a doer and an enjoyer as also the states of waking, dream and deep sleep do not co-exist with the *Ātman* at all times. In the waking state, the dream state is absent; in the dream state, the waking state is not there; in deep sleep, both these are missing. The *Ātman* alone is ever present. Śrī Gauḍapādācārya has pointed out, “*That which is non-existent in the beginning and in the end is equally so in the middle.*”

The states of waking, dream and deep sleep are each seen one moment and cease the next and hence, are unreal. The *Ātman* is eternal and, thus, real. Nothing else is needed to illuminate It; certainly nobody needs to find out whether he exists by asking another. During deep sleep, there is objectless happiness. It is to experience this bliss that we fall fast asleep regardless of how many worldly activities we may have. Is it not apparent that we have a unique experience during deep sleep? At that time, there is no sign of any object or sense-organ. Bliss is had then though there is no contact with anything objective. How indeed is this possible but for the *Ātman* itself being of the nature of bliss? In that case, is not deep sleep sufficient for one to attain the *Ātman*? No, because even though *vikṣepa* is absent in that state, *āvaraṇa*, which veils the *Ātman*, is definitely present. To remove not just *vikṣepa* but also *āvaraṇa*, realization of the *Ātman* is vital.

## The Means for the Realization of the Ātman

It is specified in the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*: “In the matter of freeing oneself from the connection with the bonds wrought by *avidyā* and thereby attaining the Ātman, which is of the nature of existence, consciousness and bliss, the means of valid knowledge are the *śāstra*, *yukti* or reasoning, the words of the *Guru* and one’s own experience characterized by inner certitude.”

Here, by *śāstra* is meant the *Upaniṣads*, which contain statements such as the following. “He that is here in the human person and He that is there in the sun are one.” “The knower of Brahman attains the Supreme.” “When the aspirant sees the slightest difference in It, he is smitten with fear.”

As for the *yukti* that is mentioned next, an instance of the reasoning that confirms that the Ātman is of the nature of existence, consciousness and bliss was given earlier. Then there is the teaching of the *Guru*. Books together with practical training are essential to acquire some forms of knowledge. Though geniuses might become knowledgeable in modern science and engineering by themselves perusing books and logically pondering over matters, others need to be taught. Just as observing adept cooks when they make cakes of flour and receiving guidance from them enable others to prepare such cakes, the life and teachings of living saints who have realized the Ātman enable people to acquire knowledge.



Only those who have personally realized the Ātman are truly fortunate; they are the ones whose dedication to *vicāra* is total. It is only in them that the power of *vicāra*, which is natural to humans, finds fulfilment.

Apart from the *śāstra*, reasoning and the words of the *Guru*, personal realization of the *Ātman* is necessary. A person's own experience is what reveals to him whether he has realized the *Ātman* or not. Indirect knowledge based on the words of the *śāstra* and the *Guru* is insufficient to bring about liberation from transmigratory existence. It is said, *"He who is attached to worldly pleasures but asserts that he knows Brahman is one who has strayed from both Brahman and karma and should be discarded like a lowly one."* It is stated in the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, *"The scholarliness of the learned marked by graceful and fluent speech and proficiency in explaining the śāstras leads to personal enjoyment, not liberation."*

Only those who have personally realized the *Ātman* are truly fortunate; they are the ones whose dedication to *vicāra* is total. It is only in them that the power of *vicāra*, which is natural to humans, finds fulfilment.

*Sat-puruṣas* are those who abide as Brahman. Thinking of 'Sat-puruṣas' is said to be most beneficial.



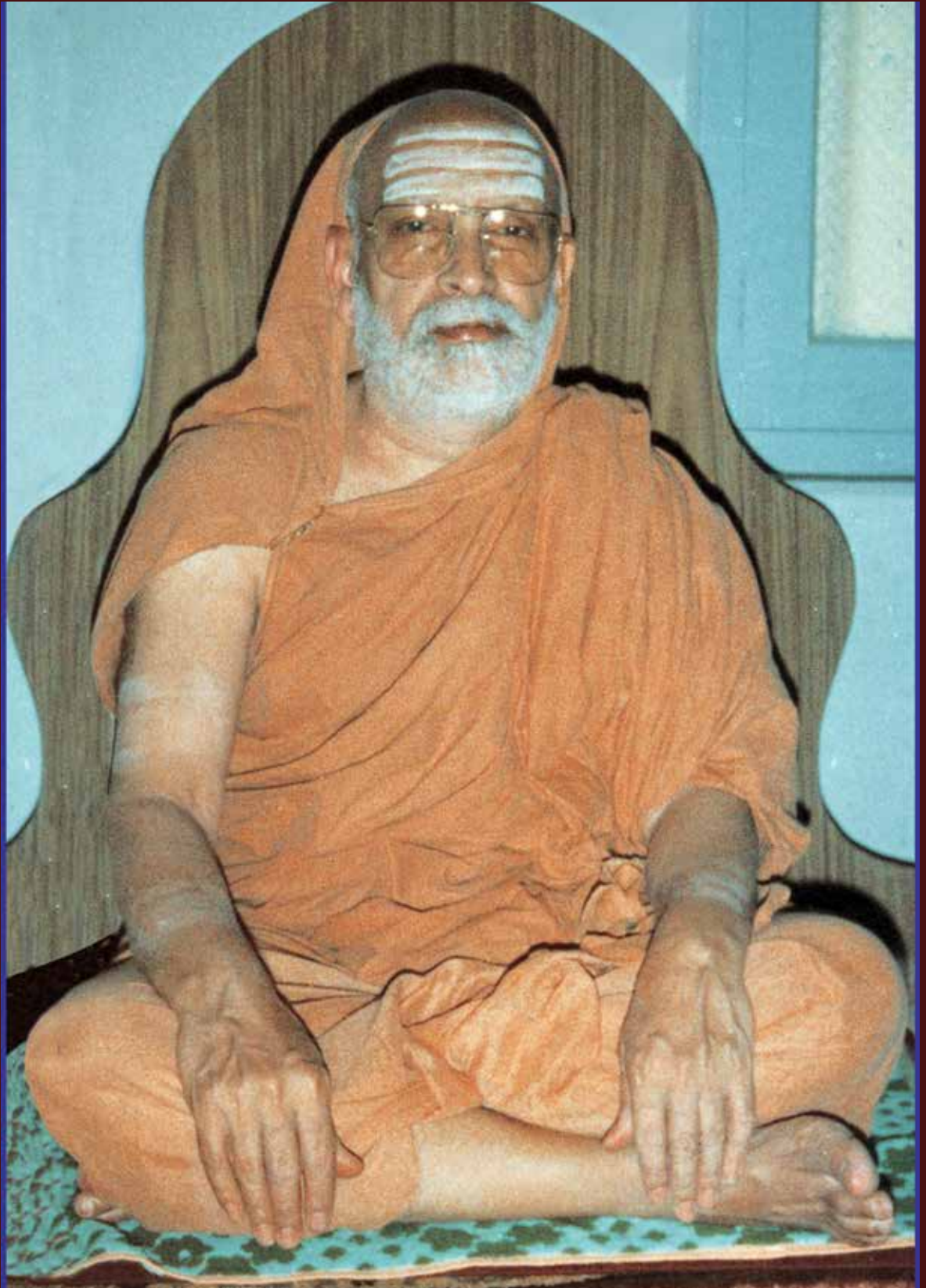
What is their life like? It is said in the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, *"Ever engaging in nirvikalpa-samādhi, the mendicant, who has controlled his mind, restrained his senses and fully withdrawn from external activities and who patiently bears the pairs of opposites, experiences his oneness with everything. Having fully burnt through nirvikalpa-samādhi the various ideas born of the darkness of avidyā, he blissfully remains as Brahman, without actions and apprehension of distinctions."*

Thinking of 'sat-puruṣas' is said to be most beneficial. Who are 'sat-puruṣas'? There is actually only one entity that is *sat* or absolutely real and that is Brahman. Thus,

*satpuruṣas* are those who abide as *Brahman*. The scripture teaches, “*The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman Itself.*” The import of this *Vedic* utterance is obvious to them as they have realized their oneness with *Brahman*. The word ‘*sat*’ is used figuratively when others, who are noble, are referred to as *sat-puruṣas*. We should endeavour to become true *sat-puruṣas*. Eulogising a liberated one whose body has fallen off, the *Veda* says, “*His possessions go to his sons, his good deeds to his well-wishers and his misdeeds to his despisers.*”

My *Guru* had all the characteristics of a knower of the *Ātman* that were touched upon. Thinking of Him with devotion, I shall conclude here.





## CHAPTER 25

# His Scientific Insight

The intellectual acumen of His Holiness was not confined to matters philosophical and religious to which He had formal exposure. His approach to any view was characterised by incisive ratiocination free from bigotry and dogma. The openness with which He considered the propositions of science, for instance, purely on their merits, merits special mention. He had a thorough grasp of the contributions of ancient India to the fields of mathematics, medicine, engineering, architecture, etc., several of which predated those popularly attributed to the western world. At the same time, He desisted from attributing western contributions to Indian origin. He never shied away from taking contentious issues head-on. He had a knack of advancing arguments at once, with punch and simplicity. He was as much at ease in conversing with those with formal scientific learning and with inquisitive youngsters as He was with traditional scholars of *Nyāya* and *Vedānta*. The catholic nature of His views was quite refreshing.

Rebirth is one of the oft debated topics; it spans across both religious beliefs and scientific schools of thought. A devotee once queried, “The *śāstras* say that rebirth exists. Is there any rational evidence in support of this?” His Holiness responded as follows:

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Yes, there is. One person suffers much in this world, while another lives happily. What is the cause? We see such differences even in young children who have done nothing in



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the present birth to justify such joy or misery. In order to reconcile with such differences, one must accept the existence of rebirth. It is only reasonable to say that we suffer now as a result of sins committed by us in our previous births and that we have joy now due to the virtuous deeds of our past.

Some people have memories of their previous births. I learn that scientists are investigating this aspect. Some of the investigated persons who recalled their previous births described certain incidents and scenes that were subsequently verified. Without prior experiences, how could such memories be present? Such memories support the existence of rebirth.



“If we do not accept rebirth, we would be forced to conclude that, *Īśvara* is partial, for He has kept some people happy and some others unhappy. He has no mercy either, because beings experience misery.’ Nobody associates such defects with *Īśvara*.”

- His Holiness

Our *śāstras* prescribe certain *prāyaścittas* (expiations) to get rid of some diseases. On the performance of the ordained expiatory *karmas*, cures are seen. How can the remedial *karmas* directed to nullify the sins of a previous birth cure a disease of this birth if there were no rebirth at all? If it is said that mere faith cures the disease, it cannot be explained why, when the *prāyaścittas* are performed with faith but not in accordance with the prescriptions, the desired result is not obtained.

A new-born babe drinks its mother’s milk even without being taught by anyone to do so. This is because of its knowledge that satisfaction can be obtained from mother’s milk. Not even a fool would involve himself in an action if he does not find utility in it. Therefore, even the child trying to drink its mother’s milk should be aware of the satisfaction that it will be deriving thereby. Such an awareness could not have arisen in this birth prior to its suckling for the first time. Therefore, the child should have acquired that knowledge in the previous birth. This too serves to establish the existence of rebirth.

Some children extraordinarily exhibit certain skills. They could not have acquired their proficiency in the few years of their present life. Their parents or grandparents may not have developed the same

skills. They should, therefore, have developed their skills in an earlier life. The case of such precocious children favours the existence of rebirth.

If we do not accept rebirth, we would be forced to conclude that, “*Īśvara* is partial, for He has kept some people happy and some others unhappy. He has no mercy either, because beings experience misery.” Nobody associates such defects with *Īśvara*. Hence, it is logical to accept rebirth.

If we do not accept rebirth, it has to be said that after death a man shall dwell forever in heaven or in hell. Is this logical? Not at all. As a general rule, that which has a beginning must have an end. Therefore, the stay in heaven has to have an end since it has a beginning.



“If we do not accept rebirth, it has to be said that after death a man shall dwell forever in heaven or in hell. Is this logical? Not at all. As a general rule, that which has a beginning must have an end. Therefore, the stay in heaven has to have an end since it has a beginning.”

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Further, consider the case of a baby that has died prematurely. It could have acquired neither *puṇya* nor *pāpa*. Will the baby be condemned to hell, or will it make its way to heaven? If its destination is hell, it has to take up punishment for no fault on its part. If we accept the other alternative, heaven, we are led to concede that the baby experiences heavenly pleasures even though it has no *puṇya* to its credit. If there were a rule that one without *puṇya* or *pāpa* would be in heaven forever after death, every mother would do well to kill her baby as soon as it is born! The non-acceptance of rebirth would result in such absurd conclusions.

What I have mentioned here are just a few reasons from amongst a host of them that establish rebirth on a logical basis.

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How apt is it to view modern science as confirming what is said in ancient religious texts? What was the contribution of our ancients to mathematics, medicine, etc.? His Holiness touched upon these in a conversation He had with a professor. In 1975, He sent for me one evening.



He was seated in a room in the eastern side of Sacchidananda Vilas. A person in his forties was seated in front of Him. His Holiness mentioned to me that he was a 'Physics Professor from Bihar'; He introduced me to him as, "My disciple." In the conversation that followed, while the professor spoke in Hindi, he did use words like 'gravity' and 'matter', rather than their equivalents in Hindi; for his convenience, His Holiness did the same.



"If your position is that the scriptures speak of infinite cycles of expansion and contraction of the universe and that that is exactly what science is arriving at, you must not only have enough matter to cause the universe to shrink but it must also be that the next expansion must match the present one. Any evidence to the contrary will be fatal to what you are trying to establish."

- His Holiness

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**Professor:** I am interested in showing that what was said in our ancient books is what modern science is now saying about the universe. It is now largely accepted that the universe is expanding. Its origin can be traced back to a time when it was a point. I believe that the universe will start shrinking after reaching a maximum size. This is because of the pull of gravity associated with the matter in the universe. It will return to the state in which it was when it originated. Then it will start expanding again. I think that this is exactly what is said in the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *purāṇas*.

**His Holiness:** You said that the universe will start shrinking because of the amount of matter in it. Has that much matter been discovered?

**Professor:** Not yet, but I am confident it will be.

**His Holiness:** Let us suppose that it will be. Will the next cycle of expansion then be identical to the present one or bigger or smaller? If the next cycle of expansion is larger, more time will be required before universe fully shrinks than will be needed for it to do so in the present cycle. Hence, ultimately, the universe will not shrink back, no matter how long one waits. Even if the next cycle of expansion is smaller than the present one, then too there will not be infinite cycles. If your position is that the scriptures speak of infinite cycles of expansion and contraction of

the universe and that that is exactly what science is arriving at, you must not only have enough matter to cause the universe to shrink but it must also be that the next expansion must match the present one. Any evidence to the contrary will be fatal to what you are trying to establish.

**Professor:** I do not think such a contingency will arise.

{It is strange that the Professor was unaware in 1975 when this conversation took place that by then several physicists had shown that as per the second law of thermodynamics, the universe would not go through infinite cycles; even if there were to be cycles, the expansion of one cycle would not be the same as that of the preceding cycle. Maybe, he was teaching in some college with poor library facilities and, so, was not up-to-date.}

**Professor (continued):** If it turns out that the cycles will not be identical, I will have to go through our texts again and see how they exactly predict what conforms to the new data.

**His Holiness:** In that case, you will be altering your interpretation of the scriptural texts to suit the scientific position of the day, whereas your aim is to start with texts and establish that that is what modern science has discovered. Let us suppose that nothing fatal to your present view is noticed now or in the near future and hence, no reinterpretation of the texts by you is needed for the present. Even then, what guarantee is there that even after a decade or two, data will not necessitate a major rethink? For instance, what would happen if scientists were to come across data that shows that the universe is expanding faster and faster? In that case, how would even the present expansion be followed by a contraction? Would you then reinterpret the texts to assert that they speak of the universe expanding faster



“What guarantee is there that even after a decade or two, data will not necessitate a major rethink? For instance, what would happen if scientists were to come across data that shows that the universe is expanding faster and faster? In that case, how would even the present expansion be followed by a contraction?”

- His Holiness



“There is much that can make us proud of our ancients in the scientific realm. The concept of zero is an instance. Our ancients were the first to understand it. Suśruta performed surgery on the eye to remove cataracts (the word His Holiness used was *netra-paṭala*) over 2000 years ago. If you see the *Sulba-sūtras*, which deal with the construction of sacrificial altars, you will find that thousands of years ago itself, our ancients had an impressive knowledge of mathematics.”

- His Holiness

and faster and not of it having infinite cycles of expansion and contraction?

**Professor:** I do not think that there is any reasonable possibility of data for an increasingly fast expansion turning up but I see the point that Your Holiness is making.

{As it turned out, the professor was wrong. Accelerated expansion of the universe was discovered in 1988 by two independent research teams and three scientists were awarded the Nobel Prize for this discovery in 2011.}

**His Holiness:** I fully appreciate your interest in seeing scientific findings in the light of our ancient texts. The only point I was trying to make is that if you equate an interpretation of the scripture with a popularly held scientific view, as scientific interpretations are subject to change with new data or ideas, you may, in time, have to reinterpret the scripture to conform to the new scientific position.

**Professor:** I value our ancient culture and accomplishments. That is why I wanted to tell my students that modern science’s universe with infinite cycles of expansion and contraction was made known very long ago, in the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *purāṇas*.

**His Holiness:** There is much that can make us proud of our ancients in the scientific realm. The concept of zero is an instance. Our ancients were the first to understand it. Suśruta performed surgery on the eye to remove cataracts (the word His Holiness used was *netra-paṭala*) over 2000 years ago. If you see the *Sulba-sūtras*, which deal with the construction of sacrificial altars, you will find that thousands of years ago itself, our ancients had an impressive knowledge of mathematics. For example, a *Sulba-*

*sūtra* of Bodhāyana is “*dīrghacaturasrasyākṣṇayā rajjuḥ pārśvamānī tiryakṇ mānī ca yat-pṛthag-bhūte kurutas-tad-ubhayam karoti (A rope stretched along the diagonal of a rectangle produces an area that the vertical and horizontal sides make together).*”

When His Holiness explained the meaning of the *sūtra*, the professor exclaimed, “Amazing! This is the Pythagoras theorem. That means that we knew of this much before Pythagoras of the sixth-century B.C.” His Holiness proceeded to give some more examples about the discoveries in ancient India.

**Professor:** I did not know all this. I shall gather such information and present it to my students. I know Sanskrit and shall study the *Sulba-sūtras*.

After the Professor left, His Holiness told me, “He is sincere. He is, however, mistaken when he takes it that the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *purāṇas* specify that the universe endlessly expands and contracts. What they actually teach is compatible with a universe that has infinite cycles, a universe that can be traced back to a point and also with a universe that expands faster and faster.” His Holiness did not elaborate on this that day as His personal attendant entered and told Him about a group of devotees from Kerala having come for His *darśana*.



It is recognised that the universe is orderly and that it functions as per the laws of nature. Are the laws of nature sufficient to account for the appearance and development of the world and various life-forms? Do the laws of nature have a foundation? If yes, what is the nature of that basis? His Holiness took up such issues and threw light on them, with complete regard to the teaching of the scripture and without discounting scientific findings in any way. In 1987, His Holiness once asked me, “What book did you read recently and like?” This was the first time He had asked me such a question and there was nothing that had happened earlier that constituted the backdrop for it. I was about to mention a scriptural text but before that He added, “Anything to do with how life, animals and humans came about.” I had read just a few days earlier, Richard Dawkins’ “*The Blind Watchmaker*” and enjoyed it; it dealt with exactly what His Holiness had specified. I mentioned this book to Him. “Summarize it for me,” He directed and I did so over the course of the next ten minutes; I also used a sheet of paper that He gave me to sketch some diagrams. He said, “The author is a firm atheist. He writes well. I think he will write more such books. Read them.” William Paley had argued (*Natural Theology or Evidences and Attributes of the Deity*, 1802) that just as the function and complexity of a watch presupposes a watchmaker, the far greater complexity of life-forms on earth presupposes the existence of their maker (God). Dawkins argued, “All appearances to

the contrary, the only watchmaker in nature is the blind forces of physics, albeit deployed in a very special way...Natural selection, the blind, unconscious, automatic process which Darwin discovered, and which we now know is the explanation for the existence and apparently purposeful form of all life, has no purpose in mind." Shortly after I had summarized the book, His Holiness said as follows:

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**His Holiness:** The scripture makes it amply clear time and again that the universe and the laws governing it are the manifestation of God. For instance, the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* teaches, "He alone is below; He is above; He is behind; He is in front; He is to the south; He is to the north; He alone is all this." The *Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad* points out, "You are the woman; You are the man; You are the boy; You are the girl; You are the old man tottering with a stick...You are the black bee; You are the green parrot... You indeed are the seasons and the seas." The *Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad* instructs, "This world is nothing but Brahman, the highest." The Lord has said in the *Bhagavadgītā*, "I am the moon...I am the mind...I am intelligence...I am the ocean...I am the lion...I am the wind...I am the shark...I am the letter 'a'...I am time...I am the spring season...I am gambling...I am effort...I am silence...I am knowledge." He has also said, "I am fire. I am the act of offering...I am the effect. I am the cause."

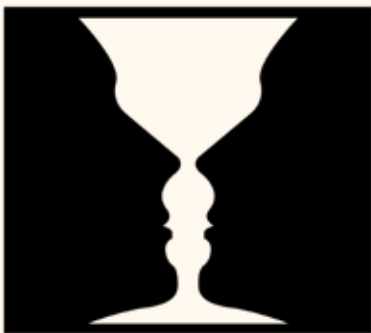


**His Holiness (continuing):** A person, who came to see me, had an objection to Lord Kṛṣṇa's statement, "Taking the form of the gastric fire and residing in bodies of all beings, I digest, in association with *prāṇa* and *apāna*, the four types of food (the foods that are ingested by masticating, by swallowing, by sucking and by licking)." He said there is no fire in the stomach; there is only acid. I asked him, "How do you specify the energy of an item of food?" He said, "In calories." I told him, "One method of determining the calories in an item of food involves putting the item in a container surrounded by water, burning it and noting how much hotter the water becomes than before." "I did not know this," he responded. I continued, "The stomach serves to digest food, the body receives energy from the food digested and this energy can be associated with the burning of the item of food. Hence, is it wrong to speak, at least figuratively, of a fire in the stomach, the gastric fire?" "No," he conceded. I then told Him, "When you say that the acid in the stomach digests the food and the Lord says that, being in the stomach, He digests the food in the

form of fire, is it not discernible from the Lord's words that He digests food by taking the form of gastric acid and the digestive processes? It is worth bearing in mind that our ancients were not such ignoramuses that they thought that some actual fire, like in the kitchen, burns in the stomach. They did know what the stomach contains." What is relevant now is that from the Lord's words, we can discern that it is He who is even the acid in the stomach and the process of digestion.

**His Holiness (continuing):** In the *Śrī-rudra*, we have, "*Salutations to You who stretch the bowstring; Salutations to You who release the arrow; Salutations to You who are the cause of the arrow moving towards the target; Salutations to You who are the cause of the arrow piercing the target.*" A bowman's role ends with pulling the bowstring, taking aim and releasing the arrow. The movement of the arrow to its target is dependent on its velocity ('vega' was the word used by His Holiness), the laws of motion ('*calana-niyama*' is what His Holiness said), the wind, the pull of the earth ('*bhūmyākaraṣaṇa*', said His Holiness) etc.; all these are the Lord. To penetrate the target, the sharpness of the tip of the arrow, the density of the target and such other factors play a role; all these are the Lord. The crux of all that I have been saying is that according the scripture, God is everything in the universe and is every law governing its functioning.

At this point, His Holiness took a sheet of paper and quickly sketched two pictures on it; this was the first time, I saw His Holiness drawing a picture. He pointed to the first and asked me, "What do you see?" I said, "Two faces close to and facing one another, or a wine glass." "Can you see both together?" He queried. "No," I replied. He then asked me to look at the second picture and tell Him what I could see. I responded, "Either a duck with its beak to my left or a rabbit facing right, with its long ears pointing backwards."





The *Śvetāśvatara-upa-  
niṣad* teaches, “He, the  
basis of the cosmos, is the  
one who manifests the  
nature of things (such as  
the heat of fire) and trans-  
forms what is mutable.”  
Thus, He is the universe  
and its laws; He is the one  
who gives life to the laws;  
He is the one who trans-  
forms things according to  
the laws of nature.

“Do you see both together,” He asked. I answered in the negative.

**His Holiness :** Each of these images is apprehended non-simultaneously in two different ways by a person. If two persons were to see either of the images at the same time, one may apprehend the image in one way and the other in the second way. Likewise, what is apprehended by a person as just the material world may be apprehended by him later, after spiritual discipline, as a manifestation of God; simultaneously too, what a materialist perceives as the material world, is seen by a saint as a manifestation of God.

He who holds that God is a creator distinct from nature and its laws may have a problem if it be said that the bodies of the animals we see and humans came to their present state through changes over millions of years by the operation of the laws of nature; a true *vedāntin* would be fine with it. If someone were to say that gradual evolution of animals and humans is wrong, he would be fine with that too. To a *vedāntin*, a small irregularly shaped stone rolling in the river and becoming a round pebble, the formation of the sun and the earth, the development of a human child from a sperm and egg are all equally attributable to God.

**His Holiness (continued):** The scripture does not stop with presenting God as just being in the form of the universe and its laws. It goes further and says that the operation of every law of nature depends on God. The *Śvetāśvatara-upa-  
niṣad* teaches, “He, the basis of the cosmos, is the one who manifests the nature of things (such as the heat of fire) and transforms what is mutable.” Thus, He is the universe and its laws; He is the one who gives life to the laws; He is the one who transforms things according to the laws of nature.

He is, importantly, not only immanent but also transcendent. The materialist may be unwilling to concede this and argue against it but a true *vedāntin* is not put off by any of

this because, to him, the materialist is a manifestation of God and his temperament is also manifested by God. What is primary to the *vedāntin* is the essential nature of the Supreme, pure consciousness. It is in this that the universe with its laws appears, like a mirage in a desert or as a snake so misapprehended in a rope. There is, thus, no real cause and effect relationship between the Supreme of the nature of consciousness and the world, unlike between, say, a seed and a tree or say, between energy (the word used by His Holiness was ‘śakti’) and the appearance (‘āvirbhāva’) of an electron (He used the word ‘electron’ itself). The *Kaṭha-upaniṣad* clearly states, “*The Self of the nature of consciousness is not born; It does not perish; It did not originate from anything; nothing originated from It.*” There is, therefore, no way any measurement made on the universe or any understanding of its laws can call into question the scriptural teaching about the true nature of the Supreme *Brahman*. The Supreme *Brahman* is decidedly beyond the scope of science. The aim of the *Upaniṣads* is to make a *sādhaka* realize his true nature of being *Brahman* and become liberated. Therefore, all the descriptions of creation in them are only meant to establish that there is nothing whatsoever that is other than the Supreme; the confirmation or falsification of any such description is immaterial.



To what extent can one breathe meanings into imageries found in the scriptures? Gods are described as having specific forms that may seem to some as far-fetched. Do they have any basis? Even the pristine curiosity of children can throw up such tricky questions. His Holiness refrained from using the arcane word of the scriptures to brush them aside. One day, as He was distributing *tīrtha-prasāda*, a boy asked Him, “What does *Candramaulīśvara* mean?” His Holiness said, “He who has the moon in His crest. It is a name of Śiva.” The boy’s father tried to get the boy to move on but he stood where he was and objected,



“What is primary to the *vedāntin* is the essential nature of the Supreme, pure consciousness. It is in this that the universe with its laws appears, like a mirage in a desert or as a snake so misapprehended in a rope. There is, thus, no real cause and effect relationship between the Supreme of the nature of consciousness and the world.”





Whenever appropriate, His Holiness proffered simple illustrations on the spot, often with an added touch of humour, to explain matters, philosophical, religious or scientific.

“How can Śiva have the moon on His head? The moon is in the sky.” His Holiness broke into a smile and said, “A name of Śiva is ‘*vyoma-keśa*, He whose locks are the sky.’ The moon is in the sky and Śiva’s locks are the sky. Any problem?” “No problem now,” said the boy and moved on.

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Whenever appropriate, His Holiness proffered simple illustrations on the spot, often with an added touch of humour, to explain matters, philosophical, religious or scientific. Vaidyasubramanya Iyer told me of the following conversation that he had witnessed.

An old lady started sobbing when she came to Him for *darśana* at Chennai in 1986. He asked her what her problem was. Amidst sobs, she managed to say, “I heard that Your Holiness had a heart-problem. Though I do not know what the problem was, I am unable to bear the suffering of Your Holiness.” His Holiness asked, “Have you seen a big tanker

transporting diesel?” “Yes,” she replied. “While the tanker is able to transport much diesel, it too needs diesel to run. Likewise, the heart pumps much blood but it too needs blood for its functioning. If the tube supplying diesel to the engine of the tanker gets partially clogged, the engine will not be able to run properly. In the same way, if a tube supplying blood to the heart gets partially clogged, there is a problem, pain. That is all that happened in my case. I am alright now. Do not worry.” She largely calmed down. “How could such a thing have happened to Your Holiness?” she asked, perhaps rhetorically. “Āñjaneya is fond of me. May be that is why He sent His mother, Añjanā, to be with me for some time. Thus, I had Añjanā,” remarked His Holiness, punning on the word ‘angina (chest pain or discomfort caused by reduced flow of oxygenated blood to the heart muscle).’ She broke into a laughter. He blessed her with a fruit and she moved on.

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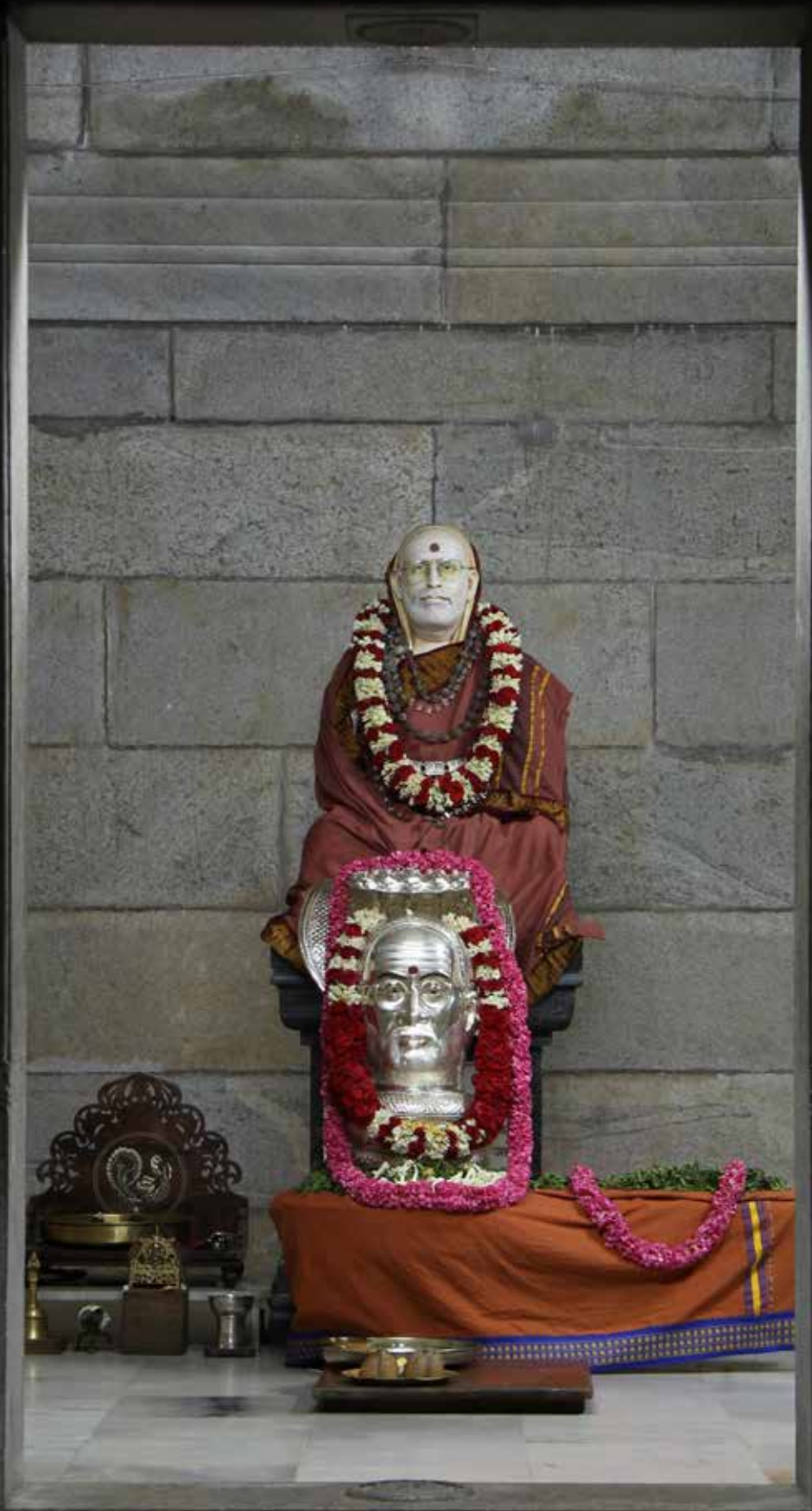
The foregoing provides but a key-hole view of His take on matters not exclusively traditional. The numerous questions taken up and answered by Him on different occasions included the following: “An earthworm that is cut into two regenerates

into two full earthworms. As rebirth as a worm is recognised in the scripture, the initial earthworm ought to have had a *jīva* (transmigrating soul). If so, what happens to it after the split? Does it simultaneously inhabit the two new earthworms or just one of them or neither? In the first case, how is it able to be in two distinct bodies? In the second and third cases, how is the contingency of soullessness of one or both of the new earthworms averted? Is it that the initial earthworm has a stock of *jīvas*? These questions arise not only in the case of earthworms but also humans. After all, a fertilised human egg divides into multiple cells and develops into a single human but if, while dividing, it splits into two units, twins develop. It is stated that a *jīva* is associated with a mind that too passes from one body to the next. If so, how is it that thoughts, emotions, perceptions, volition, memory, awareness and states of consciousness are all found to be dependent on the brain, which is a part of the body and does not transmigrate?” Singularly striking was His uncanny ability to comprehensively answer, without compromising on the teaching of the scripture, the questions of not only believers but also those of non-traditionalists and even iconoclasts.



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## CHAPTER 26

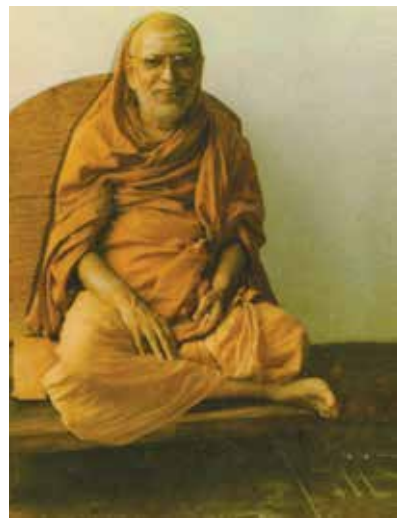
# Beyond Embodiment

His Holiness observed the *cāturmāsya* of 1989 in Sringeri and for its duration stayed in Narasimhavana. The *cāturmāsya* concluded on 15<sup>th</sup> September. On that day, He went to the northern side of the Tuṅgā and had *darśana* of Goddess Śāradāmbā.

### 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1989, Saturday

The following was reported by H. N. Shankar:

“It was between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1989. His Holiness was seated facing east in the semi-open veranda on the first floor of Sacchidananda Vilas. Giridhara Sastry and I prostrated before Him, sat facing Him and brought up, one by one, the letters received. A letter read out by Giridhara Sastry was from a devotee who sought His Holiness’s guidance on how he could control his senses and tackle distractions. To some letters, He would dictate His response and we would just write down, verbatim, what He said and communicate that to the persons concerned. For others, He would spell out His reply; we would make a note of that reply and communicate it suitably. In this case, His Holiness spelt out His answer. Looking at Giridhara Sastry and giving His response, He said, ‘As long as an object is perceived as pleasing, it is but natural that a want develops towards that object. By discrimination, when one recognizes its inherent worthlessness, the craving, and hence, the consequent distractions, cease by themselves. *‘doṣa-dṛṣṭyā muhur-muhūḥ* (By the repeated discerning of the defects)’ – this is the means



“As long as an object is perceived as pleasing, it is but natural that a want develops towards that object. By discrimination, when one recognizes its inherent worthlessness, the craving, and hence, the consequent distractions, cease by themselves.”

- His Holiness

to be adopted. No matter what the object is, it is sought after only if one sees positive attributes in it, sees it as pleasurable.’

“Then turning to me, He said, with His countenance and tone leaving me no doubt that He was instructing me, ‘What else? That is all. *‘doṣa-dṛṣṭyā muhur-muhuḥ* (By the repeated discerning of the defects).’ An object perceived as a cause of unhappiness does not generate desire.’ Continuing to look at me, He nodded his head, as if to ensure that what He had stated had been grasped by me. ‘Yes,’ said I, not in reply to His question on the content of the instruction, but meaning that I had paid attention to what I felt were His personal and direct instructions to me.”

This turned out to be the last day that letters were presented to Him.

### 17<sup>th</sup> September, Sunday

It was about 4:15 p.m. His Holiness got into His car, then parked in the shed on the eastern side of Sacchidananda Vilas. He set out to visit Narasimhapura. He alighted in the courtyard of the house of the supervisor of the *Maṭha’s* lands there. Using a walking stick, He proceeded straight to the pump house, with the supervisor accompanying Him. To reach it, He had to move down a gentle slope and descend two steep steps. He went inside the pump house, enquired about the pumps and Himself ascertained that both the pumps were in a good condition. He then asked a few questions about the *Maṭha’s* estate. Emerging from the pump house, He climbed up the two steep steps at the fence. Feeling pain, He put His right hand on His left chest. He then slowly walked up the gentle slope and reached His car. He proceeded to the Narasimha Temple in the middle of the estate and had *darśana* there. Upon returning to the car shed adjoining Sacchidananda Vilas, He sat for a while on the steps leading inside. He was looking uncomfortable as He climbed them and went in.



### 18<sup>th</sup> September, Monday

After His morning *āhnikā*, His Holiness distributed *tīrtha* to the assembled devotees in the front hall of Sacchidananda Vilas. Having completed interacting with and blessing them, He started around 10:30 a.m. by car for the Malahānikareśvara Temple. He alighted near the temple’s *‘dhvaja-sthambha* (flagpole)’, climbed the steps at the entrance to

the temple and, entering it, had the *darśana* of Lord Gaṇapati. As He was climbing the next set of steps leading to the level of the shrine of Lord Malahānikareśvara, He felt pain in His chest and sat down on a step for a few minutes. He then got up, ascended the remaining steps and proceeded to have the *darśana* of Lord Malahānikareśvara and Goddess Bhavānī. Having descended the steps, He did *pradakṣiṇa* of the shrines of the Lord and the Goddess by walking down the corridors on the four sides of the big structure housing the shrines.

After this, standing on the southern side of the outer wall surrounding the temple, He gave instructions regarding the proper preservation of the trees in that region. He then stood for a while captivated by and appreciating the grandeur of nature – the vast spread of green paddy fields visible in the backdrop of the distant majestic mountains. Moving forward, He issued directives regarding some sanitary works for two houses adjoining the temple.

Over the previous couple of months, a road around the temple at an elevation lower than that of the temple itself had been fashioned anew. It served, in a way, for '*giri-pradakṣiṇa* (circumambulation of the mountain).' His Holiness had planned its layout and initiated its construction prior to the *cāturmāsya* (which commenced on 18<sup>th</sup> July, 1989). During the *cāturmāsya*, when travel and crossing of any river are disallowed for *saṁnyāsins*, He had kept Himself posted of the progress and sent word about what was to be done. Since the untarred road had been made by excavating earth and it had been raining in the previous few days, His Holiness decided to personally ascertain how suitable the road was for vehicular use. He sat in His car and directed His personal attendant, Mahabala Bayari, who was driving, to complete a full round on the circular road. Satisfied, He had a word of appreciation for the local supervisor, Ganapati. He then returned to Narasimhavana.



There, He completed His afternoon bath and *āhnikā* and partook of some *bhikṣā*. Later, though in much discomfort, He had His evening bath and duly did His *āhnikā*. He then performed *pūja* at night; this was the last time He did so. He then retired for the night to His room on the first floor of Sacchidananda Vilas.

At about 11:15 p.m., when Shankar checked on Him, He was having pain in both His arms and it was radiating to His back. He was forced to lie only on His back and was unable to sleep. Though the weather was pleasantly cool, He found it warm. Shankar contacted Dr. Vasudeva Herale of the Sharada Dhanwanthari Hospital at Sringeri over the phone and informed Him of His Holiness's condition. On learning about His Holiness's state, Giridhara Sastry rushed to Sacchidananda Vilas from his quarters in Narasimhavana. Herale soon arrived, checked His Holiness's blood pressure and recorded His ECG. He administered an injection of Calmpose. He then suggested to His Holiness that He needed to take complete rest for a day or two. After that a visit to Manipal could be arranged for Him to undergo an operation (bypass surgery) there, so that, subsequently, He would be well and back to His routine. His Holiness said, "Wait for a week. If after that, there is any possibility or need for this, I will not object." The significance of His statement was unapparent at that time to Herale, Giridhara Sastry, and Shankar; He gave up His body in less than a week. Herale took leave of His Holiness and, outside His Holiness's room, told Giridhara Sastry and Shankar that he found changes in His Holiness's ECG indicative of a recent heart attack. His Holiness was in pain that night. He hardly slept, except between 1:30 a.m. and 3:45 a.m.



"Wait for a week.  
If after that, there  
is any possibility or  
need for this, I will  
not object."

-His Holiness

### **19<sup>th</sup> September, Tuesday**

Dr. Herale came around 7 o'clock in the morning. He found that His Holiness continued to be in pain. He administered an intramuscular injection of Pethidine. His Holiness expressed His discomfiture at Herale having had to come for His sake at night (at 11:30 p.m.) and again in the morning; it did not weigh with Him that it was only a ten-minute's drive from Herale's house, which was next to the hospital, to Sacchidananda Vilas and that between his two visits, the doctor could have slept for over six hours. Unhesitatingly, Herale conveyed that he had not been put to trouble at all and that all He wanted was that His Holiness should quickly recover and be of sound health. The doctor then left. As a consequence of the injection, His Holiness felt nauseated for some time but His pain largely subsided. He had a bath, performed His morning and afternoon *āhnikas* and then partook of some *bhikṣā*.

Around 5:30 p.m., He called for Shankar and made enquiries about the agricultural works in the *Māṭha*. After a while, He told him, “I will trouble you for only a day more.” Shankar did not realise at that time how prophetic the words of His Holiness were. He denied that His Holiness was in any way burdening him and added that after a few days of rest, His Holiness would be back to normal.

His Holiness then recalled that whenever He was unwell, His *Guru* used to have curd-rice offered at the Durgāmbā Temple. Out of respect for what His *Guru* had done and would have done if He had been physically present, His Holiness said, “Some *sevā* needs to be offered at the temple of Durgāmbā” and instructed that curd-rice be offered the next day.

He then drew Shankar’s attention to a pink shawl and told him, “It was offered by Devrao Shivaram to my *Guru*.” His Holiness treated the shawl as an article that had been sanctified by His *Guru* and received by Him. With Shankar’s help, He donned it.

He then directed Shankar to read out select compositions of Bhagavatpāda. He had placed bookmarks in the pertinent volume of the ‘*Śāṅkara-granthāvali* (Series of works of Śāṅkara)’; this volume contained Bhagavatpāda’s ‘*stotras* (hymns).’ Shankar recorded later, “As I was reading from the book, I could hear His Holiness saying, ‘Hm,’ ‘Hm,’ in between when I was going fine. When I faltered, however, He promptly corrected me. Upon completing the *Brahmānucintana*, I looked at Him for His next directive. He said, ‘In the normal course, I would have read the *Ṣatpadī-stotra*, *Lakṣmī-Narasimhakarūṅārāsa-stotra*, *Mohamudgara* (also called *Bhaja-govindam*), *kaupīna-pañcaka*, and others. Since I am not in a position to voice them myself today, you read them aloud for me.’ I proceeded to read them out and then, as directed by Him, read the *Dhanyāṣṭaka*, *Sādhana-pañcaka*, *Manīṣā-pañcaka* and *Ekaślokī*.”

With this, His Holiness fulfilled, as Shankar clearly realised, what His Holiness had, a decade earlier, told him He would do for him someday. In 1979, Shankar had been in Sringeri for his vacation at the time when His Holiness was expounding the *Bhagavadgītā-bhāṣya* to His then successor-designate and current pontiff *Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī-tīrtha Mahāsvāmin*. One day, His Holiness told him, “Just be seated here and listen. Even if you do not follow, it can serve as *śravaṇa* for you.” After a week, Shankar received a message from his parents to return to Bengaluru to attend to the application formalities to join an Engineering course. He refused because he wanted to be in Sringeri till His Holiness







completed the *Bhagavadgītā-bhāṣya*. This came to His Holiness's knowledge. He directed Shankar to go home and join an Engineering course. He told Him that He would teach Him alone someday. Ten years later, in 1989, as Shankar sat exclusively in His Holiness's presence reading what His Holiness was telling him to read on His behalf and being corrected whenever required by His Holiness, He did not have an iota of doubt that His Holiness was gracing him with that private session of *Vedānta*.

Subsequently, His Holiness had His evening bath and performed His *āhnikā* in the first floor itself, rather than on the ground floor of Sacchidananda Vilas as He normally did.

### 20<sup>th</sup> September, Wednesday

His Holiness was essentially in the same condition as on the previous evening. He had His bath and duly did His *āhnikā*. In view of His health, He had been advised not to strain Himself by going down, giving *darśana* to the public and distributing *tīrtha-prasāda*. *Sevā* was offered at the Durgāmbā Temple as directed by His Holiness in keeping with what His *Guru* would have wanted done. The *prasādas* were submitted to Him by Shankaranarayana Maiya, the *Maṭha's Peškār*, and Shankar around 12:45 p.m. His Holiness was, at that time, seated, facing north, in the semi-open veranda on the first floor. That was Shankar's last *darśana* of His Holiness while He was physically alive, for he left Sringeri that afternoon on *Māṭha* work for a day and before he returned, His Holiness had cast off His body.

That night Giridhara Sastry slept outside His Holiness's room to attend to Him, if required. Some days earlier, as he was entering His Holiness's bedroom at night to check on Him, He asked, "Did I disturb you by saying, 'Nārāyaṇa' loudly?" When in pain, He used to repeat the name of God, but without any expectation whatsoever. He had done so that night and that was the basis of His question. He was so considerate that He did not want to disturb anybody's sleep even by voicing the Lord's name in the privacy of His room and that too, at a time when He was in pain.



## 21<sup>st</sup> September, Thursday (bhādrapada-kṛṣṇa-saptamī of the cyclical year Śukla)

The pain that His Holiness had experienced on 18<sup>th</sup> night and which had continued till the next day recurred. He needed physical help for some time. Thereafter, when He was in some position to do so, He had a simple bath and performed His *āhnikā*. He then moved from the semi-open veranda, where He completed His *āhnikā*, to His room.

Around 11:00 a.m., He was informed that Dr. Subhalakshmi wanted to have His *darśana*. He granted permission for this. (Since a young girl, she had been a recipient of His Holiness's grace. She attributed, with conviction, her standing first every year in the M.B.B.S. course and then passing the M.D. course in paediatrics in flying colours to His Holiness's blessing, which she invariably sought and obtained before her examinations. She served in the Sharada Dhanwanthari Hospital in the early 1980s. She is back at the hospital now and is its Chief Medical Officer.) When she came to His presence, He sanctified her *sphaṭika-mālā* (rosary with crystal beads) and gave it back to her. Having blessed her, He gave her an apple as *prasāda* and permitted her to leave.



He was then seated alone in His room, facing west, with His back resting against the eastern wall. Through the window on His right, He could have a view of the *gopura* of Goddess Śāradā's temple. His call bell was on His right on the windowsill. Moments later, K. G. Rajesha, His personal attendant, heard His bell, entered and saw Him in discomfort and short of breath. He immediately called Mahabala Bayari. The latter noticed that His breathing was not continuous; it appeared like a strained version of *prāṇāyāma*. He rushed out to call Dr. Subhalakshmi who, by then, had reached the ground floor. When Mahabala came back, He found His Holiness seated, but without any signs of



suffering or discomfort on His countenance. Dr. Subhalakshmi arrived and determined that His Holiness was no longer breathing. As directed by her, attempts were made to revive Him but were of no avail. Dr. Herale, who had been called, arrived in about fifteen minutes and confirmed that all vital signs had ceased. The time of His Holiness's setting aside His body was specified as 11:20 a.m.

Rajsha told me later that after Mahabala had gone out (to call Dr. Subhalakshmi), he saw His Holiness become free from distress and sit peacefully, with His body erect and His eyes closed. It is presumable that, in an instant, He went into *samādhi*, as He had done many a time before. In June 1983, seeing Him in great discomfort, I once requested His Holiness to free Himself, at least for a while, from this; He immediately plunged into *samādhi* and remained in it for half an hour. After that, He opened His eyes and was again in pain. I mentioned the possibility of His Holiness having cast off His body in *samādhi* in view of some statements made by Him earlier. In 1984, Shankaranarayana Jois, the *Maṭha's* astrologer, told me that he had hesitatingly conveyed to His Holiness



His Holiness smiled and said, “Why bother? When the time comes, I may discard this body like this (and sat for a few moments with His eyes closed).”

that astrologically that was a very bad time for Him. His Holiness had smiled and said, “Why bother? When the time comes, I may discard this body like this (and sat for a few moments with His eyes closed).” In 1988, Ganapathi Subrahmanya Avadhani, the *Maṭha's purohita*, unhappily told me in the front veranda of Sacchidananda Vilas, “I asked His Holiness to bless me that I should depart before Him. He did not do so. He, who was seated, closed His eyes and said I think I will shed my body like this. You could be involved in the rituals after that.”

As a matter of fact, it is totally immaterial whether His Holiness cast off His body in *samādhi* or not. With respect to an enlightened sage, it is said in the authoritative *Vedānta-Pañcadaśī*, “Let him give up his life in good health and sitting up (such as, while focused on the Supreme) or diseased and rolling on the ground (writhing in pain) or even when unconscious. In any case, there is no delusion (leading to his enlightenment being compromised and resulting in rebirth) for him.” Likewise, in a verse of Śeṣa's *Paramārtha-sāra* cited as authoritative in the *Jīvanmukti-viveka*, it is said, “Regardless of whether he discards his body in the defiled dwelling of one who cooks dog's meat or in a holy place or with complete loss of memory, becoming freed

upon enlightenment, with sorrows ended, he attains absolute emancipation.” In the *Brahma-sūtras*, it is said, “On the authority of the scripture, when *Brahman* is realized, there occurs detachment from future sins and the destruction of the past ones. In the same way, there is no connection with virtue. On the fall of his body, liberation is certain.” The Lord has stated in the *Bhagavadgītā*, “For those who have realised the Supreme, there is absorption in *Brahman*, while living and after death.” The *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* teaches, “For the enlightened one, there is delay (in attaining complete liberation) only till the fall of his body. Thereupon, he becomes merged in the Truth.” Moreover, in keeping with the teachings of the scripture, such as, “His organs do not depart. Being but *Brahman* while alive, He merges in the Supreme *Brahman*,” for the enlightened sage, there is no departure to any world; there is just abidance as the Supreme *Brahman*, of the nature of absolute existence, pure consciousness and infinite bliss. Thus, regardless of the condition in which His Holiness gave up His body, His abidance thereafter as just the Supreme would not have been compromised even by a jot or tittle. If, as His own *Guru*, an undisputed *jīvanmukta*, asserted now and then, with certitude, His Holiness was an incarnation of the Supreme, then His mode of terminating His human drama would, in any case, not have affected Him in any way.

The Lord has stated in the *Bhagavadgītā*, “For those who have realised the Supreme, there is absorption in *Brahman*, while living and after death.”

Reverting to the events of 21<sup>st</sup> September, the following was narrated by Dr. Subhalakshmi.

“About a year before His Holiness’s *siddhi*, I had His *darśana*. He made a passing remark that He was soon going to give up His body and merge into the Supreme. I became sad and submitted to Him candidly that I would not be able to bear seeing Him cast off His mortal coil and so should not be in His presence at that moment. He smiled. I then sought and obtained His permission and blessings to pursue my post-graduation programme in nephrology. I started the course that year. Later, I received a message from Him asking me to complete my research papers and come to Sringeri. Obeying His command, I reached Sringeri and stayed there. On the day of His *siddhi*, I somehow felt very uncomfortable from the morning about His condition. I went to Sacchidananda Vilas and found that He had trouble breathing. Looking at me, He said, “I am going to give you *prasāda*,” and sat up. When I took out my stethoscope from my bag, my crystal *japa-mālā* fell out. When He saw it, He asked for it, took it in His sacred hands, performed *japa* for a few moments and gave it to me, sanctified. He also blessed me with an apple. Finding His health bad,

I requested Him to take rest and took leave of Him. Shortly after I left His chamber, His personal attendant called out for me. I rushed back and found that His Holiness had cast off His mortal coil. I realized that He had granted my request to Him a year ago that I should not be in His presence when He discarded His body. It appeared to me that He was waiting for me to leave the room to do so.”

The news of His Holiness having attained *Mahāsamādhi* was communicated to Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin, who was then camping at Pune. The news soon spread near and far, including over the radio and the electronic media. His Holiness was made to be seated in *sukhāsana* in the inner hall on the ground floor of Sacchidananda Vilas, resting against the southern wall and facing north. He was decorated with *vibhūti* and *rudākṣa-mālā*, besides *tulasī* and flower garlands. The doors were thrown open to devotees for His *darśana*.

Since the waters in the Tuṅgā were flowing high, ferrying the devotees across by boat was unfeasible; bus and lorry owners, however, voluntarily cooperated in transporting people to Narasimhavana and back to the town, till well past midnight. Upon hearing the news, educational and commercial establishments closed and people from in and around Sringeri and from outside proceeded in large numbers to pay their homage to His Holiness; according to a report, about 20,000 people did so. Among those who paid immediate homage were the President, Secretary and members of the Chikmagalur Zilla Parishad, T. V. Chandrasekharappa, M.P., V. S. Krishna Iyer, former M.P., M.L.As, Varadan, advisor to the Governor of Karnataka, the Chairman and the General Manager of Karnataka Bank Ltd. and leading citizens. The Deputy Commissioner of Police, Umesh, and the Superintendent of Police, Om Prakash, supervised the arrangements for *darśana*. The pontiff of the Hariharapura Math, Śrī Svayamprakāśa Abhinava Rāmānanda Sarasvatī Svāmin, motored to Sringeri to pay his homage; he had a long-standing association with the Sringeri Math and had even witnessed His Holiness’s coronation as a pontiff in 1954.

## **22<sup>nd</sup> September, Friday**

Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin (Śrī Sannidhānam, as He was then respectfully referred to by devotees) rushed by air in a devotee’s private aircraft from Pune to Mangaluru and from there, by car and arrived at Sringeri around 1:00 a.m. He paid His homage to His Holiness and remained in silence for some time in His presence.

When I saw His Holiness’s holy form around 4:45 a.m., He was in a seated posture on a block of ice right in the middle of the inner hall of Sacchidananda Vilas, facing west. After

some time, He was to be placed facing north resting against the southern wall in the middle of the hall. Some others and I carried His remains to the seat. I positioned His legs and hands to bring Him as close to His meditation posture as feasible and applied *vibhūti* to His forehead and arms. Śrī Sannidhānam came there and asked me, in Tamil, “Did you place Acharyal in a meditative posture?” I answered in the affirmative. He had a word or two with the *Maṭha* staff and left. A photographer took a photograph of His Holiness. Some devotees had *darśana*. A little later, His Holiness’s garments were changed and *vibhūti* freshly applied. Photographs were taken (by another photographer). After this, the door leading to the inner hall from outside was thrown open to the public and devotees from all over the country came in a queue to pay their homage to His Holiness.

Subsequently, in Śrī Sannidhānam’s presence, His Holiness’s body was placed in a wooden *menā* (a palanquin with a covered litter) in which some of the earlier pontiffs had travelled during tours, and taken in a procession from Sacchidananda Vilas to the river. As seated in the *menā*, He was ferried across the river Tuṅgā in a boat to which a decorated wooden structure capable of accommodating 15-20 people had been attached. Śrī Sannidhānam accompanied Him. (There being no ceremonial impurity upon the passing away of a *saṁnyāsīn*, all the shrines were open in the temple complex and worship went on in them, as usual.) His Holiness was then carried to the precincts of the temple of Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda and placed next to the well in the courtyard. There, Śrī Sannidhānam worshipped Him with the *puruṣa-sūkta* serving as the fundamental *mantra*, with *abhiṣeka* (inclusive of that with *pañcāmṛta*) and other aspects of *pūjā*, such





as *ārati*. As per tradition, *abhiṣeka* was performed with the waters of that well. He was dressed in a fresh set of ochre robes.

After the *pūjā*, His Holiness was adorned with a red shawl, a star-studded crown and a necklace of diamonds and rubies. The time was about 10 a.m. After showing *ārati*, He was seated in the silver palanquin (in which He had sat many



times during His initial tours) and taken in a procession through the streets of Sringeri. Śrī Sannidhānam headed the procession to the accompaniment of *Veda-ghoṣa*, *bhajans* and *nādasvara*; elephants and decorative umbrellas were part of the procession. The procession returned to the *Maṭha's* premises past noon. His Holiness's body was carried from the palanquin and placed in Pravachana Mandiram.

The Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, arrived at 12:30 p.m. with P. V. Narasimha Rao, Minister of External Affairs, Buta Singh, Home Minister, Shiv Shankar, Human Resource Development

Minister, B. Shankaranand, Law Minister, Janardhana Poojari, Minister of State for Rural Development, Jaffer Sheriff, Minister of State for Coal, Krishna Kumar, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, and Sukh Ram, Minister of State for Civil Supplies. Other dignitaries who paid their respects to His Holiness at Pravachana Mandiram included the Governor of Karnataka, P. Venkatasubbiah, advisor to the Governor, K. N. Singh, Chief Secretary of Karnataka, A. B. Datar, the



Director General of Police of Karnataka, A. R. Nizamuddin and General Secretaries of the AICC, Oscar Fernandez and Ghulam Nabi Azad. After paying floral tributes to His Holiness, Rajiv Gandhi had an audience with Śrī Sannidhānam and left by helicopter.



Devotees were still pouring in in large numbers and many had *darśana* of His Holiness at Pravachana Mandiram and

reverenced Him. Around 2 p.m., His Holiness was carried in the *menā* to the riverbank and was ferried across the Tuṅgā to Sandhya-mandapa.

There, Śrī Sannidhānam performed *abhiṣeka* with river water to the accompaniment of the chanting of the *Vedic Śrī-Rudram*. He later stated that He had found it overwhelming to perform *abhiṣeka* to His *Guru*'s body at the very place where His Holiness had blessed Him with *samnyāsa* and with the very *kamaṅḍalu* vouchsafed by Him at that time. With the wet ochre clothing replaced by fresh dry ones and decorated with *vibhūti* and *rudrākṣa-mālā*, His Holiness's body was reverentially carried on a wooden plank and placed near the shrine of His *Guru*. There, Śrī Sannidhānam performed a short *pūjā* to His Holiness. In preparation for His interment, a trench had been dug to the south of the shrine of His *Paramaguru*, the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff, and in line with the *samādhis* of His *Guru* and *Paramaguru*. The circular trench was about 8-foot deep and about 10-foot in diameter; it had within and concentric with it, an inner circular pit about 3-foot deep and 2.5-foot diameter. Years earlier, His Holiness had specified, spelling out the purely practical considerations that weighed with Him, where His body should be interred. A makeshift shed with tin sheets was erected around and over the *samādhi* spot. Barricades of bamboo were also set in place in front of and around the new shrine.

Ganapati Subrahmanya Avadhani performed a short *pūjā* there as per tradition. His Holiness was lowered into the pit. Before this, the Karnataka police offered a guard of honour. Directed by Śrī Sannidhānam, Avadhani made a mark on His Holiness's crest with a conch. He then touched His Holiness's head with a coconut and broke it on a stone nearby; he did this five times. His Holiness's *daṅḍa* was broken into three pieces and placed next to Him. His *kamaṅḍalu* was then crushed and placed by His side within the pit. His spectacles were then removed. The large gathering of devotees continuously and reverentially chanted slogans hailing His Holiness.



The pit was filled with alternate layers of sand and salt of about a foot each till He was covered to the top of the head. The last two feet or so was filled with earth. A bamboo staff was placed vertically above the centre of His head as a mark of identification of the exact location of the *samādhi*. Shankar fashioned an earthen *liṅga*, about 8 inches in diameter and about 10 inches in height and set it up precisely coinciding with the vertical staff placed on His Holiness's head. Having directed, overseen and ensured the performance of all procedures in strict compliance with the *Maṭha's* protocols, Śrī Sannidhānam entered Sacchidananda Vilas. Though the skies were overcast throughout the day, it did not pour since the time the procession left Narasimhavana in the morning till it reached the *samādhi* location; hence, the devotees were not put to inconvenience.



It was past 6:00 p.m. The head of the Jyotir Math as also the Dwaraka Math, Jagadguru Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī Mahāsvāmin, who had immense respect and reverence for His Holiness, arrived and paid homage at the *samādhi*. Visibly moved, He spent nearly half an hour there. After that, He briefly met with Śrī Sannidhānam. Śrī Sannidhānam then proceeded for His bath and, after completing His *ānhika*, duly performed the *ārādhana* at His Holiness's shrine.

His Holiness said about His *Guru* in a talk on 30<sup>th</sup> August, 1987, "My *Guru* was a knower of *Brahman* and was not dependent on any cause or effect. Still, He led His life in such a way that there accrued the welfare of the world. Remembering the events that transpired in His life, chanting His name and incorporating into our lives, at least to some extent, what He demonstrated in His life constitute a



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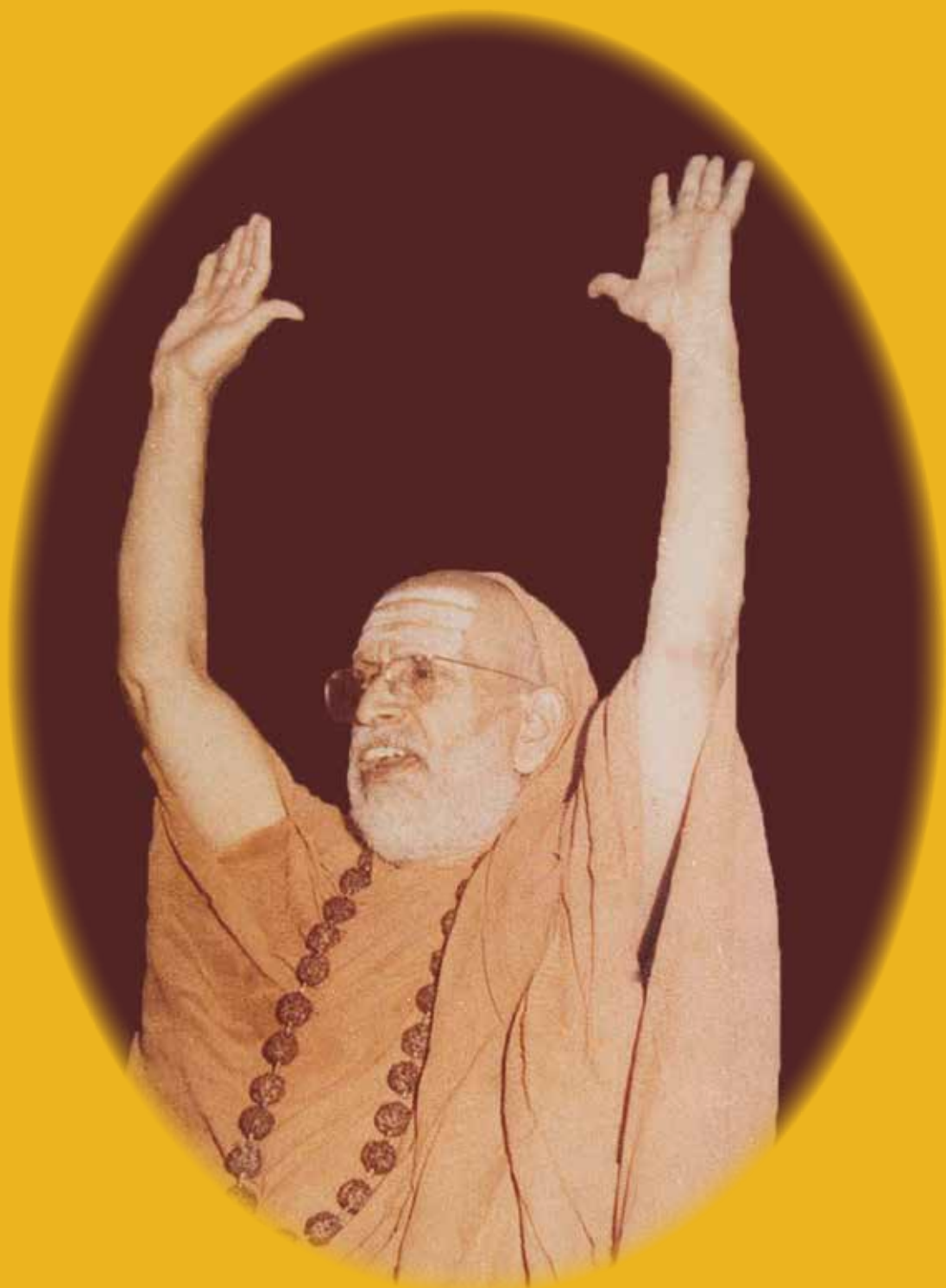
means for us to attain the highest good.” All this is indubitably true in the case of His Holiness too.

It is pertinent that even after His *Guru's* attaining disembodied liberation, His Holiness time and again spoke of His *Guru* gracing and guiding Him. Instances of His referring to His *Guru's* grace upon Him can be seen in a speech that He delivered in 1968 in which He presented some of His experiences during His first All-India tour (1964-68); an English translation of this speech is included in the introduction to the following chapter, which is titled '*Journal of Journeys*'. About a month prior to giving up His body, His *Guru* told Mantreshwara Sharma, a close disciple, “If...I get released from my mortal coil, I shall be with you as soon as you think of me.” Being totally committed to truthfulness, He would never have given this categorical assurance merely to assuage Sharma through an untruth. The 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff Śrī Saccidānanda Sivābhinava Narasimha Bhāratī was assured by His *Guru*, “You are attached to me and it will not be easy for you to bear my loss (upon my shedding my mortal coil) but you know that I shall not cease to live; only, instead of being confined to this body, I shall become omnipresent, though I shall be invisible to mortal eyes” and, again in a vision had by Him after His *Guru's* *videha-mukti*, “Where have I gone? I am here.” In some of His spontaneous metrical outpourings, the 33<sup>rd</sup> pontiff unequivocally referred to His being graced and guided by His *Guru*. Surely, devotees and disciples of His Holiness too can and do receive His grace and guidance.

There is His holy *samādhi* at Sringeri; there is an instance of His having pointed to the spot where His *samādhi* is now located and telling a disciple, “When I am not physically present, you may come here to see me. I will be here”; there are His sacred *pādukas*; there are His teachings; there is His inspiring life; there is the assurance that He gave, “I will never abandon one whom I have accepted”; there are His earlier-cited words about His *Guru* that are applicable to Him; there are many instances of devotees continuing to receive His grace and guidance; there are instances of those desirous of initiation from just Him being initiated in dreams into *mantras*; there are wonderful memories enshrined in the hearts of those who had the greatest good fortune of coming into contact with Him. His grace is undiminished and His guidance available as ever to those who genuinely seek and need it.









INDIA

NEPAL

## CHAPTER 27

# Journal of Journeys

His Holiness's *Guru*, the 34<sup>th</sup> pontiff of the Sringeri Sharada Peetham, Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhārati Mahāsvāmin undertook only two tours during His pontificate (1912-1954) and these were confined to South India; the first was from 1924 to 1927 and the second was from 1938 to 1940. In the final 14 years of His pontificate, He remained at Sringeri, without acceding to the requests of devotees to undertake further tours. He, however, stated that His disciple would do so but after satiating Himself with His *tapas*.

From the time that His Holiness became the pontiff in 1954 after the *videha-mukti* of His *Guru*, devotees increasingly pressed Him travel to their places and bless them. Acceding to their fervent prayers, He started on His first *vijaya-yātra* in March 1956. This lasted six and a half years. He was the 35<sup>th</sup> pontiff, reigned for 35 years and undertook 35 tours, long and short; overall, He toured for over 17 years. An account of these tours is presented in this chapter in tabular form.

He toured extensively from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, nay, even beyond to Nepal, and Dwaraka to Puri. He graced not merely cities and towns connected by good roads, but also remote villages. He thereby reached out to millions, blessing them regardless of their caste, creed or religion. He relentlessly drove Himself to the verge of exhaustion, only to inculcate *dharma* and spirituality in the hearts of people. Thousands of His devotees have witnessed His strenuous schedule that became rather a daily routine whilst He was touring.

All along, people thronged in large numbers for His *darśana*. His Holiness, a veritable polyglot, enthralled and enlightened the audiences with His benedictory addresses

in Hindi, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit. His performance of the glorious *pūjā* to Candramaulīśvara every evening was a treat to watch. In many locations across the country, He established branch *Maṭhas* with shrines of Śrī Śāradā and Śrī Śaṅkara, among other deities. On His tours, He consecrated hundreds of temples, instituted several religious and educational centres, and set up many cultural, social and charitable organizations. Common folk and the Maharajas alike eagerly sought to host Him, to serve Him and pay their homage unto Him. Several Presidents, Prime Ministers, Governors, Ministers of the Central and State Governments, social leaders, scholars, scientists, artists and many others, besides leaders and representatives of different faiths and religions, had His *darśana*, blessings and guidance. Countless are the homes of His devotees which were sanctified by His Holiness's visit. Those who have had the good fortune of having served Him, conversed with Him, or even seen or heard Him but once have been immensely benefitted by His grace.

The tours were not pre-planned in great detail; they would even go with the flow of events as and when they transpired. Uncertainties, surprises and challenges were part and parcel of His tours. This entire narrative would be incomplete without presenting His take on the tours, which is best brought out in His own words, which too are didactical. Towards the end of His first all-India tour, in His benedictory address on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 1968, at Shivamogga, He recounted as follows:



When I set out, I had no inclination to undertake such a long tour, save an occasional desire to visit Varanasi, bathe in the holy Ganges and have the *darśana* of Lord Viśvanātha. I wished to behold, if possible, the Himalayas once, visit Badrinath and Kedarnath. Again, the urge to worship, if feasible, Lord Paśupatināth in Nepal was lurking somewhere inside. However, I made no efforts in this regard. When devotees exhorted me now and then to undertake a tour, I thought, "Let Īśvara's will prevail," and consented. Even then, I had not thought of where to go, when and how. Somehow, things started to fall in place and the tour started, went on and is finally coming to an end. To a large extent, it could be said that the tour has been completed satisfactorily. Looking back, it is clearly evident that all these were, in fact, possible due to the glory of Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda and my *Guru's* grace.

Initially, the tour spanned Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. While in Andhra, I thought of observing the next *cāturmāsya* at Ujjain, the abode of Śrī Mahākāleśvara.

Unexpectedly, this was possible due to the *Rājamātā* of Gwalior. *Navarātri* too was celebrated in a grand manner at Gwalior with the patronage of the *Rājamātā*. At Ujjain, the inclination to visit Nepal and have *darśana* of Paśupatināth intensified. Even this came to pass. Then, I wished to experience both the pleasure and pain of touring the Himalayas. This too fructified! In the meandering and constantly ascending path to Kedarnath, the terrain was strewn with pebbles, boulders, smooth granite slabs and offered variety. Sharp pebbles pricked the feet; the heels were sore due to hard rocks; at places, it was slippery due to thin films of streaming water. As the day wore, the vagaries of weather - sharp afternoon sun, rain during dusk and a chilling wind with light snowfall as the night advanced - were in full view. Accompanied by growing darkness, the fall of snowflakes was like a shower of '*droṇa-puṣpa*' (Leucas aspera or Thumbai) on the face and a bed of sugar for the feet. The snowfall was incessant. The leg joints were stiffening. It was nearing 9 o' clock at night. On one side of the narrow path was a ravine, over 500 feet deep, with the torrential Gaṅgā below. On the other was the rocky steep mountain. Diminishing visibility led to uncertainty regarding where to tread. To compound this, having briskly trekked far ahead of the entourage, I was alone, with none in sight or earshot. Turning back was not an option. Catastrophe was just one false step away - either bang on the butting rock or fall on the lap of Mother Gaṅgā! Lo and behold, a person approached me from the direction of the temple with a lantern and escorted me! What else if not the glorious divine sport of Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda?

One day, as the tour was headed towards Varanasi, many dissuaded me, "Communal clashes and violence are prevalent in Kashi. The atmosphere is not conducive." I could not decide. Praying to Lord Viśvanātha alone is our way, strength and duty. I pondered, "O Visveśvara, why this? I cannot come when You call me! When I come, You should give me *darśana*. Why don't You fulfil my intense urge?" Musing like this for a while, I proceeded for about 40 miles towards Kolkata, when two eminent persons from Kashi came and wanted Me to return to Varanasi. I declined; they insisted; I acceded. Evidently, the Lord's grace was there. What a grand welcome awaited me at Kashi! I was immensely fortunate for the Lord's *darśana* and the glory of the *pūjā*! Reminiscing about these itself accentuates happiness, satisfaction and thrill.

From there, I went to Kolkata. Even there some hurdles and hardships surfaced. "For *saṁnyāsins* like me, what is fame or infamy, triumph or defeat? Let Īśvara's will prevail" - thinking thus, I proceeded. On the very next day after I reached the city, a wonderful transformation was seen in the atmosphere. There was no end to the love and deference of the large gathering. Aren't these the glory of Bhagavatpāda, tell-tale signs of *Guru's* grace?



Once, while at Gaya, I went to Buddha Gaya, without giving prior intimation to the authorities there. However, it appeared that someone must have informed them. They rushed to welcome me and showed their respect. A praiseworthy aspect seen there was the cleanliness of the entire premises, so maintained with utmost faith and devotion. I wondered why our temples too should not be like that. Can unclean places be deemed temples or prayer halls?

On another day, on the way to Nepal, I happened to visit a Buddhist Vihara. There was an assembly of saints and *sādhus*. Thronged by men and women, it appeared like a mixed congregation. On viewing that, their *Guru* took serious exception. He shot, “What is this inappropriate behavior? Can you all mingle like this in the presence of elders? Should you not maintain decorum?” In a trice, the men and women segregated. Their discipline and deference to the code of conduct are worthy of appreciation. Such characteristics in our gatherings are still on our wish list.

From my tour, I see three aspects standing out:

(1) I have personally witnessed and abundantly experienced the limitless grace of Īśvara and the greatness of His powers.

(2) Though due to historical, geographical and social reasons we perceive some mild differences in the appearances, costumes and customs of our people, the society is fundamentally united. This is applicable not merely for those living in the south of the Himalayas, but also for those in Nepal, the sole remaining Hindu nation. The people of Nepal have immense faith in Hindu religion and are extremely proud of being Hindus.

(3) Touring the country is good for all, essential too. Our perspectives widen and our broadmindedness proliferates. Else, narrow feelings like, “We are great; our people alone are great; this world is nothing without us,” get rooted.

All in all, the *sanātana-hindu-dharma* will never cease to exist. With intense faith, if we feel, “We should prosper; the purpose our birth should be fulfilled,” and with a pure mind, we strive in the ordained path, by the grace of Bhagavatpāda, we all will, without any doubt, attain fulfillment.



In this compendium of His tours, effort is made to the extent possible to furnish the details of dates, places, prominent events and dignitaries who called on Him. These details are arranged in a tabular form to facilitate a concise presentation. The details have been

collated from several sources, prominently from, 'Shankara Krupa' (a monthly) in Tamil, 'Shankara Krupa' in Kannada, K.K. Sankaran's unpublished account of His tours, 'Saint of Sringeri in Sacred India' by S.Y. Krishnaswamy, 'Sri Abhinava Vidyatheertha Vijayam' by K.V. Subbaratnam Iyer, 'Tattvaloka' (English magazine), souvenirs and also eye witness accounts. The names of places have been spelt as in Google Maps to facilitate their identification. In every tour of His, without exception, His Holiness pushed Himself to the limits of endurance, sharply focusing on the welfare and uplift of the people. Such was His compassion, as will be evident from the details that follow.



### **An Overview of the Tours of His Holiness**

The 1st Tour	South India - 1956 to 1962 (6 years, 3 months & 27 days)
The 2nd Tour	Short tour of Gokarna and Goa - 1962-1963 (3 months & 15 days)
The 3rd Tour	Short Tour of Bengaluru - 1963 (1 month & 8 days)
The 4th Tour	All India - 1964 to 1968 (3 years, 11 months & 7 days)
The 5th Tour	Short tour of South India - 1969 (2 months & 16 days)
The 6th Tour	Short tour of South India - 1971 (3 months & 16 days)
The 7th Tour	Short trip to Kudli - 1972 (3 days)
The 8th Tour	Short tour of Karnataka - 1973 (1 month, 17 days)
The 9th Tour	Short trip to Mangaluru and Horanadu -1973 (3 days)
The 10th Tour	Short trip to Shivamogga - 1974 (4 days)
The 11th Tour	Short trip to Shivamogga - 1974-1975 (16 days)
The 12th Tour	Short tour of Rameswaram - 1975 (1 month & 12 days)
The 13th Tour	Short tour of Karnataka - 1975 (1 month & 2 days)
The 14th Tour	Short tour of Karnataka and Goa - 1975-76 (3 months & 6 days)
The 15th Tour	Short trip to Mangaluru - 1976 (14 days)
The 16th Tour	All India - 1976-1978 (1 year, 2 months & 8 days)
The 17th Tour	Short trip to Bengaluru - 1978
The 18th Tour	Short tour of South India – 1979-80 (7 months & 9 days)
The 19th Tour	All India - 1981-1983 (1 year, 3 months & 4 days)
The 20th Tour	Short tour of Bengaluru - 1983 (2 months & 7 days)
The 21st Tour	Short tour of Bengaluru - 1983-1984 (3 months & 19 days)
The 22nd Tour	Short tour of Kalady - 1984 (3 months & 20 days)
The 23rd Tour	Stay at Kotekar - 1984 (2 months)
The 24th Tour	Short tour of Kotekar and Kollur - 1986 (1 month & 21 days)
The 25th Tour	Short trip to Gangoli, Kundapura and Kotekar - 1986 (7 days)
The 26th Tour	Short tour of Karnataka - 1986 (1 month & 19 days)
The 27th Tour	Short tour of Chennai - 1986 (2 months & 9 days)
The 28th Tour	Short stay at Kotekar - 1987
The 29th Tour	Short tour of Bengaluru - 1987 (2 months & 1 day)
The 30th Tour	Short trip to Bengaluru - 1987 (7 days)
The 31st Tour	Short trip to Kotekar - 1988 (14 days)
The 32nd Tour	Short trip to Bengaluru - 1988 (31 days)
The 33rd Tour	Stay at Kotekar - 1989
The 34th Tour	Short trip to Karnataka and Kerala - 1989 (April & May)
The 35th Tour	Short tour of Bengaluru - 1989 (1 month & 21 days)

**Major annual events and their places during the period 1954 to 1989**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Śivarātri</b>	<b>Śaṅkara-jayantī</b>	<b>Cāturmāsya</b>	<b>Navarātri</b>	<b>Vardhantī of His Holiness</b>
1954	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1955	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1956	Sringeri	Balekudru Mutt	Kalady	Kalady	Kalady
1957	Sundarapandia-puram	Tirunelveli	Courtallam	Sengottai	Vathirairuppu
1958	Kovilur	Madurai	Kalady	Coimbatore	Coimbatore
1959	Erode	Tiruchi	Ayalur	Salem	Salem
1960	Hampi	Hyderabad	Chennai	Chennai	Chennai
1961	Chennai	Vijayawada	Bengaluru	Bengaluru	Bengaluru
1962	Bengaluru	Hassan	Sringeri	Sringeri	Shivamogga
1963	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1964	Sringeri	Kalady	Courtallam	Kallidaikurichi	Tirunelveli
1965	Madurai	Kalady	Salem	Chennai	Chennai
1966	Guntur	Vemulawada	Ujjain	Gwalior	New Delhi
1967	Kathmandu (Nepal)	New Delhi	Mumbai	Mumbai	Mumbai
1968	Bengaluru	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1969	Chennai	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1970	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1971	Bengaluru	Kalady	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1972	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri

**Major annual events and their places during the period 1954 to 1989**

Year	<i>Śivarātri</i>	<i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i>	<i>Cāturmāsya</i>	<i>Navarātri</i>	<i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness
1973	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1974	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1975	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Bengaluru
1976	Bengaluru	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Bengaluru
1977	Kolkata	New Delhi	Hyderabad	Guntur	Chennai
1978	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1979	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Bengaluru
1980	Rameswaram	Kalady	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1981	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Mysuru
1982	Hyderabad	Mumbai	New Delhi	Kolkata	Kolkata
1983	Sringeri	Sringeri	Bengaluru	Sringeri	Bengaluru
1984	Sringeri	Sringeri	Kalady	Sringeri	Sringeri
1985	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1986	Sringeri	Bengaluru	Sringeri	Sringeri	Chennai
1987	Sringeri	Sringeri	Bengaluru	Sringeri	Bengaluru
1988	Sringeri	Mysuru	Sringeri	Sringeri	Sringeri
1989	Sringeri	Kalady	Sringeri	-	-



## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		The 1st Tour - South India - 1956 to 1962 (6 years, 3 months & 27 days)
14.03.1956 to 26.03.1956	Kalasa	His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin commenced His first pontifical tour one and a half years after His <i>Guru</i> , Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin, attained <i>mahā-samādhi</i> in the year 1954. This tour was confined to South India. He first camped at Kalasa and visited the places nearby.
26.03.1956 to 28.03.1956	Dharmasthala	At Dharmasthala, the <i>Jagadguru</i> was received with temple honours by Mr. Ratnavarma Heggade. He offered worship at Sri Manjunatheshwara Temple on the evening of the 27th of March.
28.03.1956 to 07.04.1956	Various places	His Holiness arrived at Ashwathapura for the installation ceremony of the idol of Śrī Śaṅkarabhagavatpāda at the temple near Moodabidri on the 29th. During His tour in South Canara Districts, He worshipped Goddess Mūkāmbikā at Kollur, with golden <i>bilva</i> leaves. He also visited several other places nearby.
07.04.1956 to 14.04.1956	Various places	His Holiness reached Kudlu, in Kasaragod Taluk, where He was received with due temple honours and was taken to Kuthyala Sri Gopalakrishna Temple. On the 9th of April, He visited Durgaparameshwari Temple at Malla.
14.04.1956 to 17.04.1956	Ullal	His Holiness camped at Ullal and left for Mangaluru on the 17th.
17.04.1956 to 22.04.1956	Mangaluru	At Mangaluru, His Holiness camped at Subramanya Sadana. He visited the Advaita Ashram and attended the ceremony of installing a marble statue of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara and a portrait of Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin.
22.04.1956 to 05.05.1956	Various Places	His Holiness visited the Mahalingeswara Mahaganapati Temple at Padubidri, the Gopalakrishna Temple, at the Edneer Math, Bajakudlu, Shree Jnanashakthi Subrahmanya Swamy Temple at Pavanje and the Chitrapur Math. Subsequently, He visited Karkala and other adjoining places and left for Shankaranarayana, a place 55 miles off Karkala.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
05.05.1956 to 09.05.1956	Shankara- narayana	His Holiness visited Sri Shankaranarayana Temple. After camping at Shankaranarayana, He proceeded to Basrur.
09.05.1956 to 10.05.1956	Basrur	His Holiness arrived at Basrur on the 9th and worshipped at Sri Mahathobhara Mahalingeshwara Temple. After a single-day camp at Basrur, His Holiness arrived at Balekudru Math (Hungacutta post).
10.05.1956 to 16.05.1956	Karkala, Balekudru	His Holiness visited Sri Ananthashayana Temple at Karkala on the 10th. The <i>Jagadguru</i> celebrated <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> at Balekudru Math. Special arrangements were made for discourses on <i>Vedānta</i> .
16.05.1956 to 03.06.1956	Various places	His Holiness had a single-day camp at Kundapura and subsequently toured various places in Kodagu District. He visited Talakaveri, where He walked up the three-mile hill road from Bhagamandala to Talakaveri and offered worship and then left for Virarajendrapet. After extensively touring Mysuru, South Canara and Coorg, He arrived at Thalassery.
03.06.1956 to 05.06.1956	Thalassery	His Holiness was given a warm reception at Sri Ramaswamy Temple at Thiruvangad.
05.06.1956 to 20.06.1956	Kozhikode	The next camp was at Kozhikode. A <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was held on the 11th of June, with the guidance of His Holiness. Subsequently, His Holiness visited many villages en route to Palakkad and blessed the devotees.
20.06.1956 to 29.06.1956	Palakkad and other places	His Holiness visited Noorani Agraharam and camped at the Kalpathy group of Agraharas. Leaving Palakkad, His Holiness visited Chittur. Later arriving at Nallepilly, His Holiness camped there till the 29th.
29.06.1956 to 02.07.1956	Thathamangalam and other places	Leaving Nallepilly, His Holiness arrived at Thathamangalam and made a brief halt at Ayalur village. He then proceeded to Perumkulam via Nenmara.
02.07.1956 to 13.07.1956	Thrissur	His Holiness arrived at Thrissur from Peruvemba. He was received at Pattikkad. On the way, He worshipped at the Shasta Temple on the hills. He then visited Naikkanal and Pushpagiri in Punkunnam and worshipped at Sri Rama Temple there. At Pazhayanadakkavu Ayyappa Temple, He

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Date	Place	Events
		worshipped Śāstā. He also worshipped at the famous Vadakkunnathan Shiva Temple, said to have been built by Paraśurāma.
13.07.1956 to 27.09.1956	Kalady	His Holiness arrived at Kalady for <i>Cāturmāsyā</i> . He performed <i>Vyāsa-pūjā</i> and undertook the <i>Cāturmāsyā-saṁkalpa</i> on the 22nd of July. On the 23rd, His Holiness performed <i>uttara-pūjā</i> and <i>vyāsākṣatā</i> was distributed to devotees. Sri Chithira Tirunal Balarama Varma Maharaja of Travancore had <i>darśana</i> of the <i>Jagadguru</i> . During the week of <i>Vināyaka-caturthī</i> , His Holiness convened a <i>vidvat-sadas</i> and distributed awards and presents to scholars. The Maharaja of Kochi, Sri Rama Varma Parikshith Thampuran, participated in the discussions and also had the privilege of having a separate interview with His Holiness. The <i>Jagadguru</i> worshipped daily at the temples of Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Śāradāmbā.
27.09.1956 to 02.10.1956	Ernakulam, Kochi	His Holiness arrived at Ernakulam on the 27th of September. He was taken in a golden palanquin to the accompaniment of chanting of <i>Vedās</i> . He addressed a huge gathering of devotees on the 28th at the Tank Shed Palace. On the 29th, He visited Kochi. There, He worshipped at the Palluruthy Azhakiyakavu Devi Temple. His Holiness returned to Ernakulam. On the 30th, He was accorded a grand civic reception by the Ernakulam Municipal Council. His Holiness paid a visit to Kochi again. He was received with temple honours at Sri Janardhana Temple on the 1st of October. On His way back to Ernakulam, at Wellington Island, the officers and employees of Kochi port paid their respects to Him. He visited a number of places and attended many religious programmes in Ernakulam and surrounding areas.
02.10.1956 to 04.11.1956	Kalady	His Holiness returned to Kalady for <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations. He conducted <i>Navarātri-pūjās</i> in the shrine of Śrī Śāradāmbā. The function commenced with a special <i>pūjā</i> to Śrī Śāradāmbā on <i>Mahālaya-amāvāsyā</i> day. The <i>Śatacaṇḍī-homa</i> was concluded on the <i>navamī</i> day. On the 14th of October, <i>Vijayadaśamī</i> day, He distributed <i>mantrākṣatā</i> to the devotees. His Holiness granted interview to Āgamānanda Svāmin of Advaita Āśrama, Kalady, on the 21st. On the 1st of November, the day of <i>Dīpāvali</i> , the 40th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was celebrated. His Holiness performed special <i>pūjā</i> at the temple of Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Śāradāmbā. A Guard of Honour was then presented to His Holiness.



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Date	Place	Events
04.11.1956 to 06.11.1956	Various Places	From Kalady, His Holiness proceeded to Aluva, where He was given a public reception. After visiting Parur, He left for Trippunithura. At the invitation of the Maharaja of Kochi, His Holiness visited his palace. Impressed by the versatile scholarliness of the Maharaja, His Holiness honoured him with the title ' <i>Abhinava-tarka-vāgīśa</i> '.
06.11.1956 to 22.11.1956	Various Places	After visiting Vaikom and adjoining places, His Holiness reached Kottayam and stayed there. Visiting other adjoining places like Mankombu, He proceeded to Alappuzha.
22.11.1956 to 12.12.1956	Various Places	His Holiness proceeded to Mullakkal and stayed there for a week. Subsequently, He proceeded to Thiruvananthapuram, after making brief halts at Ambalapuzha, Haripad, Kayamkulam, Karunagappally, Kollam, Varkala, Sasthamangalam and Suchindram.
12.12.1956 to 10.01.1957	Thiruvanantha -puram, Kanyakumari	His Holiness was received at Thiruvananthapuram by the <i>Rājapramukh</i> and Governor B. Ramakrishna Rao. The Raja hosted Him in the Kowdiar palace for five days. His Holiness worshipped at Sri Padmanabhaswamy Temple and offered to the Lord gold-laced clothes and cash. His Holiness stayed at Thiruvananthapuram for two weeks. Sri Vaidyanatha Iyer took care of all the arrangements for the camp of His Holiness. From Thiruvananthapuram, His Holiness arrived at Nagercoil, and from there proceeded to Kanyakumari where He offered worship at the shrine of Kanyākumārī Amman. He visited nearby villages and temples on His way to Tirunelveli District in Tamilnadu.
10.01.1957 to 11.04.1957	Kallidaikurichi and other places	His Holiness visited Kallidaikurichi on the 10th of January, Harikesavanallur on the 16th, Gopalamudram on the 17th, and then, Valliyur, Kalakkad, Cheranmahadevi, Sengottai, Kadayam, Veeravanallur and other adjoining places. At Kadayam, The Sanskrit Commission headed by Dr. S.K. Chatterjee met His Holiness and had discussions for nearly three hours. His Holiness performed the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> at Sundarapandiapuram on the 27th of February. Visiting the villages nearby, His Holiness arrived at Sengottai on the 17th of March, where He stayed for a week and visited many surrounding villages. At Sengottai, a community prayer meeting, organised by the Community Prayer Satsangam, took place in the divine presence of the <i>Jagadguru</i> . He arrived at Sankarankovil on the 7th of April and worshipped at Sri Sankaranarayana Swamy Temple.

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Date	Place	Events
11.04.1957 to 21.04.1957	Palamadai and other places	His Holiness arrived at Palamadai where Śrī Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita, Saint and Sanskrit poet, spent his last days. He camped there for three days and gave a discourse on the 13th of April, after which He proceeded to Ariyanayagipuram and Kodaganallur, en route to Tirunelveli.
21.04.1957 to 11.06.1957	Tirunelveli	At Tirunelveli, His Holiness was given a rousing reception on the 21st of April. On the 26th, He visited Sri Nellaiappar Swamy Temple and worshipped there. <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> was celebrated by His Holiness for five days starting from the 30th of April, in the special pandal put up at Teppakkulam street. His Holiness was given a civic reception by the Tirunelveli Municipal Council on the 15th of May. He left for Palayamkottai (19th), and addressed a public meeting at Perumalkulam. He again returned to Palayamkottai on the 3rd of June. He visited a number of surrounding villages and on the 9th, was given a civic reception by the Palayamkottai Municipal Council.
11.06.1957 to 10.07.1957	Tiruchendur and other places	Leaving Palayamkottai, His Holiness proceeded to Tiruchendur. On arrival at the Tiruchendur Subramania Swamy Temple, His Holiness was received with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> and other temple honours. On the 12th, His Holiness performed <i>pūjā</i> at the shrine of Lord Subrahmaṇya with golden <i>bilva</i> leaves. His Holiness paid a short visit to Pudukkottai, and stayed in the palace of His Highness Raja Sri Brahdamba Dasa Rajagopala Tondaiman. Later, He returned to Tuticorin, and He visited <i>Sekkizhar Kazhagam</i> . Tuticorin Municipal Council presented an address to His Holiness in its office premises on the 27th. Later, He visited other villages and reached Ambasamudram. Then, His Holiness proceeded to Courtallam.
10.07.1957 to 08.09.1957	Courtallam	His Holiness arrived at Courtallam and camped with His retinue at the Bungalow of P.A.C. Ramaswamy Raja of Rajapalayam. He performed <i>Vyāsa-pūjā</i> on the 12th of July and <i>somavāra-pūjās</i> on the 29th of July, 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th of August. Special <i>pūjās</i> were conducted on <i>Vināyaka-caturthī</i> . That same evening <i>Gaṇapati-vākyārtha-sadas</i> was inaugurated, which got concluded on the 8th of September. <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> came to a close on the 8th, with <i>Umā-maheśvara-vrata</i> . His Holiness then proceeded to Sengottai in response to the request of several ardent devotees to conduct the <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations there.
08.09.1957 to 04.10.1957	Courtallam to Sengottai	His Holiness acceded to the request of the Raja of Ettayapuram and camped at his palace for a day on the 19th of September, on His way to Sengottai. His Holiness arrived at Sengottai, covering places such as Kovilpatti, Iyarsanendal and Kalugumalai. He concluded the three day <i>ārāadhanā</i> celebrations of His Holiness Śrī Candraśekhara Bhārati Mahāsvāmin on the 24th. On the same day,

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Date	Place	Events
		the <i>Navarātri-mahotsava</i> was commenced in the usual grand manner. <i>Śatacaṇḍī-homa-pūrṇāhuti</i> was performed on the 30th. From Sengottai His Holiness arrived at Veeravanallur.
04.10.1957 to 16.10.1957	Rajapalayam, Srivilliputhur	From Veeravanallur, His Holiness visited Rajapalayam and then arrived at Srivilliputhur on the 13th of October. The next day, He worshipped at Sri Srivilliputhur Andal Temple and also at Sri Vaidyanatha Swamy Temple. The local Municipal Council presented an address of welcome to the <i>Jagadguru</i> .
16.10.1957 to 26.10.1957	Vathirairuppu	The 41st <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was celebrated on the 16th at Vathirairuppu. Devotees thronged His camp in huge numbers to seek the <i>Jagadguru's</i> blessings. His Holiness climbed the Chaturagiri Hills and worshipped at the Sundaramahalinga and Chandanamahalinga shrines during this period.
26.10.1957 to 05.11.1957	Virudhunagar, Sattur, Ramanathapuram	His Holiness arrived at Virudhunagar and visited Sri Chokkanathar Temple on the 26th. On the 28th, His Holiness proceeded to Sattur. He arrived at Aruppukkottai on the 29th. His Holiness reached Ramanathapuram on the 3rd of November, and was received by the elite of the town led by Sri Ramanatha Sethupathi, the Crown Prince. His Holiness left for Devipattinam on the 4th, and after performing <i>pūjā</i> at Navapashanam, returned to Ramanathapuram at noon. On the 5th, <i>pūjā</i> to Śrī Rāja Rājeśvarī, the tutelary deity of the Sethupathi dynasty, was performed by His Holiness in the Ramanathapuram Palace. His Holiness visited Thiruppullani and took a holy bath at the Ādi Setu, and after worshipping at Sri Adi Jagannatha Temple, returned to Ramanathapuram at noon.
05.11.1957 to 01.12.1957	Rameswaram and other places	His Holiness left for Rameswaram in the evening. On the way, Kasinathadurai of Ramanathapuram Palace and the people of the locality received His Holiness with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> . At the dry dock on the sea shore at Mandapam, Mr. Khan Bahadur P.R.M.K. Mohammed Abdul Rahman Marakayar respectfully welcomed the <i>Jagadguru</i> . His Holiness reached Pamban on the other shore by a steam boat. At Pamban, His Holiness was received in specially decorated pandal by the Rameswaram Devasthanam authorities, the Port Officers, the Customs Officers, the Fisheries and the Railway Officers. From the outskirts of Rameswaram Town where His Holiness was received with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> , His Holiness walked through the main streets, in torrential rain, till the Devasthanam Thiruppani Buildings, where He was to stay for a week. His Holiness performed the <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> in the south-western corner of the famous third corridor of the temple. His Holiness took a sacred bath at Dhanushkodi during the lunar eclipse on the 7th of November. On the 11th of November, He offered <i>pūjā</i> on a grand scale to Lord Śrī Rāmanātha and Śrī

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Date	Place	Events
		Parvatavardhinī. The Rameswaram Panchayat board presented a welcome address to His Holiness on the 13th of November. On the 16th of November, His Holiness started from Rameswaram and reached Mandapam. He camped there at Ramnad Raja's Choultry and performed the <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> there. From Mandapam, the <i>Jagadguru</i> proceeded to Sivaganga where He consecrated the idol of Śrī Ratnagarbha Gaṇapati. Starting from Sivaganga the <i>Jagadguru</i> made a brief halt at the Koviloor Math and then reached Karaikudi.
01.12.1957 to 17.01.1958	Karaikudi and other places	At Karaikudi, His Holiness was welcomed by the devotees at the Koppudai Nayaki Amman Temple and was taken in procession by leading <i>Nagarathars</i> and other devotees. On the 5th of December, His Holiness addressed a public meeting at Sri Siva Temple. On the 11th of December, the Karaikudi Municipal Council accorded a welcome address to His Holiness. From Karaikudi, He proceeded to Devakottai and was accorded an address of welcome by the Devakottai Municipal Council on the 21st of December. From Devakottai, His Holiness proceeded to Kottaiyur where He visited the Kottaiyur College on the 17th of January 1958.
17.01.1958 to 20.01.1958	Aranthangi	His Holiness camped at Aranthangi for a day. Arriving at Avudaiyar Koil, His Holiness was received by Thambiran Svāmin.
20.01.1958 to 05.03.1958	Thanjavur & Tiruchi Districts	His Holiness toured the districts of Thanjavur and Tiruchi and halted in many places including Tiruchi, Thanjavur, Lalgudi and Mannargudi. At Kumbakonam His Holiness presided over a <i>sadas</i> . He also visited Pudukkottai and surrounding villages. The <i>Jagadguru</i> performed the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> at Kovilur on the 16th of February. He then proceeded to Kulithalai and neighbouring villages in Tiruchi District. His Holiness reached Pettavaithalai near Tiruchi on the 19th where He was taken in a procession to Kamanaickenpalayam, where He stayed at the Nangavaram Bungalow for a week. Then, He visited Manathattai, Nangavaram and other villages in Kulithalai Taluk. He left Tiruchi District on the 2nd of March and proceeded to Melur.
05.03.1958 to 20.04.1958	Madurai District	The devotees of Madurai gave His Holiness a magnificent reception on the 5th. He was taken in a grand procession in a decorated and flower bedecked golden palanquin to the Meenakshi Sundaeswarar Kalyana Mandapa. On the 9th of April, His Holiness visited Sholavandan and nearby villages. On the 11th of April, He was accorded a reception by the Madurai Saurashtra Sabha. Then His Holiness worshipped at the Prasanna Venkatachalapathy Temple, Thallakulam, and visited the suburbs of Madurai District at the request of devotees.

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Date	Place	Events
20.04.1958 to 16.05.1958	Madurai	His Holiness celebrated <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> between the 20th and the 24th of April. He was taken in a grand procession which terminated at the Meenakshi Temple Thirukalyana Mandapam. The Madurai Municipal Council presented a civic address to His Holiness on the 11th of May. On the same day, His Holiness was received at the TVS workshop by Mr. J. Srinivasan, Director, and His Holiness addressed the workers there. His Holiness concluded His ten week stay at Madurai and proceeded to Thirumangalam. Leaving Madurai, His Holiness camped at Thirumangalam.
16.05.1958 to 21.06.1958	Sholavandan, Thenkarai, Sivaganga & Mannadi- mangalam	His Holiness arrived at Sholavandan. He conducted the <i>ārāadhanā</i> of Śrī Vṛddha Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin on the 20th of May, at Thenkarai. Earlier He visited the Mullipallam Temple and worshipped at the shrine. His Holiness visited other neighbouring places, including Sivaganga where He performed the <i>yantra-pratiṣṭhā</i> and the <i>aṣṭabandhana kumbhābhiṣeka</i> at Sri Rathnagarbhaganapathi Swamy Temple. From Mannadimangalam (near Sholavandan) His Holiness proceeded to Dindigul.
21.06.1958 to 25.06.1958	Dindigul	His Holiness was given a grand reception in front of the Shankara Math. He camped at Dindigul for five days at the Kannivadi Bungalow. He left for Athur en route to Palani.
25.06.1958 to 30.06.1958	Palani	His Holiness conducted <i>pūjā</i> on a grand scale at the shrine of Lord Daṇḍāyudhapāṇi for the welfare of humanity. He proceeded to Kalady, visiting towns en route.
30.06.1958 to 01.10.1958	Kalady	On the 1st of July, His Holiness commenced the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> which concluded on the 22nd of September. From Kalady, He proceeded to Irinjalakuda where He camped. Then His Holiness reached Pattambi.
01.10.1958 to 07.10.1958	Nallepilly, Kollengode	His Holiness conferred the title ' <i>Saṅgīta-ratnākara</i> ' to Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavata. He then proceeded to Kollengode at the invitation of the Raja. He was taken in a palanquin through the streets of Perumalkoil village and other streets. He left for Ayalur on the 4th, en route to Palakkad. At Palakkad, His Holiness stayed for 4 days.
07.10.1958 to 08.12.1958	Coimbatore	His Holiness arrived at Coimbatore and was received at Sri Nrisimha Swami Temple on the Podanur Road. The annual <i>ārāadhanā</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin was celebrated at Shankara Math from the 11th of October. <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations and <i>Caṇḍī-homa</i> took place at R.S. Puram in a special <i>pandal</i> put up in front of (Binny) Sri Subba Rao's house. On <i>Vijayadaśamī</i> ,

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Date	Place	Events
		Sringeri Math <i>Āsthāna Vidvān</i> Sri V.S. Ramachandra Sastri, Principal of Bhāratīya Gīrvaṇa Prauḍha Vidyā Abhivardhanī Paṭhaśālā, Bengaluru, was awarded the title <i>Vidyā Nidhi</i> by His Holiness and honoured with a gold medal. The 42nd <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was celebrated on the 10th of November in Ram Nagar. His Holiness paid a visit to the Suburban High School. On the 22nd, His Holiness inaugurated the function of <i>Divya Prabanda Vizha</i> . He was received by Sri P.S.G.G. Govindaswamy Naidu and others. On Sunday, the 30th, He worshipped at the Perur Patteeswarar Swamy Temple. Back at Coimbatore His Holiness conducted <i>vidvat-sadas</i> on the 3rd and the 4th of December. On the 8th, His Holiness left for Ooty, after two months of stay at Coimbatore.
08.12.1958 to 22.12.1958	Ooty	His Holiness was received at Ooty by Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer and other devotees. His Highness Sri Jayachamarajendra Wodeyar paid respects to His Holiness in the evening and invited Him to Mysuru. The <i>Jagadguru</i> visited the Emerald Dam of the Kundah Hydro-electric Power House on the 10th and later left for Glenmorgan on the 12th. His Holiness was taken by ropeway trolley to the Pykara (Singara) Hydro-electric Power Plant on the 13th, nearly 3500 feet below Glenmorgan. Subsequently, He left for Mettupalayam.
22.12.1958 to 14.01.1959	Gobichetti- palayam & Satyaman- galam	His Holiness camped at Gobichettipalayam for three weeks visiting Satyamangalam and the villages nearby. He convened a <i>vidvat-sadas</i> on the 11th of January where many scholars participated.
14.01.1959 to 25.01.1959	Tiruppur	The next camp was at Tiruppur. On the 22nd of January, His Holiness visited Eswaran Koil, where He was given welcome address by the Tiruppur Vara Vazhipattu Thirukkootam.
25.01.1959 to 04.02.1959	Avinashi Pollachi	Leaving Tiruppur, His Holiness next camped at Avinashi. His Holiness arrived at Pollachi via Coimbatore. On the 1st of February, He worshipped Lord Muruga at Pollachi.
04.02.1959 to 20.02.1959	Udumalpet	Sri Govindaswamy Naidu received His Holiness at the G.V.G.V. College on the 4th. On the 8th, His Holiness was accorded a civic reception by Udumalpet Municipality. On the 9th, His Holiness sent <i>prasādas</i> through His personal representative for the laying of the foundation stone for a new

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Date	Place	Events
		building of Shankara Math at Raja Street, Coimbatore, by Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer. On the 20th, He left for Kolinjivadi Village, Dharapuram.
20.02.1959 to 02.03.1959	Dharapuram	A civic address was presented by the Municipal Chairman of Dharapuram on the 26th of February. On the 2nd of March, He arrived at Erode.
02.03.1959 to 12.03.1959	Erode	His Holiness stayed at Erode for ten days. He was given a civic reception on 10th, by the Erode Municipal Council. His Holiness performed the the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> at Erode.
12.03.1959 to 19.03.1959	Bhavani	His Holiness proceeded to Bhavani and camped there. He visited the temple of Lord Saṅgameśvara and Goddess Vedanāyakī and inspected the temple renovation works. His Holiness paid a visit to Chemicals Colony, Mettur Dam, Salem, on the 15th. After camping at Unjalur (Kodumudi) for 2 days, His Holiness proceeded to Palakkad.
19.03.1959 to 22.03.1959	Palakkad	This was His Holiness's third visit to Palakkad, in response to a special invitation to attend the <i>Atirudra-mahāpuruṣasūkta-yajña</i> . His Holiness attended the <i>yajña</i> and blessed the assembled people. During His stay at Palakkad, His Holiness made a surprise visit to Coimbatore on the 21st, to acquaint Himself with the progress of the construction of the Shankara Math in Raja Street.
22.03.1959 to 14.04.1959	Karur	His Holiness was welcomed in front of Sri Pasupatheeswarar Temple by Pandit P.S. Rama Sarma and others. He camped for two weeks in Karur. He paid a two day visit to Coimbatore for inaugurating the <i>Rāmanavamī</i> celebrations at R.S. Puram and also visited the Shankara Math construction site.
14.04.1959 to 30.04.1959	Krishnaraya- puram, Mahadana- puram and other places	His Holiness camped at Krishnarayapuram up to the 17th. At Mahadanapuram, His Holiness visited Śrī Bhāṣya Svāmin's <i>āśrama</i> where the Svāmin received Him with all honours. His Holiness blessed the numerous devotees assembled there. There, He rendered a moving discourse, recalling the greatness of Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin. On the 20th of April, His Holiness visited Śrī Kamalānanda Nṛsimha Bhāratī Svāmin Adhiṣṭhānam Pāṭhaśālā. He later paid visits to Nangavaram and Kulithalai.
30.04.1959 to 20.05.1959	Tiruchirappalli	At the western gate of the National College, Trichy, His Holiness was given a grand reception with eminent pandits reciting the <i>upaniṣads</i> . His Holiness conducted the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations between the 8th and the 13th of May, during which time a <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was held. His Holiness was

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Date	Place	Events
		given a grand reception on the 19th at Advaita Sabha by its President, Sri Shankara Dikshitar and others. His Holiness then left for Bikshandar Kovil.
20.05.1959 to 04.06.1959	Bikshandar Kovil, Srirangam, Thiruvanaikoil	At Bikshandar Kovil, <i>Nṛsīmha-jayantī</i> was celebrated on the 21st. On the 25th, His Holiness was given a warm reception by the Seva Sangam at Srirangam. His Holiness then visited the Jambukeswarar Temple in Thiruvanaikoil. The next halt was at Ammankudi. His Holiness then visited Vathalai, Upper Anicut and other villages on the 27th and the 28th. His Holiness visited the Uchi Pillayar Temple and Thayumana Swamy Temple, Rockfort at Trichy on the 31st. His Holiness then left for His tour of the Thanjavur District.
04.06.1959 to 20.06.1959	Thanjavur District	On the 4th of June, His Holiness set foot on Koviladi village near the Grand Anicut, where He was received with due honours. He visited Sri Rangantha Temple and offered a <i>pītāmbara</i> to the deity. He then visited Thiruvaiyaru where He was received with all honours. He paid a visit to Panchanadeeswarar (Aiyarappar) Temple. On the 6th, He left for Mannargudi. After staying there for a few days, His Holiness reached Nagapattinam on the 13th. The next day, He reached Thiruthuraipoondi where He was received with temple honours. His Holiness visited the shrine at Sikkal and worshipped Lord Siṅgāra Velan. On the 16th, He reached Dharmapuram where the <i>Adhīnam</i> received Him with full honours. He then arrived at Tiruvarur where He camped for 3 days (16th to 19th). The next halt was at Needamangalam on the 20th.
20.06.1959 to 25.06.1959	Mayiladu- thurai	His Holiness worshipped at Sri Brahmapureswarar Temple on the 25th of June, where Śrī Somasundara Thambiran Svāmin of Pracharak Math received Him and showed Him around.
25.06.1959 to 29.06.1959	Chidambaram, Kattur	His Holiness arrived at Chidambaram via Sirgazhi and was given a very grand reception. The next day, He paid a visit to the Thillai Nataraja Temple at Chidambaram, where He was received at the eastern <i>gopuram</i> by the <i>podu dīkṣitars</i> . His Holiness performed <i>Rudra-abhiṣeka</i> to the Candramaulīśvara Liṅga at the temple. On the 28th, His Holiness worshipped at the shrines of Gāyatrī Amman and Thillai Kālī. His Holiness camped for a day at Kattur.
29.06.1959 to 04.07.1959	Neyveli	His Holiness visited the Neyveli Lignite Mines. He evinced great interest in the project and got Himself acquainted with several processes there. He blessed the assembled staff. He also paid a visit to Erumbur.



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Date	Place	Events
04.07.1959 to 05.07.1959	Kumbakonam	His Holiness visited Kumbakonam en route to Thanjavur on the 4th of July, and offered worship at the Adi Kumbeshwaraswamy Temple. Earlier, He was received at the temple entrance by the officials of the temple and devotees. His Holiness then proceeded to Kuthalam and Papanasam and arrived at Thanjavur the same night.
05.07.1959 to 06.07.1959	Thanjavur	On the 5th, His Holiness offered worship at Brihadeeswarar Temple and at Kamakshi Temple. He also paid a visit to the Sarasvati Mahal Library. He was taken in procession through the main streets of Thanjavur. He took a bath at the holy confluence of Poompuhar (Kaveripoompattinam), where the river Kāverī enters the sea. His Holiness arrived at Srirangam on the 6th of July.
06.07.1959 to 19.07.1959	Srirangam, Bikshandar Kovil and other places	His Holiness was at Srirangam for two days followed by His stays at Bikshandar Kovil and at Aiyampalayam. He then toured Vellore, Pathupattur, Musiri, Srinivasanallur, Sriramasamudram, Lalgudi, Kulithalai and other adjoining villages. He also visited Puliyur, Chinnadharapuram, Karuppathur, Sivaganga, Manathattai, Keelakattu Road and other places in Thanjavur District where He was received with all honours. On the 19th of July, His Holiness left for Srinivasanallur and reached Ayalur.
19.07.1959 to 29.09.1959	Ayalur and other places	His Holiness arrived at Ayalur where He was received with due honours. On the 20th of July, His Holiness commenced the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> in a specially decorated <i>pandal</i> . He performed <i>somavāra-pūjās</i> on the 10th, 17th, 24th and 31st of August. His Holiness conducted the <i>Gaṇapati-vākyārtha-vidvat-sadas</i> from the 6th of September till the 15th. On the 16th, the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> was concluded. It was there that His Holiness established the Akhila Bharata Shankara Seva Samiti for dissemination of the teachings of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara and also blessed the start of a Tamil Monthly Journal "Shankara Krupa".
-do-	Various places	After visiting Kattuputhur, Nagayanallur, Pudur, Jothiyampatti, Mohanur, Manathattai, Vengarai, Velur, Mahendramangalam and other adjoining villages, and staying in each of these places for a day or two, His Holiness arrived in Salem on the 29th of September.
29.09.1959 to 07.11.1959	Salem	His Holiness was received at Sugavaneswarar Temple in Salem. The 6th <i>ārādhana</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin was conducted for three days in a grand scale from the 1st of October. The <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations began on the 2nd. On the 10th, the <i>Śatacaṇḍī-pūrṇāhuti</i> was performed. <i>Vijayadaśamī</i> was celebrated on the 11th. The 43rd <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was

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Date	Place	Events
		celebrated on the 30th. His Holiness then proceeded to Peddanaickenpalayam on the 7th of November.
07.11.1959 to 21.11.1959	Various Places	His Holiness visited Ettapur, Abinavam, Thuraiyur, Musiri, Attur and Thirukoilure. He visited Ulagalantha Perumal (Trivikramaswamy) Temple at Thirukoilure.
21.11.1959 to 27.11.1959	Cuddalore	His Holiness arrived at Cuddalore and was given a rousing reception. He camped there for six days. He also visited Pondichery.
27.11.1959 to 03.12.1959	Various Places	After visiting Villupuram, His Holiness paid short visits to Virudhachalam, Nellikuppam, Bhuvanagiri, Ulundurpet, Rasipuram, Namakkal, Bhavani and reached Coimbatore.
03.12.1959 to 13.12.1959	Coimbatore	The inauguration of the newly constructed branch Math (Raja Street) premises and the <i>kumbhābhīṣeka</i> of the temple took place in a grand manner on the 4th of December. The functions commenced from the 4th of December and ended on the 8th. His Holiness performed special <i>pūjās</i> with His lotus hands to Lord Śrī Ratna Garbha Gaṇapati and blessed the huge gathering of devotees who had assembled there.
13.12.1959 to 23.12.1959	Karur and Salem	His Holiness arrived at Karur on the 13th of December where He was accorded a reception by the public with full honours. The consecration of the idol of Śrī Rājarājeśvarī in the newly built Shankaralaya took place on the 14th. His Holiness then left for Tirumanilaiyur and then visited Namakkal and Tiruchengode, where He visited the famous Subramanya Swamy Temple. He again visited Salem, this time to accept formally Sri Shankaralaya and an adjacent vacant land which was gifted to the <i>Maṭha</i> by Messrs. U. Mahadevan, U. Krishnamurthy, U. Venkat Rao and Mrs. Savithri Ammal.
23.12.1959 to 02.01.1960	Dharmapuri and Hosur	His Holiness camped for three days at Dharmapuri and five days at Hosur (Mysuru State). He paid a visit to Giddannahalli (Hosur) Nageswara Devasthanam.
02.01.1960 to 14.01.1960	Various Places	His Holiness visited Krishnagiri on the 2nd, Tirupattur (3rd to 5th), Vellore (5th to 12th), Tindivanam and Pondicherry.

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Date	Place	Events
14.01.1960 to 15.01.1960	Tiruvanna- malai	His Holiness worshipped at Sri Arunachaleswara Temple. The camp was at M.K. Anna Choultry. His Holiness then visited Arni on His way to Ranipet. Near Arni is a village by name Adaiyapulam, which is the birth place of the famed Śrī Appayya Dīkṣitar. His Holiness paid tributes to Śrī Dīkṣitar in a discourse at Arni.
15.01.1960 to 14.02.1960	Various places	Leaving Thiruvannamalai, His Holiness proceeded to Ranipet, Chittur, Palamaner, Kolar, Chikkaballapura, Sidlaghatta, Chintamani, Srinivasapura, Malur, Vijayapuram, Doddaballapura, Viduraswattha, D Palya and Gudibanda. He visited Kolar Gold Fields and Nandi Hills.
14.02.1960 to 19.04.1960	Hampi, Bellari, Kurnool and Raichur Districts	Acceding to the request of the head of the Virupaksha Math, His Holiness visited Hampi on the 14th. He performed <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> there on the 25th. Leaving Hampi, His Holiness proceeded to Hospet. Then His Holiness went to Chandir and subsequently to Kurnool Districts by touring Halaharavi, Alur, Molagavalli, Adoni, Pathikonda, Kodumur, Kurnool, Atmakur, Alampur, Gudoor, Markapur, Dornala and other adjoining places. He then visited Srisailam where He performed <i>pūjās</i> to Śrī Mallikārijuna and Bhramarāmba. Subsequently, He proceeded to Nandyal and then toured Anantapur, Tadipatri and Rayadurgam in Ballari District and Kudligi extensively. He arrived at Rayadurgam on the 30th of March. His Holiness then crossed the Tuṅgabhadrā river and entered Raichur District, visiting Munirabad, Huligi, Gangavathi, Sindhanur, Manvi and Raichur. His Holiness then paid short visits to Kṛṣṇā River (Kṛṣṇā-tīram), Narayanpet, Mahboobnagar and Jadcherla. He proceeded towards Hyderabad.
19.04.1960 to 20.04.1960	Kishan Bhag Hyderabad	He reached Kishan Bhag, near Hyderabad on the evening of the 19th of April 1960. Mr. Raja Tryambaklal, Director of Endowments, Govt. of Andhra, and Sri Narasimha Rao, Home Minister, Raja Venkata Rao Limbekar and other devotees received His Holiness.
20.04.1960 to 25.04.1960	Hyderabad	The next evening His Holiness left Kishan Bhag for Hyderabad City. He halted at the Sanatana Dharma Sabha in Begum Bazaar for five days. Here He was received on behalf of the Government of Andhra Pradesh with due honours. Amongst the aristocratic families of Hyderabad was that of Raja Venkata Rao Limbekar. He and his wife Indumati Devi were ardent disciples of His Holiness.
25.04.1960 to 25.05.1960	-do-	Raja Venkata Rao Limbekar had constructed a temple for Śrī Śāradāmbā and Ādi Śāṅkara in University Road, Nallakunta. The consecrations of the shrines were performed by His Holiness on the 26th of April. That year's <i>Śāṅkara-jayantī</i> was celebrated in the precincts of the Shankara Math

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Date	Place	Events
		where the two shrines had been consecrated. At the invitation of Raja Venkata Rao Limbekar, His Holiness stayed in his bungalow in Secunderabad for three weeks starting from the 29th of April.
25.05.1960 to 11.06.1960	Various Places	His Holiness left Secunderabad on the 25th of May, and after halting at numerous villages and towns en route, reached Vijayawada on the 1st of July, 1960 and arrived at Yadagiri on the same evening. At Yadagiri, He worshipped Lord Lakṣmī-Nṛsīmha. His Holiness then toured extensively in the Warrangal District by paying short visits to Nawabpet, Hanumakonda, Warangal, Ellanda and other places. He then entered the Khammam District and visited Khammam, Kothagudem and Yellandu, where fitting receptions were accorded. He then proceeded to Bhadrachalam and worshipped at Sri Sita Ramachandra Temple. From there, He visited Jallada, Aswaraopeta and other adjoining villages and entered East Godavari District by touring Chintalapudi and Tadepalligudem. He then proceeded to Eluru on the 11th.
11.06.1960 to 27.06.1960	Various Places	His Holiness camped at Eluru on the 11th, 12th, and the 13th of June, where He delivered religious discourses at the Shankara Math, Gita Bhavan and Ramachandra Raopet. His Holiness arrived at Rajahmundry on the 15th and camped there for three days. From the 17th, He toured the places on the banks of the holy river Godāvarī, viz., Kodurupadu Road, Vakkalanka, Mukkamala, Nandamuri Taraka, Bendamurlanka, Amalapuram, Ramachandrapuram and other places. He visited the Draksharamam Temple and arrived at Kakinada on the 27th.
27.06.1960 to 07.07.1960	Rajahmundry to Chennai	The <i>Jagadguru</i> visited Rajahmundry via Pithapuram, crossed the Godāvarī River and camped at Vijayawada from the 1st of July. He performed the <i>śukravāra-pūjā</i> in Vijayawada. From Vijayawada, His Holiness proceeded to Ananthavaram, Kolluru, Ongole and other places and stayed there for a day each. He entered the Chengalpattu District and toured several places in this district for a few days. His Holiness reached Sullurupeta in Red Hills on the 6th of July. On the 7th, He arrived at Ponneri and visited Andarkuppam. Then He proceeded to Chennai.
07.07.1960	Chennai	For nearly a hundred years, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> of Sringeri had not visited the city of Chennai. A reception committee was formed in the city at a largely attended meeting on the 23rd of June, with Mr. S. Anantharamakrishnan (Simpson & Co.) as Chairman, to accord a fitting reception to the <i>Jagadguru</i> on the arrival in the city on the 7th of July. The original premises of the Sringeri Math branch in Chennai is in Krishnappa Naicken Agraharam, George Town. His Holiness first visited that <i>Maṭha</i> and then proceeded to the Shiva-Vishnu Temple in T. Nagar where a grand reception had

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Date	Place	Events
		been arranged. This was followed by a procession along the main roads of the city to Kamakshi Kalyana Mandapam in Boag Road, T. Nagar, where His Holiness stayed till the conclusion of the <i>Cāturmāsya</i> .
08.07.1960	Chennai	His Holiness commenced <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> .
10.07.1960	-do-	His Holiness attended Akhila Bharata Shankara Seva Samiti Sammelan at Kamakshi Kalyana Mandapam.
11.07.1960 to 17.07.1960	-do-	Numerous dignitaries, both Indian and foreign, had the opportunity of meeting His Holiness and conversing with Him during this period viz., Sri Bishnuram Medhi, the Governor of Chennai, Jayaprakash Narayan, K.M. Munshi, the Ex-Governor of U.P, Sri Chintaman Dwarakanath Deshmukh, former Union Finance Minister, Sri C. Subramaniam, Minister of Finance, Chennai, M. Bhaktavatsalam, Home Minister, Chennai, P.T. Rajan, M.L.C, Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, Sri Mrityunjaya Prasad, Smt. Bishnuram Medhi, Smt. Subramaniam, Justice T.L. Venkatarama Iyer, Sri M. Venkatasubba Rao, and Sri Patanjali Sastri (Chief Justice of India), Ellsworth Bunker, US Ambassador to India, Sir William Thomas, Consulate General of US in Chennai, many eminent musicians and film artistes besides the Heads of Sakatapuram, Sivaganga and Hariharapur Maths. His Holiness blessed all of them.
18.07.1960	-do-	Mr. K.M. Munshi, the Ex-Governor of Uttar Pradesh, paid homage to His Holiness.
01.08.1960	-do-	Mr. Bishnuram Medhi, the Governor of Chennai State, along with Smt. Medhi paid homage to His Holiness.
05.08.1960	-do-	<i>Varalakṣmī-pūjā</i> was performed by His Holiness.
06.08.1960	-do-	Mr. Mrityunjaya Prasad, the eldest son of President Sri Rajendra Prasad, called on the <i>Jagadguru</i> and received His blessings.
13.08.1960	-do-	The President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, visited His Holiness and performed <i>pādapūjā</i> . His Holiness honoured him by conferring on him the title ' <i>Rāṣṭra-ratna</i> .'
13.08.1960	-do-	A visitor who was greatly impressed by the <i>Jagadguru's</i> rational outlook was Mr. Ellsworth Bunker, the US Ambassador to India. Mr. Bunker called on His Holiness and offered his respects to Him. Mr. Bunker asked and was informed about the activities of the <i>Maṭha</i> in the field of traditional Sanskrit and scriptural learning. The conversation then turned to current events and the state of the

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Date	Place	Events
		contemporary world. His Holiness said that there was no conflict between religion and science, and that if the utilisation of scientific knowledge was based on the ethical and moral values inculcated by religion, then science would serve mankind, instead of destroying it. "How is peace to be maintained in this world?" asked Mr. Bunker. Replied His Holiness, "War can never bring about permanent peace. Every act of wrong and cruelty will bring about a wrong and cruel consequence. Birth is not the beginning of existence nor death, its end. One has to be born again and again to reap the rewards of past acts. If this is realised by the leaders, then they will think twice before embarking on destructive acts." Mr. Bunker was deeply impressed by the visit, and particularly by His Holiness's practical approach to the problems of the present.
14.08.1960	Chennai	Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer, Secretary to the Raja of Chettinad, called on His Holiness and invited Him to celebrate the <i>Navarātri-pūjā</i> at his residence in Raja Annamalaipuram. His Holiness agreed to the request.
15.08.1960	-do-	<i>Somavāra-pūjā</i> was performed by His Holiness. At 4:30 p.m., there was a <i>vākyārtha-sadas</i> in His presence.
16.08.1960	-do-	On the 16th, Sir P.T. Rajan, M.L.C, called on His Holiness and had a discussion about the renovation of Madurai Sri Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple in which His Holiness evinced great interest. He congratulated him on his mission in renovating the temple. During the week, His Highness the Maharajakumar Elayaraja of Travancore and Rangasamudram Śrī Śiva Saccidānanda Sarasvatī had an audience with His Holiness.
26.08.1960	-do-	The <i>Vināyaka-caturthī</i> celebrations commenced on the 26th of August with special <i>pūjās</i> and <i>pancāmṛta-abhiṣeka</i> to Śrī Gaṇapati by His Holiness and attended by a vast concourse of devotees. In the evening, the <i>Gaṇapati-vākyārtha-sadas</i> was inaugurated by His Holiness on a specially decorated <i>pandal</i> in the <i>sannidhi</i> of Śrī Vighneśvara. The <i>sadas</i> lasted for ten days. Mr. C. Subramaniam, Finance Minister, Chennai, along with his wife, called on His Holiness at His Camp at Kamakshi Kalyana Mandapam. The following scholars participated in the discussions in the <i>sadas</i> : <i>Mahāmahopādhyāya</i> Sri N.S. Ananthakrishna Sastri, <i>Mahāmahopādhyāya</i> K.S. Krishnamoorthy Sastri (Andhra), K.L. Vyasaraya Sastri, Trivandrum Sri Venkatarama Sastri, Kolkata Madhusudana

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Date	Place	Events
		Nyayacharya, Kottaram Sri Rama Subba Sastri, Mylapore Sri Balasubramania Sastri, <i>Panditarāja</i> Sri S. Subrahmania Sastri of Pranthiyankarai, Bengaluru Sri B. Rama Bhatta, Gwalior Sri Anantarama Sastri, Kalady Sri N.S. Krishna Sastri, Chidambaram Sri K.S. Narasimha Sastri, Indore Vinayakadillu Sastri, Nellore Sri Lakshmikanta Sastri, Bezawada Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Sastri, Kochi Raman Nambiar and Raja Mahendrapuram Bulusu Appanna Sastri. The ten day <i>sadas</i> concluded on Sunday, the 4th of September, with a discourse in Tamil and Sanskrit by His Holiness.
05.09.1960	Chennai	On the 5th of September, His Holiness performed the concluding <i>pūjās</i> of <i>Cāturmāsya</i> as also <i>Umā-maheśvara-vrata</i> . His Holiness left Boag Road, T. Nagar, and proceeded to Navasuja, the residence of Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer in Raja Annamalaipuram on the 5th of September. Prior to that His Holiness paid a visit to Sri Kapaleeshwarar – Karpagambal Temple at Mylapore, where the temple authorities received Him with due honours. He worshipped at the shrines of Śrī Kapālīśvara, Śrī Karpagāmbā and other deities. <i>Navarātri</i> was celebrated at Navasuja, R.A. Puram with great pomp and splendour. From there, His Holiness proceeded to 'Shankaralaya' near Chitrakulam in Mylapore. From there, He proceeded to Shankara Gurukulam in Abhiramapuram, founded by <i>Śāstra-Ratnākara</i> Thethiyur Sri Subrahmanya Sastri. The next halt was Mandavelipakkam. Since, it was <i>grahaṇa-punyakāla</i> , His Holiness had a holy bath in the sea at Santhome, Mylapore.
08.09.1960	-do-	Śrī Rāmachandrānanda Tīrtha Svāmin of Shakatapuram Math called on His Holiness at 'Navasuja' and paid his respects.
18.09.1960	-do-	The <i>Svāmiji</i> of Sivaganga Samsthanam of Mysuru State (A branch of Sringeri Math) called on His Holiness and offered his respects to the <i>Ācārya</i> .
19.09.1960	-do-	The <i>ārādhanā</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhārati Mahāsvāmin was performed for three days beginning from Monday the 19th, on a grand scale. The main <i>ārādhanā</i> was on the 20th, the <i>Mahālaya-amāvāsya</i> day.
21.09.1960	-do-	Special <i>pūjās</i> to Śrī Śāradāmbā and an attractive <i>durbār</i> in the nights by His Holiness highlighted the <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations that commenced on Wednesday, the 21st of September, at the wonderfully decorated <i>pandal</i> adjoining 'Navasuja' in Raja Annamalaipuram.
29.09.1960	-do-	The <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations at the camp of His Holiness came to a close with the performance of <i>Śatacaṇḍī-homa</i> at noon in the presence of His Holiness. <i>Kāṇikā</i> (offerings) from the Maharaja of

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Date	Place	Events
		Mysuru, Travancore, Indore, Palitana, Jamkhandi, Vadodara, Darbhanga, the Maharani of Burdwan, Sri. S. Anantaramakrishnan, Chairman of the Reception Committee, and other devotees, running to several thousands of rupees, were then offered at the lotus feet of His Holiness. The <i>Jagadguru</i> conferred titles to various scholars.
30.09.1960	Chennai	On the <i>Vijayadaśamī</i> -day, <i>Lalitā-homa</i> was performed in the presence of His Holiness and the function concluded with <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> and <i>maṅgalārati</i> .
05.10.1960 to 09.10.1960	-do-	His Holiness left his camp at 'Navasuja' at Raja Annamalaipuram, for Mandavelipakkam.
09.10.1960 to 11.10.1960	-do-	His Holiness moved from 'Gita' at Mandavelipakkam to 'Sudhama-Gomati', Residence of Sri.K.R. Sundaram Iyer & Sri K. Easwara Iyer at Sri Desika Road at Alwarpet.
11.10.1960 to 17.10.1960	-do-	After a stay of three days in Alwarpet, the <i>Jagadguru</i> temporarily shifted His stay to Gandhi Nagar in response to the request from devotees there. The <i>Jagadguru</i> arrived at Gandhi Nagar at 5 p.m. and was received at Ramana Nivas. The camp there was for six days. His Holiness laid the foundation stone for the temple dedicated to Śrī Ananta Padmanābhasvāmi at Gandhi Nagar on Wednesday the 12th, and offered <i>ārati</i> . His Holiness returned from His camp at Gandhi Nagar to 'Gomathi' at Sir Desika Road, Alwarpet.
19.10.1960	-do-	The 44th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was celebrated on Wednesday, the 19th, <i>Dīpāvali</i> , with great enthusiasm at Alwarpet. Thousands of devotees submitted their offerings to His Holiness, fell at the <i>Jagadguru's</i> feet and sought His Blessings. His Holiness handed over the entire sum received as offerings towards the expansion programme estimated to cost Rs. 10 lakhs for the development of the Sri Adi Shankara College at Kalady.
25.10.1960	-do-	His Holiness visited the Madras Motors Private Ltd. at Mount Road, went round the workshops and blessed all the staff and workers. From Mount Road, He proceeded to Thiruvottiyur, where His Holiness visited the adjacent factories of Hackbridge-Hewittic & Easun Ltd. and The Enfield India Ltd. His Holiness then left for Broadway, where He visited two cycle companies. His Holiness evinced keen interest in the manufacturing processes in the factories that He visited.



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Date	Place	Events
05.11.1960	Chennai	Leaving Alwarpet on Saturday, the 5th of November, the <i>Jagadguru</i> moved to 'Shankara Gurukulam' at Abhiramapuram. The camp at Abhiramapuram was up to the 22nd of November. During His stay at Abhiramapuram, His Holiness paid brief visits to C.I.T Nagar, North T. Nagar, Adyar and Saidapet in response to the pressing invitations of the devotees in these places.
14.11.1960	-do-	On Monday, the 14th of November, the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of Sri Nataraja Shrine at Sri Siva-Vishnu Temple was performed in the benign presence of His Holiness.
23.11.1960 to 06.12.1960	-do-	From Abhiramapuram, His Holiness moved to Nungambakkam to the residence of Sri K.R. Sundararajan. During this camp, His Holiness visited Nungambakkam, Mambalam and other surrounding places to bless the numerous devotees. On the 29th, His Holiness performed special <i>pūjās</i> at the shrine of Lord Naṭarāja in the newly consecrated Siva-Vishnu Temple. On the 4th of December, He camped the residence of Sri P.S. Subramania Iyer, blessed his family and other devotees assembled there.
07.12.1960 to 08.12.1960	Thiruthani	His Holiness offered worship to Lord Muruga in the Subramanya Swamy Temple.
08.12.1960 to 14.12.1960	Tirupati	His Holiness arrived at Tirupati. After visiting Sri Govindaraja Swamy Temple, His Holiness went to Tirumala Hills. Worshipping the Lord of Seven Hills on the 11th, His Holiness proceeded to the Vasanta Mandapam to preside over the All India <i>vidvat-sadas</i> , which was held between the 11th and the 13th of December. On the 13th, His Holiness was taken in a grand procession in a decorated golden palanquin along the main streets of Tirumala. His Holiness worshipped the deity and submitted 108 sovereigns of gold and a precious gem-set pendant as offering to Lord Venkateśvara. The <i>Jagadguru</i> then left for Sri Kalahasti.
14.12.1960 to 17.12.1960	Sri Kalahasti, Tiruvallur	His Holiness reached Sri Kalahasti via Renigunta and worshipped Śrī Śrīkālahastiśvara and the Goddess. On the way to Chennai, He visited Śrī Vaidya Vīrarāghava Svāmi at Tiruvallur and returned to Chennai on the 17th.
17.12.1960 to 24.12.1960	Chennai	His Holiness camped at 'Sudharma', the residence of Sri Anantharamakrishnan till the 24th of December and conducted <i>pūjās</i> in the specially erected and decorated <i>pandal</i> . His Holiness visited the Higginbothams book store and went through the contents of select books with avid interest.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
24.12.1960 to 07.01.1961	Chennai	His Holiness moved to George Town where He was received at Kachaleeswarar Temple with temple honours. During this stay, He paid a short visit to Chintadripet. He subsequently camped at the Sringeri Math in the Krishnappa Naicken Agraharam for a day, before He left for Thiruvottiyur where He worshipped Lord Tyāgarāja and Śrī Vadivudaiyamman.
07.01.1961 to 31.01.1961	-do-	The camp shifted to the residence of Sri K.S. Venkatrama Iyer in T. Nagar for a week. Later, His Holiness stayed in the residence of Sri P.S. Subramanya Iyer at Ramachandra Iyer Street, T. Nagar. From there, on the 14th, His Holiness proceeded to Marina beach and had <i>uttarāyaṇa</i> bath in the sea. Later in the day, His Holiness stayed at the new property at T. Nagar which had been purchased for the purpose of housing a branch Math. A committee of local disciples was formed for its management. During His stay at T. Nagar, He made a visit to Chintadripet and returned.
31.01.1961 to 22.02.1961	-do-	On the 31st, His Holiness travelled to Kanchipuram and worshipped at the numerous shrines of that famous city and camped at the Shankara Math branch there. Leaving Kanchi, His Holiness visited the temples in Thirukazhukundram and Mahabalipuram on the 2nd of February and returned to Chennai on the evening of the 3rd of February. The next day, His Holiness visited Triplicane and was given a royal welcome in front of Sri Parthasarathy Swamy Temple. He camped at Triplicane from the 4th to the 15th of February. On the 8th, the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> of the year was performed in Triplicane. On the 12th, His Holiness worshipped at the temple of Śrī Pārthasārathi Swamy where He offered silk <i>vastra</i> and saree to the God and Goddess respectively. Then started the procession of His Holiness in the Golden Palanquin. On the 16th, the camp shifted to Mylapore. He later left for the residence of Sri H. Subramanian Iyer of Chitra & Co. in Alwarpet on the 22nd of February.
22.02.1961 to 05.03.1961	-do-	His Holiness stayed at the residence of Sri Balasubramanian at Gopalapuram for three days from the 25th of February. He visited Tambaram on the 28th. He then left for Gandhi Nagar. During the stay at Gandhi Nagar, His Holiness visited the office of the Swadesha Mitran and blessed all those assembled there. From the 27th of February to the 4th of March, the camp was at T. Nagar Shankar Math. On the 2nd of March, the day of the lunar eclipse, His Holiness had <i>samudra-snāna</i> and blessed the devotees present in the beach. Later, He rendered a discourse at Sri M.Ct. Muthiah Chettiar Boys High School at Kilpauk. His Holiness also visited IJET Kodambakkam run by Sri K.R. Sundararajan, who offered a plot to His Holiness to construct a temple for Goddess Śāradāmbā. On the 5th morning, His Holiness arrived at the residence of Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer at Raja

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Date	Place	Events
		Annamalaipuram. Later His Holiness left for Shankara Gurukulam at Abhiramapuram. Thereafter, He camped at the Shankara Math branch, T. Nagar.
05.03.1961 to 08.03.1961	Chennai	On the 5th of March, His Holiness visited Ambattur. On the 6th of March, His Holiness visited the Integral Coach factory. He evinced keen interest not only in the working of the factory but also in the latest improvements in design and construction of the coaches. On the 7th of March, His Holiness visited the TI Cycle Company.
08.03.1961 to 24.03.1961	Naidupeta, Ongole,Guntur	On the 8th of March, His Holiness began His tour of Andhra Pradesh and arrived at Naidupeta. From Naidupeta, His Holiness arrived at Ongole on the 12th of March. Nellore was the next camp of His Holiness where the <i>ārāadhanā</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin was conducted on the 13th. After visiting Ongole, Chilakaluripet, Papayapalem and Kottapalem, His Holiness arrived at Guntur on the 24th.
24.03.1961 to 14.04.1961	Guntur	His Holiness performed <i>Śrī Rāmanavamī-pūjā</i> at Guntur. The foundation stone for a new Shankara Math was laid by His Holiness at the request of the local devotees on 1st of April 1961. With Guntur as His camp, His Holiness visited some surrounding places. He arrived at Bapatla on the 9th of April, Chinna Agraharam in Gurazala Taluk on the 11th, and camped at Rajupalem in Sattenapalle Taluk on the 12th. On the 14th, He left Guntur for Vijayawada.
14.04.1961 to 05.06.1961	Vijayawada	His Holiness performed <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> in a specially erected <i>pandal</i> in Vijayawada Motor Stores workshop premises in Gandhi Nagar. There was also a <i>Mahārudra-yajñā</i> . It was during this visit that Sri Sitarama Anjaneyulu (Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin in His <i>pūrvāsrama</i> ) had <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness for the first time. Leaving Vijayawada on the 21st, His Holiness arrived in Kolluru in Tenali Taluk for a three-day visit. He presided over the <i>vidvat-sadas</i> conducted at Kolluru. His Holiness then returned to Vijayawada on the 23rd and stayed there till the 5th of May. Machilipatnam, Srikakulam, Gudivada, Kunchavaram, Avanigadda, Guntur and Tenali were the places He visited. Mr. Chandramouli, Minister for Religious Endowments, Andhra Pradesh, called on His Holiness at His camp at Tenali on the 22nd of May.
05.06.1961 to 19.06.1961	Vijayawada to Dachepalli	Leaving Vijayawada on the 5th of June, His Holiness arrived at Veeravalli on the 6th and camped there till the 8th. His Holiness arrived at Repalle on the 11th and visited Chandole on the 13th. From there, He visited adjoining places and reached Cherukuru on the 15th of June, where He performed

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Date	Place	Events
		the <i>ārādhana</i> of Śrī Vṛddha Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin. Visiting Karamchedu and Chirala, the <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Dachepalle, en route to Hyderabad.
19.06.1961 to 20.06.1961	Dachepalli, Nagarjuna- konda	His Holiness camped at Dachepalli on the 19th of June 1961. The officials connected with the construction of the Nagarjuna Sagar Dam requested His Holiness to bless the project camp with His holy visit. Accordingly, His Holiness arrived at North Vijayapuri in the evening. It was as late as 11 p.m. when His Holiness reached the project area. At the pressing request of the assembled devotees, the <i>Jagadguru</i> delivered a short benedictory discourse though it was very late and despite the strain caused by the long travel to the dam site and the Buddhist relics in the extensive project area. His Holiness blessed all the officials, workers and residents in the construction site and the localities nearby. His Holiness stayed at the hill colony on the 19th of June. The next afternoon, the <i>Jagadguru</i> left for Hyderabad.
20.06.1961 to 01.07.1961	Hyderabad	At Hyderabad, His Holiness was received at the branch Math by Minister of Andhra, Sri Chandramouli, the H.R.E Commissioner, Raja Venkat Rao Limbekar and others. This was His Holiness's second visit to this city. He stayed here till the 29th of June. In between, He paid short visits to Secunderabad and Aikyapettai. On the 1st of July, He left for Vedadri Kshetra, on His way to Guntur.
01.07.1961 to 05.07.1961	Vedadri and Guntur	At Guntur, on the 2nd, an idol of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya was installed in the newly built temple for which His Holiness had laid the foundation stone earlier. On this occasion, a branch of the Akhila Bharata Shankara Seva Samithi was established here and it was decided to bring out the 'Shankara Krupa' magazine in Telugu. Leaving Guntur on the 5th of July, His Holiness arrived at Narasaraopet.
05.07.1961 to 08.07.1961	Narasaraopet and other places	Sri Sitarama Anjaneyulu ( <i>Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin</i> in His <i>pūrvāśrama</i> ) whose native place is Narasaraopet, had <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness here also. From Narasaraopet, the <i>Jagadguru</i> toured the surrounding villages. At Tripuranthakam, He visited the temple of Lord Śrī Tripurāntakeśvara and Goddess Bālā Tripurasundarī Devī. On the 8th, His Holiness left for Markapur and on the 9th, arrived at Srisailam.
09.07.1961 to 12.07.1961	Srisailam and Cuddapah	At Srisailam, the <i>Jagadguru</i> worshipped Śrī Mallikārjuna. This is the second visit of His Holiness to this holy town. <i>Pūjā</i> was performed by the <i>Jagadguru</i> to Lord Mallikārjuna and Goddess Bhramarāmbikā in the morning. The activities pertaining to the renovation of the temple

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Date	Place	Events
		commenced during the visit of His Holiness. After visiting Kembha on the 12th, the <i>Jagadguru</i> left for Cuddapah.
12.07.1961 to 26.07.1961	Cuddapah	The Cuddapah Municipality presented a welcome address to the <i>Jagadguru</i> . The address was read by Haji Muhammad Rahamathulla Saheb, a member of the Council. The <i>Svāmin</i> of Pushpagiri Peetham received His Holiness on the 18th. After visiting Dharmavaram, Akuli, Madakasira, Hindupur and Yelahanka, the <i>Jagadguru</i> proceeded to Bengaluru on the 26th morning.
26.07.1961	Bengaluru	A rousing reception was accorded to His Holiness <i>Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin</i> when He arrived at Anand Rao Circle in Bengaluru. His Holiness was received by His Highness Sri Jayachamarajendra Wodeyar, Governor of Mysuru, Sri B.D. Jatti, the Chief Minister, other Ministers of Mysuru, distinguished judges and devotees of the <i>Maṭha</i> .
27.07.1961 to 23.10.1961	-do-	Later, on the 27th of July, a record crowd witnessed the proceedings of the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> performed by His Holiness with five other <i>saṁnyāsins</i> at the Bengaluru Shankara Math. Union Minister Mr. K.C. Reddy, and ministers from the Mysuru government and several High Court Judges and other dignitaries were present during the function. The head of Pushpagiri Math, Śrī Vidyā Nṛsiṁha Bhāratī Svāmin, stayed with His Holiness during the <i>Cāturmāsya</i> . On the day of <i>Vyāsa-pūjā</i> , a meeting of the Akhila Bharata Shankara Seva Samithi was organised and it was decided that the 'Shankara Krupa' magazine be commenced in Kannada also. The usual <i>Gaṇapati-vākyārtha-sadas</i> was conducted in Bengaluru Shankara Math from the 13th of September 1961, in which scholars from different parts of the country participated. The 7th <i>ārādhana</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin was celebrated at Bengaluru by His Holiness from the 8th of October, for three days. That year's <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations were also conducted at Bengaluru Shankara Math. Śrī Vishveṣa Tīrtha Svāmin of Pejawar Math met with His Holiness.
23.10.1961 to 31.10.1961	-do-	The camp shifted to Malleswaram and His Holiness stayed there between the 23rd and the 30th. The Prince of Travancore called on His Holiness and sought His blessings. Then His Holiness left for Seshadripuram on the 31st. He visited different localities such as Shankarapura, Rajajinagar, etc. During the stay of the <i>Jagadguru</i> in Bengaluru, the then Vice President of India, Dr. Radhakrishnan had His <i>darśana</i> .

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Date	Place	Events
07.11.1961 to 13.12.1961	Bengaluru	The 45th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness <i>Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin</i> was celebrated at the Shankara Math, Bengaluru. The Chief Minister of Mysuru State, B.D. Jatti and other dignitaries spoke at the function. His Holiness moved to Cantonment for four days from the 20th of November. He visited N.R. Colony on the 25th, and Rajajinagar on the 5th of December. He visited Gavi Gangadhareswara Swamy Temple where He performed special <i>pūjās</i> . On the 10th, a public reception was given to His Holiness at Puttanna Chetty Town Hall. His Holiness was given a warm send-off on the 13th of December.
13.12.1961 to 18.12.1961	Various Places	Leaving Bengaluru, His Holiness toured in the areas of Kunigal, Channapatna, Krishnarajapura and Madduru. At Madduru, His Holiness stayed for three days at the request of H.K. Veeranna Gowda, Minister of Mysuru State. At Mandya, His Holiness was received by the Governor and the Chief Minister. After visiting Ramanagara, Krishnarajapete and Hassan, the <i>Jagadguru</i> proceeded to Rudrapatna.
18.12.1961 to 01.01.1962	Rudrapatna	That particular year was considered to be inauspicious because of the evil effects of the confluence of eight planets occurring on the 5th of February 1962. To ward off the evil aspects of this confluence, an ' <i>Atirudra-mahāyāga</i> ' had been arranged in the village of Rudrapatna on the banks of river Kāverī between the 20th of December and the 1st of January 1962. His Holiness was present during the twelve days of the <i>yāga</i> and supervised the conduct of the ceremonies. The Chief Minister and the other ministers of the state obtained the blessings of the <i>Jagadguru</i> . Similarly, under the <i>Jagadguru's</i> directions and benediction, a <i>Navagraha-yajña</i> was performed in the sacred precincts of Navapashanam in Ramanathapuram District.
01.01.1962 to 18.01.1962	Rudrapatna to Nanjanagudu	From Rudrapatna, His Holiness reached Konanur the next day and subsequently visited Ramanathapura, Saligrama, Bettadapura, Periyapatna, Krishnarajanagara, Hunsur and adjoining places till the 13th. At Nanjanagudu, the <i>Jagadguru</i> performed <i>pūjā</i> to Lord Śrīkaṅṭheśvara.
18.01.1962 to 14.02.1962	Mysuru	His Holiness arrived at Mysuru on the 18th where He was welcomed by His Highness Maharaja and other devotees. Later, He visited Abhinava Shankaralaya. <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> was performed on the Chamundi Hills on the 2nd of February 1962.

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Date	Place	Events
14.02.1962 to 01.03.1962	Various Places	Touring places like Tadagavadi, Srirangapatna, Palahalli, Gundlupete, Chamrajanagar, Talakadu, Kollegal and Tirumakudalu Narasipura for a fortnight, His Holiness arrived at Mandya and installed an idol of Śrī Śaṅkara at the newly constructed temple. Subsequently, He returned to Mysuru before proceeding to Bengaluru.
01.03.1962 to 08.03.1962	Bengaluru	The <i>Jagadguru</i> went to Bengaluru where He performed the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> . Leaving Bengaluru on the 6th, His Holiness proceeded to Chennai for a short visit, through Chintamani and Ranipet.
08.03.1962	Chennai	His Holiness <i>Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin</i> arrived at Chennai at Shankara Math, T. Nagar and was given a grand reception by the devotees.
12.03.1962	-do-	On the 12th morning at 10:30 a.m., His Holiness arrived at the Ananta Padmanabhaswamy Temple at Gandhi Nagar, Adyar where the <i>mahākumbhābhiṣeka</i> was performed in the august presence of His Holiness. In the evening, the <i>Jagadguru</i> performed the <i>Śāradā-Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> in the specially erected <i>pandal</i> adjoining the temple.
13.03.1962	-do-	On the 13th of March, His Holiness visited the old Shankara Math in the Krishnappa Naicken Agraharam at George Town and inaugurated the newly renovated <i>Maṭha</i> .
17.03.1962	Ulunderpet	After a stay of ten days in Chennai, the <i>Jagadguru</i> left for Ulundurpet, where He camped.
18.03.1962 to 21.03.1962	Srirangam and other places	During His camp at Srirangam, the 5th volume of the ' <i>Jagadguru Granthamālā</i> ' book series was released. On the 19th, His Holiness visited Bikshandar Koil and returned to Srirangam. On His way to Tiruchi, the <i>Jagadguru</i> visited the Jambukeshwara Temple, where He was received with temple honours. His Holiness then left for Allur from where He paid short visits to Kamanaickenpalayam, Nangavaram, Manathattai, Mahadanapuram, Puliur and Karur. His Holiness left for Krishnarajapuram and returned to Karur. On the 21st of March, His Holiness performed <i>pūjā</i> at the <i>adhiṣṭhāna</i> of Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra at Nerur before leaving for Coimbatore.
21.03.1962 to 27.03.1962	Coimbatore, Palakkad	During His stay in Coimbatore, <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the temple in Perur for Pañcamukha Prasanna Rāja Gaṇapati was performed in the august presence of His Holiness. Later, His Holiness camped at Palakkad for two days.
27.03.1962 to 02.04.1962	Kalady	At Kalady, His Holiness called for a meeting of the Shankara Trust at Shankara College to discuss various developmental activities to be taken up in the College. On the 1st of April, the <i>jayantī</i> of Jagadguru Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin was celebrated. His Holiness

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Date	Place	Events
		then reached Coimbatore via Thrissur and Vadakkancheri. From Coimbatore, His Holiness reached Gobichettipalayam.
02.04.1962 to 05.04.1962	Gobichetti- palayam, Salem and other places	At Gobichettipalayam, His Holiness visited the Shankara Math branch in Eswaran Koil street, which was newly constructed with a Kalyana Mandapa in memory of <i>Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin</i> . Visiting Erode, Salem and a few other places such as Nagaiyanallur, Kattuputhur, Sriramasamudram, Thottiyam, Musiri and Ayyampalayam, His Holiness returned to Salem.
05.04.1962 to 18.04.1962	Bengaluru	The <i>ārādhana</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin was conducted on the 6th of April. During the stay of His Holiness, the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of Lord Subrahmaṇya at Kumara Park was performed.
19.04.1962 to 03.05.1962	Bengaluru to Shravana- belagola	Visiting Kanakapura, Malavalli, Jalamangala, Kunigal and Channarayapattana, His Holiness arrived at Shravanabelagola where He was honoured by the Jain Svāmin.
03.05.1962 to 12.05.1962	Hassan	From Holenarsipura, His Holiness arrived at Hassan on the 3rd, and was received by the Municipal Commissioner and other prominent citizens. The <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations were conducted at Hassan.
12.05.1962 to 19.05.1962	Hassan to Belur	Leaving Hassan, His Holiness visited Ponnathapura, Arkalgudu, Sakleshpura and Gonebidu. His Holiness reached Belur where <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> was performed to Lord Gaṇapati in the Police Station Yard and to Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara in the Siva Temple.
19.05.1962 to 15.06.1962	Belur to Tumkuru	The <i>Jagadguru</i> toured Chickmagaluru, Halebeedu, Khandya, Sakrepatna, Kadur, Ajjampura, Hosadurga, Chitradurga, Challakere, Hiriyyur, Sira, Madhugiri and Tumkuru. At Tumkuru, He was welcomed and honoured by Sri Śivakumāra Svāmin of Sri Siddhaganga Math.
15.06.1962 to 09.07.1962	Nelamangala to Sringeri	His Holiness had camps at Nelamangala, Hebbur, Mayasandra, Turuvekere, Chikkayakanahalli, Honnavalli, Tiptur, Arsikere, Birur, Tarikere, Lakkavalli and Narasimharajapura. Then, visiting Koppa, the <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Hariharapura where the <i>Svāmin</i> performed <i>pādapūjā</i> and obtained the blessings of His Holiness. Then there was a camp at Hulugaru (Kigga). From Hulugaru, His Holiness arrived at Kigga and performed <i>pūjā</i> at the Sringshwara Temple with silver coins. From Kigga, His Holiness reached Sringeri.



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Date	Place	Events
(1962)	(Sringeri)	(His Holiness's stay in Sringeri during the year 1962 was short and was interrupted by several journeys to places nearby. The <i>Cāturmāsya</i> and <i>Navarātri</i> of 1962 were held in Sringeri. His Holiness undertook the construction of the front <i>gopuram</i> of the Sharadamba Temple. In addition, He had a new guest house constructed for visitors. This was named 'Sri Shankara Krupa' and was opened by the Maharaja of Mysore on the 18th of October. After a brief stay at Sringeri, His Holiness undertook a short tour.)
		The 2nd Tour - Short tour of Gokarna and Goa - 1962-1963 (3 months & 15 days)
20.09.1962 to 03.01.1963	Shivamogga and Goa	Leaving Sringeri on the 20th of September, the <i>Jagadguru</i> arrived at Sriramanahalli in Thirthahalli Taluk. He then left for Shivamogga and camped there for a fortnight. The 46th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was celebrated at the Shivamogga camp on the 27th of October 1962. After touring Shivamogga and adjoining places extensively, His Holiness visited Soraba, Sagara and Karwar. His Holiness was kind enough to respond to the invitation of the members of the Rama Mandir sub-committee of Kargal to visit their Rama Temple and also the Sharavathy Valley project. After visiting Siddapura and Sirsi, His Holiness left for Gokarna on the 6th of December. During His 5-day stay at Gokarna, His Holiness took <i>samudra-snāna</i> and then worshipped the sacred <i>Ātma-liṅga</i> . About 20,000 people assembled and watched the <i>pūjā</i> . After the <i>abhiṣeka</i> and <i>pūjā</i> , His Holiness offered an expensive <i>vastra</i> and a pendant. Soon after this, the <i>Jagadguru</i> blessed the <i>purṇāhuti</i> of the <i>mahārudra-homa</i> performed for the purpose of warding off the impending danger to the country from a hostile neighbour. Then His Holiness worshipped Mahābaleśvara and Goddess Pārvatī. While there, His Holiness received several deputations praying for His visit to Goa. He acceded to their earnest prayers and proceeded towards Goa through Ankola, where He camped for 5 days. The devotees of Ankola took part in all the festive activities with great enthusiasm. It was also decided to construct a Mandapa at the spot where His Holiness performed the <i>pūjā</i> , and name it 'Sharada Mandapa'.
-do-	Goa and back to Sringeri	Parthagali was His first camp in Goa, where He was hosted by Śrī Dvārakānāth Svāmin, the Head of the <i>Maṭha</i> belonging to the <i>Gouda Sārasvat Brahmanas</i> . His Holiness stayed there till the 16th of December. From there, He visited Madgaon, where He was given a grand reception. His Holiness blessed the assembled with a benedictory discourse in chaste Hindi. From there, He left for Panjim.

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Kalady  
Sharada, Shankara Temples (Old)*



*Dharmasthala  
Sri Manjunatheshwara Temple*



*Kanyakumari  
Devi Temple*



*Thiruvananthapuram  
Sri Padmanabha Swamy Temple*



*Perur  
Sri Patteeswarar Swamy Temple*



*Tenkasi  
Sri Kasi Viswanathar Temple*



*Srivilliputhur  
Sri Andal Temple*



*Palani  
Sri Dandayudhapani Swamy Temple*



*Madurai  
Sri Meenakshi Amman Temple*



*Rameswaram  
Sri Ramanatha Swamy Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

The 1st Tour - South India - 1956 - 62

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Tiruchendur  
Sri Subramanya Swamy Temple*



*Tirunelveli  
Sri Nelliappar Swamy Temple*



*Bhavani  
Sri Sangameswarar Temple*



*Thanjavur  
Sri Brihadeeswarar Temple*



*Triplicane  
Sri Parthasarathy Swamy Temple*



*Tirumala Tirupati  
Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple*



*Sri Kalahasti  
Sri Kalahasteswara Temple*



*Hampi  
Sri Virupaksha Temple*



*Thiruvannamalai  
Sri Arunachaleswara Temple*



*Thiruthani  
Sri Subramanya Swamy Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

**The 1st Tour - South India - 1956-62**

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Kanchipuram  
Sri Ekambaranathar Temple*



*Tiruvallur  
Sri Vaidya Veeraraghava Swamy Temple*



*Kanchipuram  
Sri Varadaraja Perumal Temple*



*Mysuru  
Sri Nandi Chamundi Hills*



*Yadagirigutta  
Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Temple*



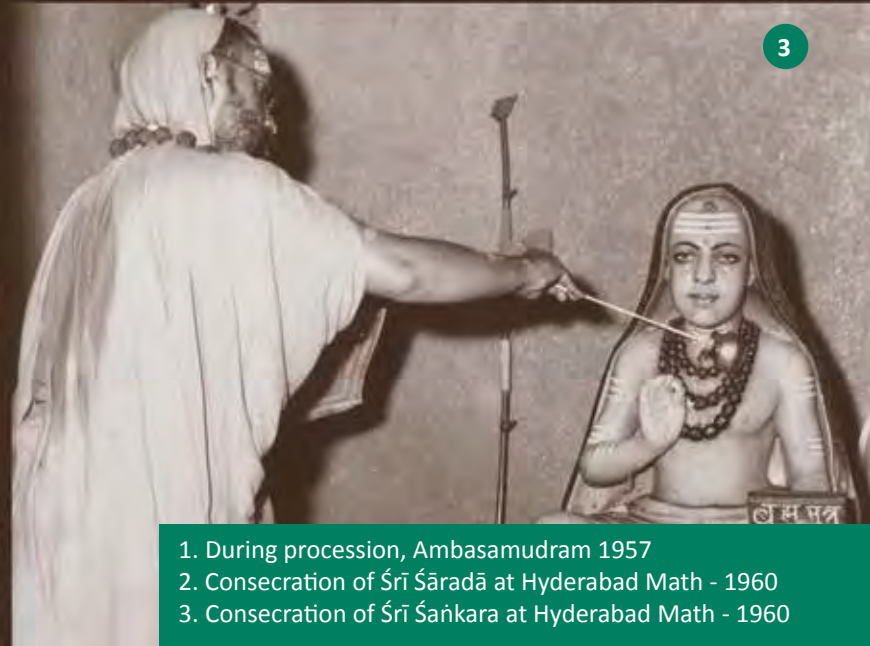
*Srirangam  
Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple*



*Thiruvottiyur  
Sri Vadivudaiyamman Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

The 1st Tour - South India - 1956 - 62

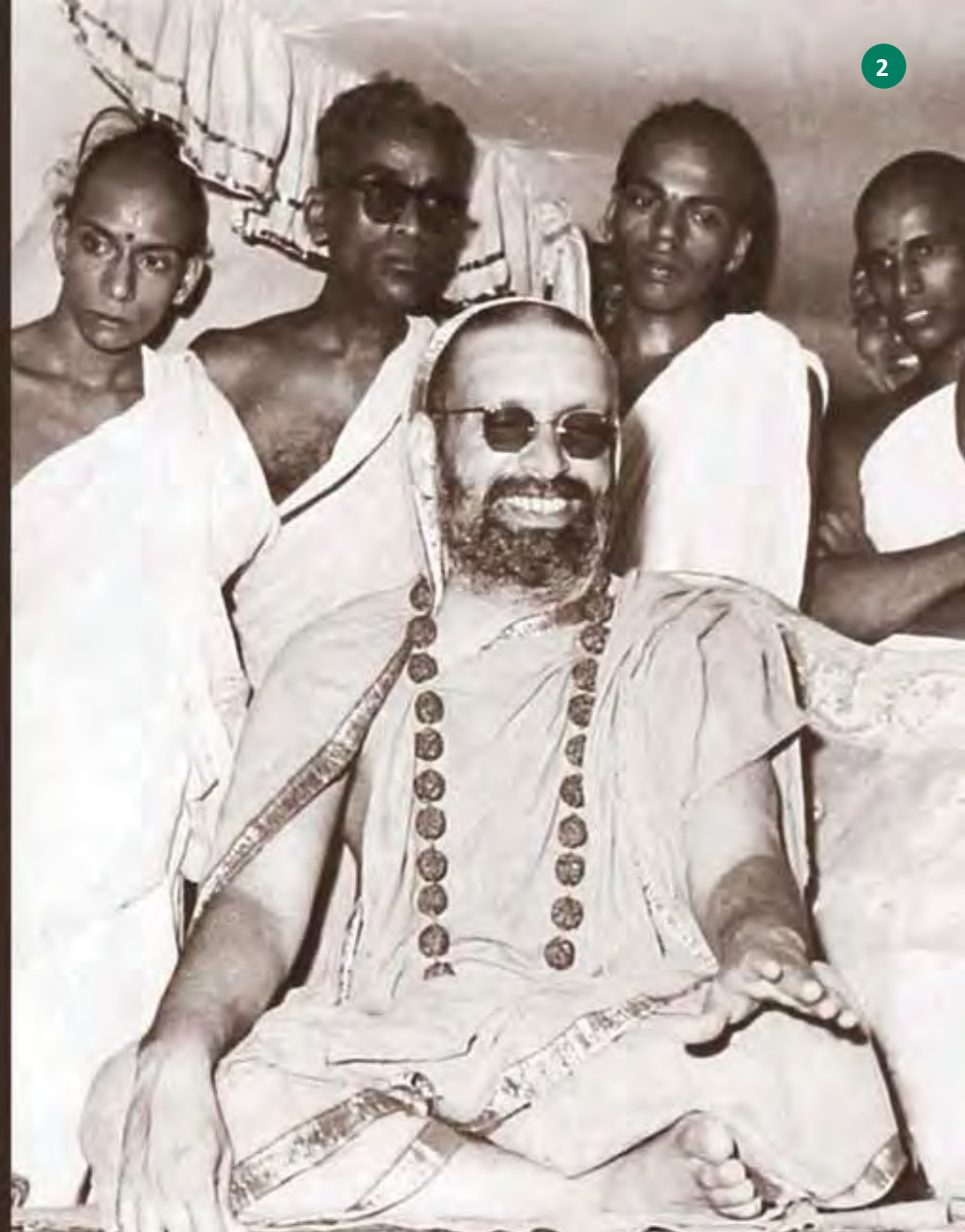


1. During procession, Ambasamudram 1957
2. Consecration of Śrī Śārādā at Hyderabad Math - 1960
3. Consecration of Śrī Śaṅkara at Hyderabad Math - 1960

The 1st Tour - South India - 1956 - 62



1. Arrival at Chennai - 1960  
2. *Darśana* at Chennai - 1960



The 1st Tour - South India - 1956 - 62



1,2,3. Candramaulīśvara pūjā  
at Chennai - 1960

The 1st Tour - South India - 1956 - 62



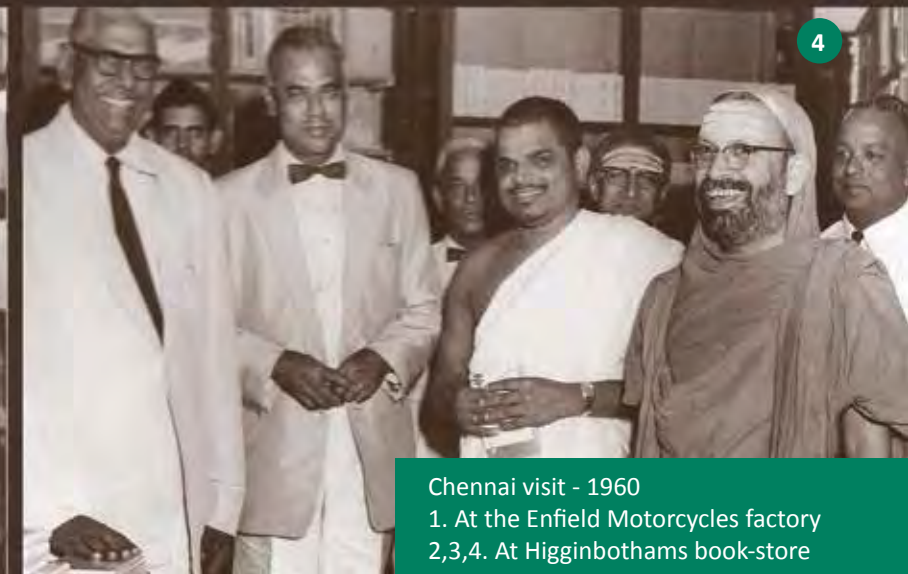
Chennai visit - 1960  
1. Proceeding towards Durbār  
2. During Navarātri-durbār

The 1st Tour - South India - 1956 - 62





1,2,3,4. *Kumbhābhīṣeka* at Siva Vishnu Temple, Chennai - 1960



Chennai visit - 1960  
1. At the Enfield Motorcycles factory  
2,3,4. At Higginbothams book-store

## The 1st Tour - South India - 1956 - 62



Chennai visit - 1961  
1,2. At Integral Coach Factory  
3. Inside a Coach

The 1st Tour - South India - 1956 - 62



1,2,3,4. *Samudra-snāna*  
at Chennai - 1961



3



1



2

- 1. *Dharmopanayana*, Vijayawada - 1961
- 2. Sri Anantapadmanabha Swamy Temple
- 3. A discourse on the occasion of Kumbhābhiṣeka at Sri Anantapadmanabha Swamy Temple, Adyar - 1962

## The 1st Tour - South India - 1956 - 62

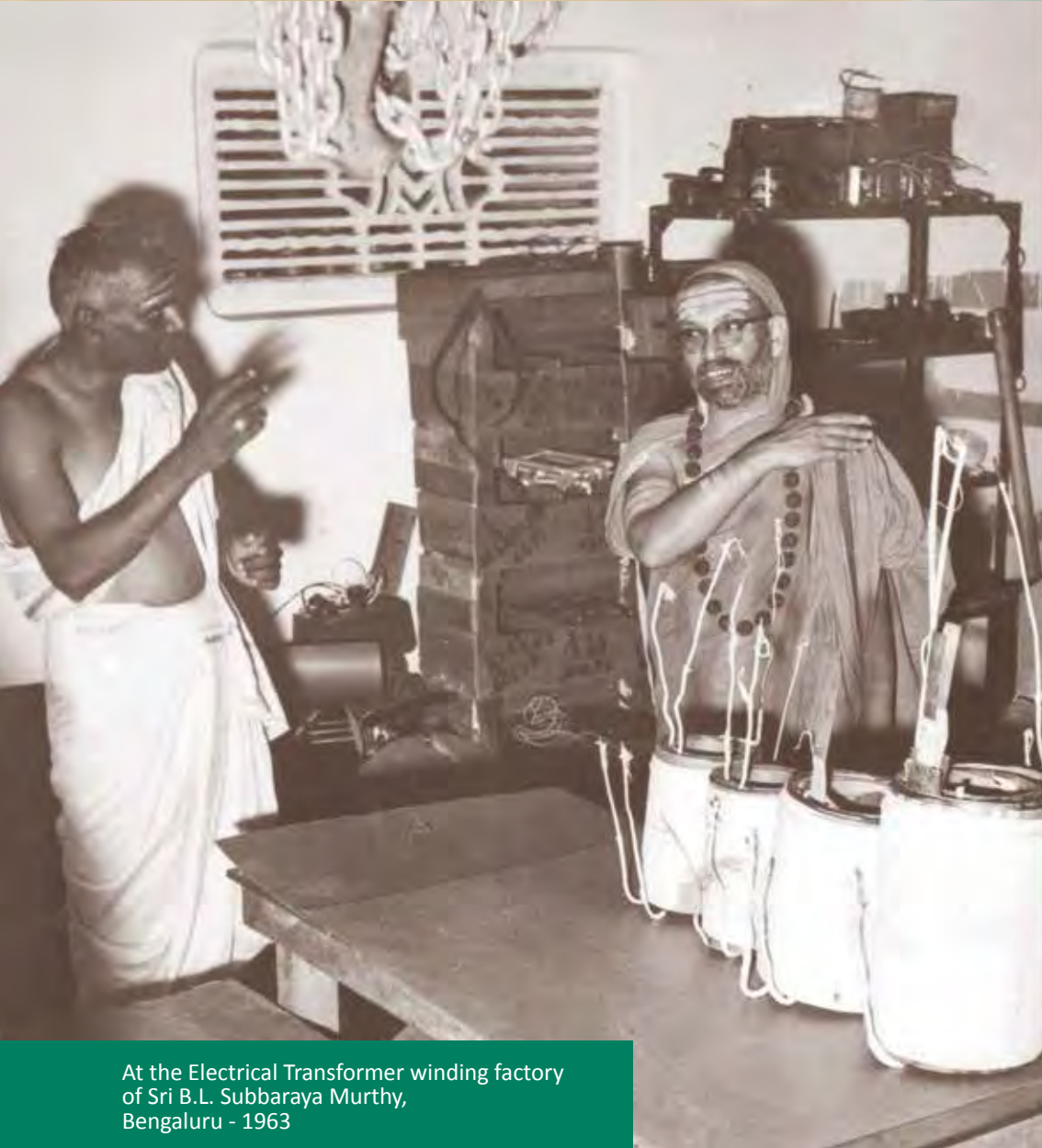


At Sri Anantapadmanabha Swamy Temple, Adyar - 1962

The 1st Tour - South India - 1956 - 62

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		The Superintendent of Police and other high officials received His Holiness and ferried Him across the backwaters. On reaching the outskirts of the city, He was taken in a two-mile long procession to the Mahalakshmi Temple where Lt. Governor Shivashankar received Him and preformed <i>dhūlipādapūjā</i> . His Holiness performed <i>Cāndramouliśvara-pūjā</i> at the Vasco-da-Gama Institute. The next day (19th) was the first anniversary of Goa's independence from the Portugese. The officials and devotees sought blessings from His Holiness. From Panjim, His Holiness proceeded to Mangeshwar. After visiting various temples at Mangeshwar, His Holiness reached Canacona and worshipped at the Lakshmi Nrisimha Temple. On the 21st of December, His Holiness left for Karwar and then visited Kumta, Honnavara and Sirsi. He then returned to Sringeri on the 3rd of January 1963, via Thirthahalli.
(February, March and April 1963)	(Sringeri)	(The last week of February 1963 was full of activities in Sringeri. His Holiness peformed the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> on the 22nd of February. The <i>kumbhābhiṣekas</i> of the renovated temple of Śrī Śāradāmbā and also the shrine on the <i>adhiṣṭhāna</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhārati Mahāsvāmin were performed on the 3rd of March in a grand and traditional manner in the presence of the Maharaja of Mysore. A <i>Sahasraçaṇḍī-homa</i> was performed in order to ensure peace in the world. The <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations took place with the usual fervour for five days at Sringeri with the main <i>pūjā</i> on the 28th of April. No sooner were these functions over than His Holiness again started on another <i>vijaya-yātrā</i> .)
		The 3rd Tour - Short Tour of Bengaluru - 1963 (1 month & 8 days)
29.05.1963 to 06.07.1963	Bengaluru	Starting from Sringeri on the 29th of May 1963, His Holiness toured the towns such as Hassan en route to Bengaluru. The <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Bengaluru on the 3rd of June, and opened the Sri Chandrasekhara Bharathi Kalyana Mandapam inside the Shankara Math campus and on the 10th of June, presided over the Golden Jubilee celebrations of <i>Śrī Bhāratiya Gīrvaṇa Prauḍha Vidyābhivardhinī Pāṭhaśālā</i> , a school for higher studies in Sanskrit and scriptures, established by Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhārati Mahāsvāmin in Bengaluru. The Maharaja of Mysore, Sri Jayachamarajendra Wodeyar, who was also the Governor of the State, inaugurated the function. After the function, His Holiness returned to Sringeri.



At the Electrical Transformer winding factory  
of Sri B.L. Subbaraya Murthy,  
Bengaluru - 1963

The 3rd Tour - Short Tour of Bengaluru - 1963



## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
(1963)	(Sringeri)	(During the year, His Holiness observed the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> in Sringeri. The <i>Navarātri</i> and the 47th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness were also celebrated in Sringeri in the august presence of His Holiness.)
(1964)	(Sringeri)	(Early in 1964, His Holiness decided to conduct <i>koṭi arcana</i> to Śāradāmbā. This took more than a month and at its conclusion there was an assemblage of scholars and pandits. On 11th February, His Holiness performed <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> .)
		<b>The 4th Tour - All India - 1964 to 1968 (3 years, 11 months &amp; 7 days)</b>
16.04.1964 to 29.04.1964	Kigga, Shivamogga, Chickmagaluru Srirangapatna	In April 1964, His Holiness started again from Sringeri on His second long <i>vijaya-yātrā</i> . His Holiness arrived at Kigga from Sringeri and worshipped there. He then stayed at Shivamogga for two days. He donated an amount as seed capital for the construction of a Shankara Math branch. He then proceeded to Chickmagaluru where too He donated a sum of money as seed capital for establishing a Shankara Math branch there. The <i>Jagadguru</i> conducted Śrī <i>Rāmanavamī-pūjā</i> at Hassan and reached Srirangapatna via Tiptur. On the 23rd, the <i>Jagadguru</i> witnessed the <i>Koṭi Rāmanāma Mahotsava</i> at Srirangapatnam and blessed the devotees. The Maharaja of Mysore too participated in the event along with the members of the royal family. His Holiness laid the foundation stone for the Municipal High School and then left for Mysuru.
29.04.1964	Mysuru	On the 29th, His Holiness blessed the royal family at Mysuru, and later, laid the foundation stone for the Oriental Research Institute and Kalyana Bhavana. Sri Siddavanahalli Nijalingappa, the Chief Minister of Karanataka, was present at the function.
30.04.1964	Bengaluru	His Holiness reached Bengaluru via Krishnaraja Nagara from Mysuru.
01.05.1964 to 06.05.1964	-do-	In the evening of the 1st of May, His Holiness was received with due respects when He reached Bengaluru. On the 2nd, the Śaṅkarācārya of Paścimāmnāya (Dwaraka) Peetham reached Bengaluru where He was received by the Government officials and other members of the reception committee. On the 3rd, the <i>Jagadguru Śaṅkarācāryas</i> of Sringeri and Dwaraka Peethams blessed the devotees at Sri Shankara Math Bengaluru.
06.05.1964 to 09.05.1964	Hoskote, Salem	On the 6th, His Holiness reached Hoskote from Bengaluru and then reached Salem on the 7th. He worshipped Lord Śrī Lakṣminārāyaṇa there. Devotees received the <i>Jagadguru</i> with great devotion and took Him in a procession to the Sringeri Math branch.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
09.05.1964	Palakkad	On the 9th, His Holiness reached Palakkad from Salem. The <i>Jagadguru</i> was received by devotees with great zeal. Then, His Holiness left for Kalady.
10.05.1964 to 23.05.1964	Kalady	On the 10th of May, His Holiness reached Kalady. He was received with great devotion by the Director of Sri Shankara College, Śrī Śivasaccidānanda Sarasvatī Svāmin, the Principal, teachers, staff and students of the college, along with thousands of devotees who had assembled there from various places. His Holiness worshipped at the shrines of Śrī Śāradāmbā, Śaṅkara and the <i>samādhi</i> of Śrī Āryāmbā. The <i>Jagadguru</i> presided over the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations between the 12th and the 16th of this month. A <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was conducted in a grand style. His Holiness laid the foundation stone for Sri Shankara Memorial Hall at Kalady.
23.05.1964	Kochi	His Holiness visited Mattancherry and camped there. He also visited Thekke Madham and performed <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> at the <i>pandal</i> erected there. Dr. C.A. Cuttat, the Swiss Ambassador in India, had the <i>darśana</i> of the <i>Jagadguru</i> . Well-versed in <i>Advaita</i> Philosophy, the Ambassador sought clarifications from the <i>Jagadguru</i> on spiritual practices, topics such as the difference between <i>suṣupti</i> and <i>samādhi</i> states, the distinction between various stages of <i>samādhi</i> and the role of <i>bhakti</i> in <i>Advaita</i> philosophy. His Holiness responded to all His questions and also appropriately guided him on spiritual practices.
24.05.1964 to 28.05.1964	Ernakulam	The <i>Jagadguru</i> was received with pomp at Ernakulam. His Holiness visited some temples there. Later, He was taken in a grand procession to the Kochi Maharaja's durbar where the Maharaja, Sri Rama Varma Parikshit Thampuran, performed <i>dhūli-pādapūjā</i> to His Holiness. His Holiness then had <i>darśana</i> of Lord Muruga at Sri Subramanya Temple and returned to Kalady.
28.05.1964 to 06.06.1964	Kalady and other places	His Holiness started from Kalady and visited Paravoor, Kodungallur, Siranganur, Thrissur, Perungala, Alathur, Vadakkencherry, Ayalur, Nallepilly and Kollengode en route to Coimbatore.
06.06.1964 to 06.07.1964	Coimbatore	The <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Coimbatore via Chittur. There He performed the <i>ārāadhanā</i> of Śrī Jagadguru Vṛddha Nṛsimha Bhārati Mahāsvāmin on the 11th of June. His Holiness had <i>darśana</i> of the temple at Perur on the 19th. There, He also visited the Panchamukha Ganapathy Temple dedicated by Sri Krishna Iyer to the Sringeri Sharada Peetham's care. He camped at Ram Nagar from the 26th of June.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
07.07.1964 to 13.07.1964	Tiruppur, Udumalpet, Kolinjivadi and Karur	The next camp was at Tiruppur. On the 8th of July, His Holiness reached Udumalpet and stayed there for two days. The camp shifted to Kolinjivadi on the 10th. His Holiness reached Karur on the 11th, where He visited Tirumanilaiyur and afterwards, performed <i>pūjā</i> at Karur Sringeri Shankara Math. He visited Chinna Dharapuram and thereafter returned to Kolinjivadi.
13.07.1964 to 18.07.1964	Dindigul, Vattalagundu, Melmangalam	His Holiness was received by the devotees at Sri Shankara Math at Dindigul. He performed <i>pūjā</i> at Kannivadi Jamin Bungalow and blessed the devotees there. On the 14th, His Holiness was received by devotees at Periyakulam at the Varadarajaperumal Temple. The <i>Jagadguru</i> camped at Melmangalam for two days from the 16th.
18.07.1964	Srivilliputhur	His Holiness arrived at Srivilliputhur via Usilampatti and had the <i>darśana</i> of Śrī Āṇḍāl and Lord Vaidyanātha. The <i>Jagadguru</i> inspected the site where Shankara Math branch was being built with the efforts of Śrī Jothi Valaiyapati Svāmin.
20.07.1964 to 22.07.1964	Rajapalayam and Sivakasi	His Holiness was received with great devotion by Sri S.R. Narayana Raja, Sri P.A.C.R. Ramasubramaneya Rajha and other devotees. Then He visited Sivakasi and Thulukappatti. At Shankarankovil, His Holiness had <i>darśana</i> of Śrī Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa and Śrī Gomatī Ambā. Later, His Holiness visited the Shankara Seva Samiti at Krishnapuram.
22.07.1964 to 21.09.1964	Courtallam	His Holiness arrived at Courtallam on the evening of the 22nd. He was received with great devotion by the disciples. <i>Vyāsa-pūjā</i> was conducted by His Holiness on the 24th, which marked the commencement of <i>Cāturmāsya</i> . Honourable Maharajas of Nepal, Mysuru, Travancore, Indore, Gwalior, and <i>Rājamātā</i> of Burdwan presented their offerings to the <i>Jagadguru</i> . The Maharaja of Mysore, who was also the Governor of Tamilnadu had the <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness. <i>Śrī Gaṇapati-vākyārtha-sadas</i> was conducted from the 9th to the 21st of September. His Holiness visited Citrasabhai and had the <i>darśana</i> of Lord Naṭarāja. He then visited the Siddheswara Peetham, Courtallam. The Maharaja of Travancore had the <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness along with members of the royal family.
21.09.1964 to 28.09.1964	Sengottai	The <i>Jagadguru</i> arrived at Sengottai in the evening and was received with full honours. Sri K. Brahmananda Reddy, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, came along with his family to have <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness and received <i>prasāda</i> from Him. His Holiness visited various temples at Sengottai.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
28.09.1964 to 03.10.1964	Elathur, Sundarapan- diapuram	Arriving at Ilathur from Sengottai, His Holiness was received with great love and care by the villagers. The <i>Jagadguru</i> blessed all the devotees by visiting many of their homes. He visited Sundarapandiapuram and was received by the Sringeri Math's Mudrādhikari Sri A.G. Dharmaraja Iyer and other members. The <i>Jagadguru</i> visited Achankovil to have the <i>darśana</i> at Sree Dharmasastha Temple. The temple priests and officers received His Holiness in front of the temple. The <i>Jagadguru</i> had the <i>darśana</i> of Śrī Karuppasvāmi, Śrī Ayyanār and Śrī Ayyappa where special <i>pūjās</i> were conducted.
03.10.1964 to 18.10.1964	Kallidaikurichi	His Holiness visited Kallidaikurichi from Sundarapandiapuram, halting at many villages on the way. Grand arrangements were made for His stay and also for the <i>caṇḍī-yāga</i> . On the 4th, His Holiness performed the <i>ārāadhanā</i> of Śrī Jagadguru Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin. <i>Navarātri</i> was celebrated from the 6th of October. On the 14th, the <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> of the <i>Caṇḍī-homa</i> was performed. His Holiness inaugurated Sri Sharada Dharma Vaidyashala at Kallidaikurichi built by Sri Shankara Dharma Sthapanam on the 15th.
18.10.1964 to 21.10.1964	Manimutharu	His Holiness was received by devotees with great adoration at Manimutharu. The engineers and officers at the dam took His Holiness for a tour around the dam and explained the salient features. His Holiness then went to the falls and worshipped Śrī Rāma and Śrī Vināyaka in the temples there.
21.10.1964	Alwarkurichi	His Holiness visited Parama Kalyani College, established and managed by Sri Anatharamakrishnan and delivered a benedictory address to the students there.
22.10.1964	Bana- theertham	The <i>Jagadguru</i> had a holy bath in the Banatheertham falls. His Holiness honoured hundreds of <i>Vedic</i> pandits with gifts.
24.10.1964 to 30.10.1964	Amba- samudram, Veeravanallur	His Holiness was given a grand reception at Ambasamudram. He then visited Veeravanallur on the 26th, where He blessed the students at the Hindu High School there. On the 28th, His Holiness arrived at Gopalsamudram and camped there for two days.
30.10.1964 to 16.11.1964	Tirunelveli	The <i>Jagadguru</i> was given a rousing reception at Tirunelveli. On the 31st, His Holiness performed the <i>jayantī</i> of Śrī Jagadguru Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin. The people of Tirunelveli were blessed with the opportunity to celebrate His Holiness's 48th <i>Vardhantī</i> on the 3rd of November, the <i>Dīpāvali</i> day, in His holy presence. <i>Mahārudra-japa</i> , <i>homa</i> , <i>vedapārāyaṇa</i> and other such religious events had been organized between the 1st and the 3rd of November. The Shankara Seva

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		Samiti submitted a special souvenir 'Bhakti Malar' at the lotus feet of the <i>Jagadguru</i> . His Holiness inaugurated a <i>vidvat-sammelana</i> on the 7th. His Holiness visited Palayamkottai on the 14th.
16.11.1964 to 26.11.1964	Various Places	His Holiness worshipped at the Mahaganapati Temple and the Siva Temple in Palayamkottai and then visited Chikkanarasaiyan Gramam, Kalakkadu, Valliyur, Vadiveeswaram, Boothapandi, Veeravarmapuram, Nagercoil and Kanyakumari. He visited the South Travancore Hindu College in Nagercoil and then worshipped at the Thanumalayan Temple at Suchindram on the 24th and returned again to Nagercoil. He visited Darsanankoppu on the 25th before arriving at Thiruvananthapuram. His Holiness had also visited Vanamamalai and Thirukkurungudi. There, He was received by the 47th Jeeyar of Vanamamalai.
26.11.1964 to 05.12.1964	Tiruvananthapuram	The Maharaja of Travancore had earlier come to Courtallam during the <i>Cāturmāsya</i> to pay respects to His Holiness and had then requested His Holiness to visit Tiruvananthapuram and conduct a <i>caṇḍī-yajña</i> . It was partly in fulfilment of this request that His Holiness went to Tiruvananthapuram, where He was received in a grand manner by the Maharaja. There, the <i>caṇḍī-yajña</i> was conducted in the august presence of the <i>Jagadguru</i> . His Holiness also laid the foundation stone for the proposed Shankara Math branch and left for Pazhavangadi on the 5th of December.
05.12.1964 to 15.12.1964	Varkala, Kottarakkara, Punalur, Kulathupuzha, Aryankavu	His Holiness visited the Sanskrit College in the city on the 7th. He then arrived at Varkala and worshipped at the Janardana Swamy Temple. He also had a bath in the sea and reached Kollam in the evening. He reached Kottarakkara on the 11th, where He was given a grand reception. From there, the <i>Jagadguru</i> arrived at Punalur on the 12th and worshipped at Sree Krishna Temple, the next day, and also visited the Punalur Paper Mills. He then reached Kulathupuzha and from there proceeded to Aryankavu and worshipped at the Shastha Temples in both the places. The <i>Jagadguru</i> then returned to Sengottai.
15.12.1964 to 20.12.1964	Sengottai and other places	Leaving Sengottai, His Holiness reached Sambavar Vadagarai and worshipped at the Siva, Vishnu Temples there and subsequently went to Ayakudi (16th), Krishnapuram (17th), Kadayanallur (18th) and Sundarapandiapuram (19th). The <i>Jagadguru</i> performed special <i>pūjā</i> at the Śiva Temple in the early morning for <i>Ārdrā Darśana</i> on the 20th and then left for Tenkasi.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
20.12.1964 to 27.12.1964	Tenkasi, Amba- samudram and other places.	From Tenkasi, His Holiness went to Courtallam on the 22nd and returned to Tenkasi. The <i>Jagadguru</i> performed <i>pushpāñjali</i> at the Kasi Viswanathar Temple on the 23rd and then proceeded to Ambasamudram where He was given a grand reception. After performing the <i>dhanurmāsa-pūjā</i> the next day, His Holiness arrived at Rangasamudram and visited the ashram of Śrī Śiva Saccidānanda Sarasvatī Svāmin. From there, He went to and worshipped at the Narambunatha (Narumpoonathar) Swamy Temple in Thirupudaimarudhur and proceeded to Kadayam and camped there for two days. The <i>Jagadguru</i> subsequently arrived at Keelapavoor.
27.12.1964 to 14.01.1965	Keelapavoor, Ariyanayagi- puram, Tirunelveli, Karukurichi	At Keelapavoor, the <i>Jagadguru</i> was given a very grand reception. His Holiness worshipped at the Ramalinga Swamy Temple on the 29th and arrived at Ariyanayagipuram where He worshipped at the Kailasanatha Swamy Temple. His Holiness reached Pappakudi on the 31st and from there left for Karukurichi. On the 12th of January 1965, the <i>Jagadguru</i> was given a grand reception at the Nellai Sangeetha Sabha in Tirunelveli.
14.01.1965 to 21.01.1965	Tiruchendur	His Holiness worshipped Lord Vaikuṅṭhanātha at Srivaikuntam on the 14th. Visiting the village Vasappaneri on the way, He proceeded to Tiruchendur, where the <i>Jagadguru</i> performed <i>pūjā</i> to the deity. He then left for Thoothukudi on the 21st.
21.01.1965 to 02.02.1965	Thoothukudi, Arumuga- mangalam, Krishnapuram, Kovilpatti, Ettayapuram	His Holiness gave His blessings for the construction of the Shankara Math at Thoothukudi. On the same day, He visited Arumugamangalam and proceeded to Krishnapuram on the 22nd and inaugurated a hospital constructed by Sri V.S. Mani. The <i>Jagadguru</i> then arrived at Kovilpatti and visited the <i>sanskrit pāṭhaśālā</i> . He then reached Ettayapuram, where He was received by the Maharaja in a grand manner.
02.02.1965 to 10.02.1965	Rameswaram, Batlagundu	His Holiness's next major halt was at Rameswaram. The <i>Jagadguru</i> worshipped at the shrine of Lord Śrī Rāmanātha and Parvatavardhinī Ambā. A <i>utpātaśānti-homa</i> was performed at the instruction of His Holiness to alleviate the sufferings of people affected by the recent cyclone. His Holiness then went to the Rama Setu on the 4th and determining the spot of confluence of the <i>Ratnākara</i> (Indian Ocean) and <i>Mahodadhi</i> (Bay of Bengal), His Holiness consecrated it as a sacred bathing place for the pilgrims, and performed His <i>anuṣṭhāna</i> and <i>pūjā</i> to the <i>Linga</i> . He then blessed and gave rewards to the students doing <i>vedādhyayana</i> in the Sringeri <i>pāṭhaśālā</i> . During

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		His stay in Rameswaram, the then acting Governor of Tamilnadu, P. Chandra Reddy, came with his family and sought the blessings of the <i>Jagadguru</i> . After reaching Batlagundu, His Holiness left for Palani on the 10th.
10.02.1965 to 17.02.1965	Palani, Sholavandan, Vathirairuppu, Srivilliputhur, Sundarapan- diapuram	At Palani, His Holiness declared open a <i>dharmasālā</i> which had been constructed by the late Sri M.N. Ramaswamy Iyer, on the 11th. He then visited the sacred shrine of Śrī Daṇḍāyudhapāṇi on the hill and personally performed <i>abhiṣeka</i> and <i>pūjā</i> to the deity. The <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Sholavandan on the 12th where He was received with all temple honours at the Santhana Gopalakrishna Swamy Temple. The next visit was Thenkarai. His Holiness laid the foundation stone for the Sringeri Shankara Math at Thenkarai. Returning to Sholavandan, His Holiness visited Vathirairuppu (Watrap) on the 15th and camped there upto the 17th. While at Vathirairuppu, the <i>Jagadguru</i> visited Srivilliputhur on the 15th, and laid the foundation stone of the 'Shankaralaya' building on the same day. On the 17th, His Holiness visited Sundarapandiapuram and returned to Vathirairuppu. From there He left for Madurai.
17.02.1965 to 21.03.1965	Madurai, Sivaganga	His Holiness arrived at Madurai on the 18th of February. A huge gathering of devotees enthusiastically attended the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> performed by His Holiness on the 1st of March. A reception by the Municipal Council of Madurai was accorded to His Holiness on the 4th of March. After reaching Madurai, His Holiness paid a visit to Sivaganga on the 5th of March, and installed the idol of Śrī Śaṅkarabhagavatpāda along with his four disciples in the Sringeri Shankara Math and returned to Madurai in the evening.
-do-	Madurai	His stay in the historical city of Madurai was marked by two special events. One was the visit of Śrī Nirañjana Deva Tīrtha, the head of the Govardhana Pīṭha of Puri, on the 13th of March. He had a private meeting with His Holiness Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin on the 14th, after which both His Holiness and the <i>pīṭhādhipati</i> of Puri gave <i>darśana</i> to a huge gathering of devotees. The Puri <i>pīṭhādhipati</i> delivered an <i>anugraha bhaṣaṇa</i> in chaste Sanskrit, which His Holiness Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin translated into simple Tamil for the benefit of the assembled. The other important event at Madurai was the performance of the <i>sahasra-caṇḍī-yajña</i> which attracted thousands of devotees from the city and surrounding villages. The <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> of the <i>Caṇḍī-homa</i> which was started on the 13th, for the welfare of the world with the benign blessings of the

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Date	Place	Events
		<i>Jagadguru</i> , was performed on the 17th in the august presence of His Holiness and the Śaṅkaracārya of Puri.
17.02.1965 to 21.03.1965	Madurai	On the 19th, the Maharaja of Mysore had the <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness. On the 20th, His Holiness attended the grand <i>maṅḍalābhiṣeka</i> performed at Sri Sakthi Ganapathy Temple in Tallakulam, and performed the <i>abhiṣeka</i> and <i>arcana</i> to Lord Mahagaṇapati. Visiting Sethupathi Higher Secondary School, His Holiness revealed the portrait of Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin in Ramanna Hall. The <i>Jagadguru</i> visited TVS Nagar and blessed the devotees. His Holiness left Madurai on the 21st of March.
21.03.1965 to 01.05.1965	Sivakasi, Gudalur, Kannur, Mathur and other places	He then visited Sivakasi on the 21st and left for Gudalur on the 23rd and camped there for a day. Leaving Kannur on the 2nd of April, the <i>Jagadguru</i> arrived at Mathur on the 6th, where He was given a rousing reception and taken in procession in the golden palanquin. Subsequently the <i>Jagadguru</i> visited and halted at Malla (7th), Agalpady (8th), Thaire (10th), Kudlu (12th), Kasaragod (13th), Pundoor (14th), and Sunkoppa (15th) and arrived at Rudrapatna on the 16th. At Rudrapatna, <i>Sītārāma-sāmrājya-pattābhiṣeka-mahotsava</i> had been arranged at the divine presence of His Holiness. Visiting various places on the way, His Holiness proceeded to Kalady.
01.05.1965 to 11.05.1965	Kalady	On the 1st of May, His Holiness arrived at Kalady for the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations. <i>Śatacaṇḍī-yāga</i> was performed along with the <i>caṇḍī-pārāyaṇa</i> in the august presence of the <i>Jagadguru</i> . The Dwaraka and Puri Śaṅkarācāryas also participated in the <i>jayantī</i> celebrations. A <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was also conducted. On the 6th of May, <i>kanakābhiṣeka</i> was performed to Śaṅkarabhagavatpāda. The <i>Pīṭhādhipatis</i> of all the three <i>Maṭhas</i> participated in the Kerala Brahmin Conference that was held in Kalady on the 7th. His Holiness left Kalady on the 11th.
11.05.1965 to 23.05.1965	Parali, Sathyaman- galam, Gobichetti- palayam	The <i>Jagadguru</i> arrived at Parali on the 11th from Kalady and from there proceeded to Coimbatore on the 12th. At Coimbatore, the <i>Jagadguru</i> was offered a warm welcome at the residence of Sri Subba Rao at R.S. Puram. He then proceeded to Satyamangalam on the 14th of May and camped there for two days. He arrived at Gobichettipalayam on the 16th and camped there for a week and proceeded to Erode on the 23rd.



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Date	Place	Events
23.05.1965 to 07.06.1965	Erode and other places	Arriving at Erode, His Holiness halted there for four days. On the 27th, Svāmin Cidānanda, the President of The Divine Life Society, visited Erode, called on the <i>Jagadguru</i> and offered his respects. Leaving Erode, His Holiness visited Kolanalli and Kodumudi and performed <i>pūjā</i> there. From there, His Holiness visited various places, Karur, Tirumanilaiyur, Sholavandan, Thenkarai, Mannadimangalam, Mullipallam and Melakkal. Before reaching Melmangalam on the 7th, His Holiness visited Kodaikanal on the 5th and also visited the Kodaikanal lake.
07.06.1965 to 29.06.1965	Melmangalam and other places	A rousing reception was given to His Holiness when He arrived at Melmangalam on the 7th of June. On the 11th of June, His Holiness visited Palani Dandayudapani Swamy Temple and personally worshipped at the shrine of the Lord of the Palani hills. During His stay, the Maharaja of Mysore, Sri Jayachamarajendra Wodeyar, had the <i>darśana</i> of the <i>Jagadguru</i> and received His blessings. The <i>Jagadguru</i> was immensely pleased with the answers given by the <i>pāṭhasāla</i> students to the test given to them on the 13th. He rewarded the students with silver dollars of Śāradāmbā, with His own hands. His Holiness then worshipped at the temples of Lord Śrīraṅganātha, Śrī Varadarāja Perumā, Śrī Mīnākṣisundareśvara, Śrī Vīrabhadra, Śrī Bṛhannāyakī with Śrī Māyapāṇḍīsvara. His Holiness then left for Kunnavarankottai, the birth place of the 26th Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin. His Holiness then visited Vallur, Namakkal and Bikshandar Kovil. His Holiness left for Mettur on the 22nd. He then arrived at Pugalur and camped there for four days. He then proceeded to Kadambankurichi and from there to Puliur. From there, He proceeded by foot to Nerur on the 29th of June.
29.06.1965 to 08.07.1965	Nerur, Trichy and other places	At Nerur, the <i>Jagadguru</i> worshipped at the <i>adhiṣṭhāna</i> of Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra. The <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of Visalakshi Vishwanatha Temple, in front of the <i>samādhi</i> of Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra, was performed by the <i>Jagadguru</i> on the 1st of July. In accordance with the instruction which had been given by Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra during his life time, a <i>Śiva-liṅga</i> had been brought from Benaras and installed near the site of the <i>samādhi</i> . His Holiness also personally performed the <i>pūjā</i> at the <i>samādhi</i> of Brahmendra. From Nerur, He left for Krishnarayapuram on the 5th and on the same day, proceeded to Mahadanapuram by foot. Leaving Mahadanapuram on the 6th, His

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Date	Place	Events
		Holiness arrived at Trichy. After visiting Ponmalai, Thiruverumbur, He also worshipped at the Thayumanavar Temple at Rockfort and installed the base idol with His own hands and inaugurated the renovation work there on the 8th.
08.07.1965 to 12.07.1965	Musiri	His Holiness reached Musiri on the 8th and after giving His blessings for the successful completion of the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the Koppumapuri Temple, the <i>Jagadguru</i> visited the Srirangam Sri Shankara Gurukulam on the 10th and came to Sri Vani Vilas Press where He activated the power-driven printing machine. The Acting Governor of Madras, Sri P. Chandra Reddy, had the <i>darśana</i> of the <i>Jagadguru</i> in Trichy and received His blessings on the 11th. He then proceeded to Salem (12th).
12.07.1965 to 20.09.1965	Salem	His Holiness started the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> of 1965 at Salem on the 13th of July. Honourable Maharajas of Mysore, Travancore, Dharbhanga, Burdwan and the Queen of Gwalior, presented their offerings to the <i>Jagadguru</i> . Knowing that His Holiness was in Salem, many devotees from Chennai requested Him to honour the city of Chennai with His presence and personally supervise the <i>yajñas</i> proposed to be conducted there. His Holiness blessed them saying that He would come to Chennai in the third week of September. The <i>Jagadguru</i> arrived in Chennai on the 20th of September.
20.09.1965	Chennai	His Holiness arrived at Chennai and stayed at the Sringeri Math, T. Nagar for two days.
22.09.1965	-do-	After worshipping at the Vinayaka Temple in West Annamalaipuram, and at the Kapaleeswarar Temple in Mylapore, His Holiness reached <i>Navasuja</i> followed by a mile-long procession of devotees, with hundreds of <i>ṛtviks</i> chanting <i>mantras</i> and devotees offering <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> and <i>maṅgalārati</i> , house to house, en route to <i>Navasuja</i> .
24.09.1965	-do-	The three-day <i>ārādhana</i> celebrations of Jagadguru Śrī Candrasekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin were conducted from the 24th to the 26th of September.
26.09.1965	-do-	<i>Navarātri</i> of 1965 was celebrated in Chennai. The <i>Navarātri durbar</i> held by His Holiness concluded on the 4th of October. The Maharajas of Baroda, Palitana, Travancore, Mysuru, Kochi and Gwalior, as also many prominent disciples who were present at the <i>durbār</i> submitted their offerings to the <i>Jagadguru</i> .
30.09.1965	-do-	The <i>Sahasraçaṇḍī-mahāyajña</i> was initiated in the august presence of His Holiness.
04.10.1965	-do-	<i>The pūrṇāhuti</i> of the <i>yajña</i> was conducted in the presence of His Holiness.

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Date	Place	Events
05.10.1965	Chennai	On the day of <i>Vijayadaśamī</i> , there was a procession from <i>Navasuja</i> with Goddess Śāradāmbā seated in a flower bedecked palanquin, followed by His Holiness.
12.10.1965	-do-	The <i>Atirudra-mahāyajña</i> was initiated by His Holiness on the 12th.
20.10.1965	-do-	A <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was conducted starting on the 20th and concluding on the 23rd of October.
22.10.1965	-do-	His Holiness performed <i>kanakābhiṣeka</i> to Śrī Śāradāmbā.
23.10.1965	-do-	The 49th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was celebrated in a grand manner. The <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> of <i>Atirudra-yajña</i> was offered on the day of the <i>Vardhantī</i> . A fitting finale to the several religious celebrations lasting for over a month, the citizens of Chennai gathered in their thousands to pay homage to His Holiness on the occasion. Sri Jayachamarajendra Wodeyar, the then Governor of Chennai, presided. A memorable feature of the functions of the evening, was His Holiness's donation of the gold coins with which He had performed the <i>kanakābhiṣeka</i> to Goddess Śāradāmbā, together with a sum of Rs. 5,000 to the National Defence Fund in response to the Prime Minister's appeal for gold for Defence. These were received in person by the then Chief Minister of Chennai, Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam. His Holiness handed over to the Chief Minister the <i>Atirudra</i> and <i>Sahasraçaṇḍī prasādas</i> , for distribution to the Jawans for success in their endeavours. Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer announced his gift of the plot of land where the <i>Sahasraçaṇḍī</i> and <i>Atirudra-yajñas</i> had been held for the construction of a public prayer and discourse hall under the name, 'The Sringeri Jagadguru Pravachana Mandiram'.
27.10.1965	-do-	His Holiness laid foundation stone of the Sharada Temple at the Indian Institute of Engineering and Technology, Kodambakkam, in the land gifted by Sri K.R. Sundararajan.
02.11.1965	-do-	His Holiness visited shrines in T. Nagar and suburbs; He installed <i>utsava-murtis</i> in the Jalakanteswarar Temple in the IIT Madras campus and also conducted the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> at Sri Bhavani Shankar Temple at Anakaputtur, near Pallavaram.
27.11.1965	-do-	His Holiness camped at Triplicane for three days.
05.12.1965	-do-	His Holiness laid the foundation stone for the Sringeri Jagadguru Pravachana Mandiram at Raja Annamalaipuram.
11.12.1965	-do-	His Holiness left Chennai on the 11th. On the way to Kanchipuram, His Holiness visited the WS Insulators Factory campus where He laid the foundation stone for a Ganapathi Temple.

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Date	Place	Events
11.12.1965 to 13.12.1965	Kanchipuram, Arakkonam	The <i>Jagadguru</i> had <i>darśana</i> at the Kamakshi, Ekambaranathar and Varadaraja Perumal shrines. His evening <i>pūjā</i> of Śrī Śāradā Candramaulīśvara, in the renovated Sringeri Math attracted vast crowds. The next camp was at Arakkonam. At Arakkonam, His Holiness visited the Asbestos Cement Factory.
13.12.1965 to 21.12.1965	Puttur to Pushpagiri	His Holiness visited Puttur and thereafter, made visits to other towns. His Holiness camped at Pushpagiri on the 19th. He then made brief halts at Cuddappah and Proddatur.
21.12.1965 to 23.12.1965	Allagadda	His Holiness camped at this place for two days.
23.12.1965	Ahobilam	His Holiness was received at Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple with due temple honours. There His Holiness offered worship to Śrī Māloḷa Nṛsimha.
23.12.1965 to 24.12.1965	Nandyal	Arriving at Nandyal, the <i>Jagadguru</i> performed the evening <i>pūjā</i> at the sacred precincts of the Bheemeshwara Temple.
24.12.1965 to 25.12.1965	Mahanandi	His Holiness performed <i>pūjā</i> to <i>Mahānandīśvara</i> .
25.12.1965 to 30.12.1965	Kurnool, Adoni, Alampur	At Kurnool, His Holiness stayed at the Rambhotla Devalaya. Then, He journeyed to Adoni. At both the places, He was accompanied by the head of the Siddeswari Math of Courtallam. From Adoni, His Holiness proceeded to Alampur in Mahbubnagar District. On the 28th, His Holiness had a holy dip in the confluence of the Tuṅgabhadrā and Kṛṣṇā rivers and left for Gadwal. From there, His Holiness toured Wanaparthy on the way to Hyderabad.
30.12.1965 to 28.01.1966	Hyderabad	Amongst those who received the <i>Jagadguru</i> at Hyderabad were Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao, Minister of Law and Endowments, Andhra Pradesh, Sri Raja Venkata Rao Limbekar, Sri K.N. Anantaraman, Chief Secretary of Andhra State and Sri Narayana Chetty, Commissioner of Religious Endowments. Numerous dignitaries, including the Governor Sri Pattom A. Thanu Pillai, visited His Holiness during His stay in the city. On the 6th of January, 1966 Śrī Cidānanda, President of the Divine Life Society, called on His Holiness. The <i>Jagadguru's</i> visits to the Bharat Heavy Electricals factory campus,

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Date	Place	Events
		Hanuman Temple in Ramanathapur, the ancient Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple at Saroornagar and to the Laxmi Narayana Swamy Temple at Secunderabad were noteworthy events during His Holiness's Hyderabad stay. Leaving Hyderabad on the 26th, His Holiness made brief halts at Mahabubnagar and Umamaheshwar Nagar.
28.01.1966 to 03.02.1966	Srisailam	His Holiness arrived at Srisailam. There He visited the spot where Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara is said to have meditated and sat there for a long time, lost in deep contemplation. He performed the <i>Mahākumbhābhiṣeka</i> of Sri Krishnadevarāya <i>Gopuram</i> of Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple on the 2nd of February. He worshipped Lord Mallikārjuna for nearly two hours, personally performing <i>arcana</i> to the famous <i>Liṅga</i> and Goddess Bhramarāmbika. One other significant act of His Holiness while at Srisailam was the laying of the foundation stone of the Shankara Math branch building. This arose out of an unpremeditated wish of His Holiness and as a result of the munificence of the assembled devotees, it became a reality in the twinkling of an eye, as it were.
03.02.1966 to 04.02.1966	Tripuran- takam, Narasaraopet	His Holiness travelled to Guntur via Tripurantakam and Narasaraopet. He left for Guntur on the 4th.
04.02.1966 to 19.02.1966	Guntur	The Sringeri Math in Parvathi Puram was the venue of <i>Śatacaṇḍī</i> and <i>Mahārudra-yajñas</i> . The crowning event of the <i>Jagadguru's</i> stay was the installation of Śrī Śāradāmbā in the newly constructed temple donated by Sri Polisetty Sitaramanjaneyulu. The <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> ceremony was performed by His Holiness on the 9th of February. Religious heads from Machilipattinam, Courtallam, Gudivada and of Gayathri and Pushpagiri Peethams were present at the function. Sri V. Vaidyasubramania Iyer laid the foundation stone for the Shankara Sadan, a hall to be constructed between the newly erected Sharada Temple and the already existing shrine of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara. There was large-scale feeding of the poor on the occasion. <i>Lakṣārcana</i> was performed to the Goddess in the evening.
-do-	-do-	The <i>Mahārudra-yajña</i> on the 8th and the <i>Śatacaṇḍī-yajña</i> on the 10th were commenced in the august presence of His Holiness. The <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> of the <i>Śatacaṇḍī</i> was conducted on the 14th. His Holiness performed the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> on the 18th. The <i>Mahārudra-yajña</i> was concluded with the <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> on the 19th. His Holiness then proceeded to Kunchavaram.

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Date	Place	Events
19.02.1966 to 25.02.1966	Kunchavaram, Peravali	His Holiness camped for three days at Kunchavaram and subsequently, at the towns nearby. He then arrived at Peravali on the 24th, and camped for a day there. He then left for Tenali.
25.02.1966 to 04.03.1966	Tenali, Kolluru, Ananthavaram	His Holiness arrived at Tenali on the 25th. He camped at Kolluru and Ananthavaram till the 3rd. He then left for Vijayawada on the 4th.
04.03.1966 to 31.03.1966	Vijayawada, Machilipatnam, Gudivada	The next camp of His Holiness was at Vijayawada. He then visited Machilipatna and Gudivada and then left for Guntur.
31.03.1966 to 04.04.1966	Guntur	On the 1st, the 2nd and the 3rd of April, a <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was convened in the divine presence of His Holiness. The heads of the Siddeshwari Math of Courtallam and Gayathri Pitha were also present on the occasion. On the 2nd of April, the book 'Kalady' written by Sri K.R. Venkatraman was released.
04.04.1966 to 08.04.1966	Vijayawada, Jaggayapet	His Holiness returned to Vijayawada. He then visited Jaggayapet and camped there.
08.04.1966 to 09.04.1966	Nelakondapalli	His Holiness visited the birth place of Bhakta-Ramadas.
09.04.1966 to 11.04.1966	Bhadrachalam, Yellandu, Mahabubad	His Holiness proceeded from Khammam to Bhadrachalam and offered worship at the Bhadrachalam Temple. He then reached Yellandu on the 9th and Mahabubabad on the 10th, and camped there for a day each.
11.04.1966 to 14.04.1966	Warangal	At Warangal, His Holiness visited Hanamkonda, Kazipet and Kommala.
14.04.1966 to 20.04.1966	Kaleswaram, Kodavatancha	After visiting Mahadevpur, His Holiness proceeded to Kaleshwaram on the 14th. On the 15th, He arrived at Kodavatancha. He then visited Kamalapur, Vangara, Mulkanoor and Huzurabad before reaching Vemulawada.

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Date	Place	Events
20.04.1966 to 27.04.1966	Vemulawada	His Holiness arrived at Vemulawada, a place of historical importance. The <i>Jagadguru</i> conducted the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations from the 21st to the 25th. Religious discourses and a <i>Vākyārtha-vidvat-sadas</i> were held. About 100 <i>vidvāns</i> participated in the deliberations. On the 26th, His Holiness worshipped at the Raja Rajeshwara Swamy Temple and made suggestions for further renovation of the precincts.
27.04.1966 to 28.04.1966	Racharla Golappally, Yellareddypet	On the 27th, His Holiness laid the foundation stone for 'Geetha Mandir' at the request of Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao. He also performed the <i>kumbhābhīṣeka</i> of Eswara Temple at Yellareddypet.
28.04.1966 to 05.05.1966	Various Places	His Holiness extensively toured Jagtial, Kothapally, Husnabad, Karimnagar, Dharmapuri and Nirmal and arrived at Basar on the 4th. He conducted <i>pūjā</i> at the Sarasvatī Temple with 108 silver coins.
05.05.1966 to 10.05.1966	Various Places	The <i>Jagadguru</i> visited Pochampadu, Nizamabad, Kamareddy, Medak, Siddipet and Jangaon and was given a rousing reception everywhere. He then arrived at Yadagirigutta.
10.05.1966 to 11.05.1966	Yadagirigutta	His Holiness worshipped Lord Nṛsimha at the Narasimha Swamy Kshetram and left for Hyderabad.
11.05.1966 to 18.05.1966	Hyderabad	Arriving at Hyderabad, His Holiness camped at the Shankara Math, University Road.
18.05.1966 to 24.05.1966	Various places	His Holiness, after touring Alwal, had short camps at Sangareddy, Jogipet, Medak and Shivampet and arrived at Kamareddy for a single-day camp.
24.05.1966 to 31.05.1966	Various Places	Leaving Kamareddy, His Holiness visited Nizamabad, Nirmal, Basar, Bhainsa, Khanapur, and Luxettipet and arrived at Mancherial.
31.05.1966 to 04.06.1966	Various Places	In Mancherial, He worshipped at the Kannikaparameswari Temple and the Venkateswara Swamy Temple. Then He visited Sirpur-Kaghaznagar where He visited the Milk factory and the Sirpur Paper Mills. He then visited Bellampalli and Asifabad. On the 4th of June, He reached the frontier of

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## Major Temples visited by His Holiness



*Kalady  
Sharada, Shankara Temples (Old)*



*Srivilliputhur  
Sri Andal Temple*



*Courtallam  
Sri Courtallanathar Swamy Temple*



*Thiruvananthapuram  
Sri Padmanabha Swamy Temple*



*Tenkasi  
Sri Kasi Viswanathar Temple*



*Rameswaram  
Sri Ramanathaswamy Temple*



*Tiruchendur  
Sri Subramanya Swamy Temple*



*Palani  
Sri Dandayudhapani Swamy Temple*



*Madurai  
Sri Meenakshi Amman Temple*

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*Nerur  
Samādhī of Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra*



*Kanchipuram  
Sri Varadaraja Perumal Temple*



*Kanchipuram  
Sri Ekambaranathar Temple*



*Srisaïlam  
Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple*



*Sankarankovil  
Sri Sankaranarayana Swamy Temple*



*Bhadrachalam  
Sri Sita Ramachandra Swamy Temple*



*Varkala  
Sri Janardana Swamy Temple*



*Trichy  
Sri Ucchipillaiyar/Thayumanavar  
Temple*



*Yadagirigutta  
Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Temple*



*Vemulawada  
Sri Raja Rajeswara Swamy Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



Salem visit - 1964

1. At Sri Lakshmi Narayana Perumal Temple
2. With the Salem Municipal Council Members
3. Welcome by devotees

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66

WAY TO  
FREE SRINGERI MUTT  
TEMPLES KALADY.



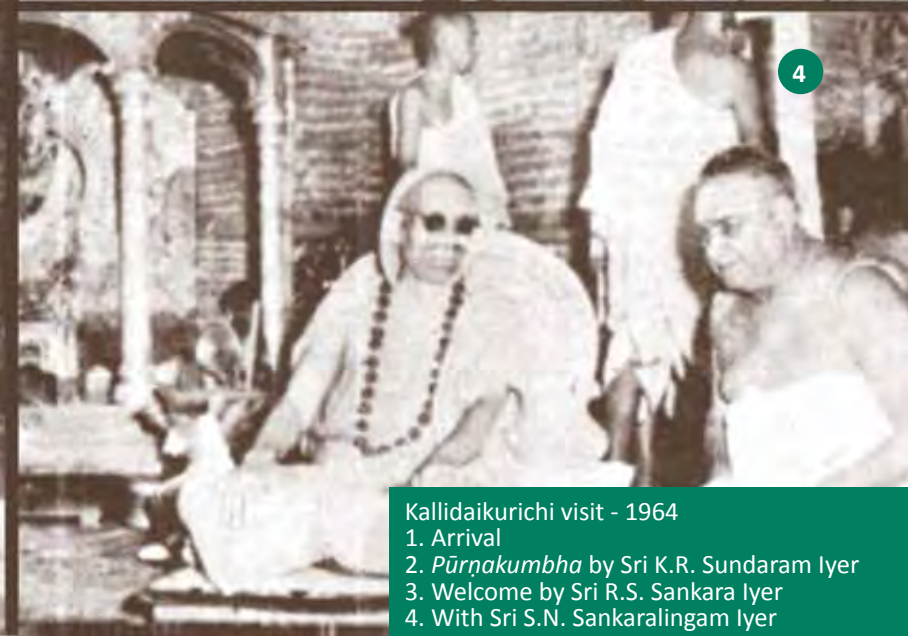
At Sringeri Math, Kalady - 1964

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



Foundation stone for Sri Shankara Memorial Hall at Kalady - 1964

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66

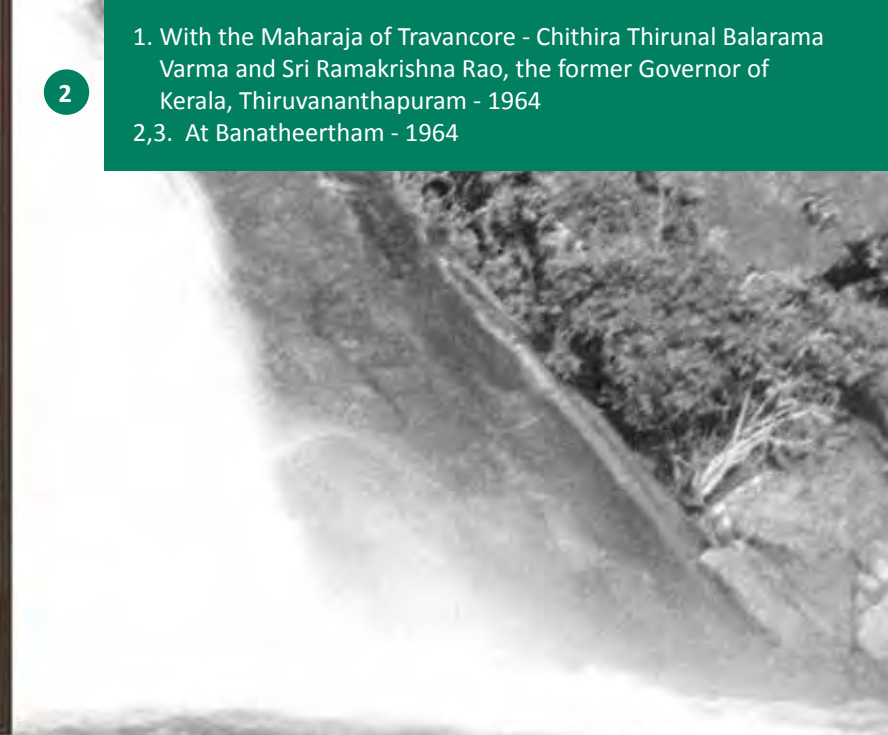


Kallidaikurichi visit - 1964  
1. Arrival  
2. *Pūrṇakumbha* by Sri K.R. Sundaram Iyer  
3. Welcome by Sri R.S. Sankara Iyer  
4. With Sri S.N. Sankaralingam Iyer

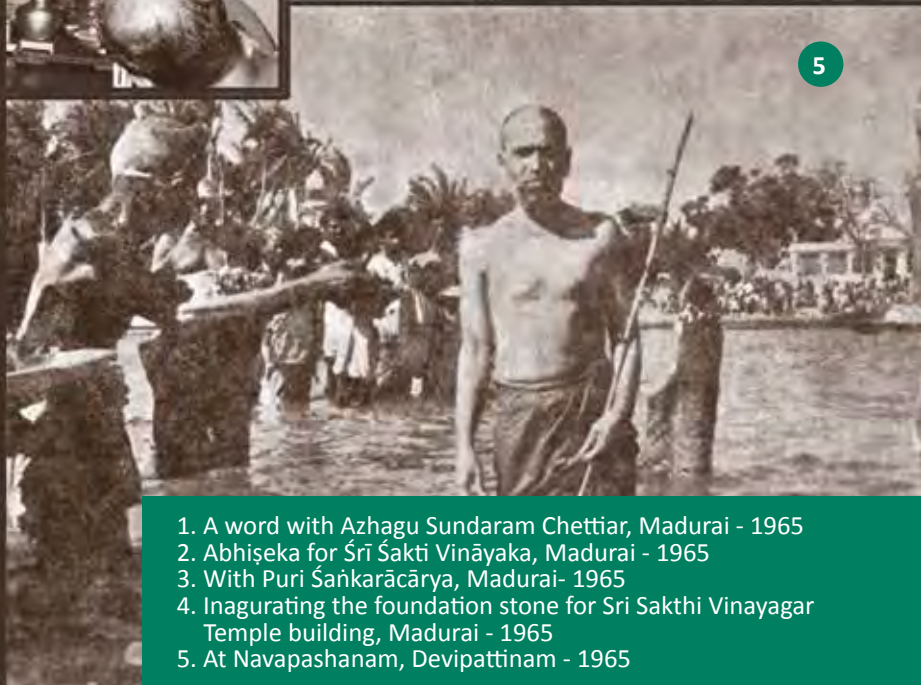
The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



1. With the Maharaja of Travancore - Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma and Sri Ramakrishna Rao, the former Governor of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram - 1964  
2,3. At Banatheertham - 1964



The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



1. A word with Azhagu Sundaram Chettiar, Madurai - 1965
2. Abhiṣeka for Śrī Śakti Vināyaka, Madurai - 1965
3. With Puri Śaṅkarācārya, Madurai- 1965
4. Inagurating the foundation stone for Sri Sakthi Vinayagar Temple building, Madurai - 1965
5. At Navapashanam, Devipattinam - 1965

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



At Sivaganga - 1965

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66





At Kalady - 1965

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



With the Śaṅkarācāryas of Dwaraka  
and Puri Peethams, Kalady - 1965

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



With the Heads of Dwaraka and  
Puri Peethams - Kalady 1965

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



1-6. At Nerur - 1965  
7. Worshipping at Śrī Brahmendra's Adhiṣṭhāna  
8. Kumbhābhiṣeka at Nerur - 1965

## The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



1,2. Guntur - 1966

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



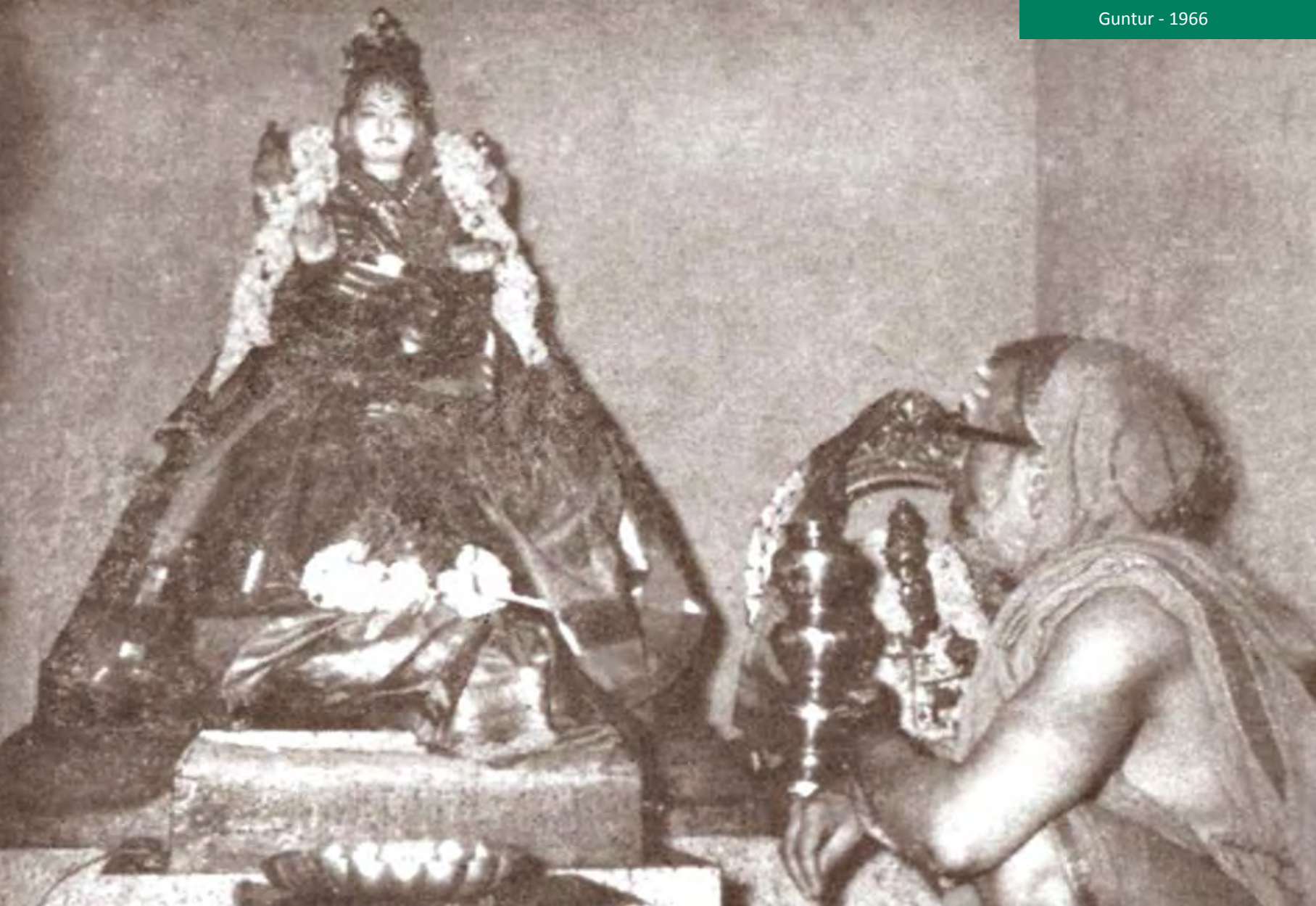
1-4. Guntur - 1966

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



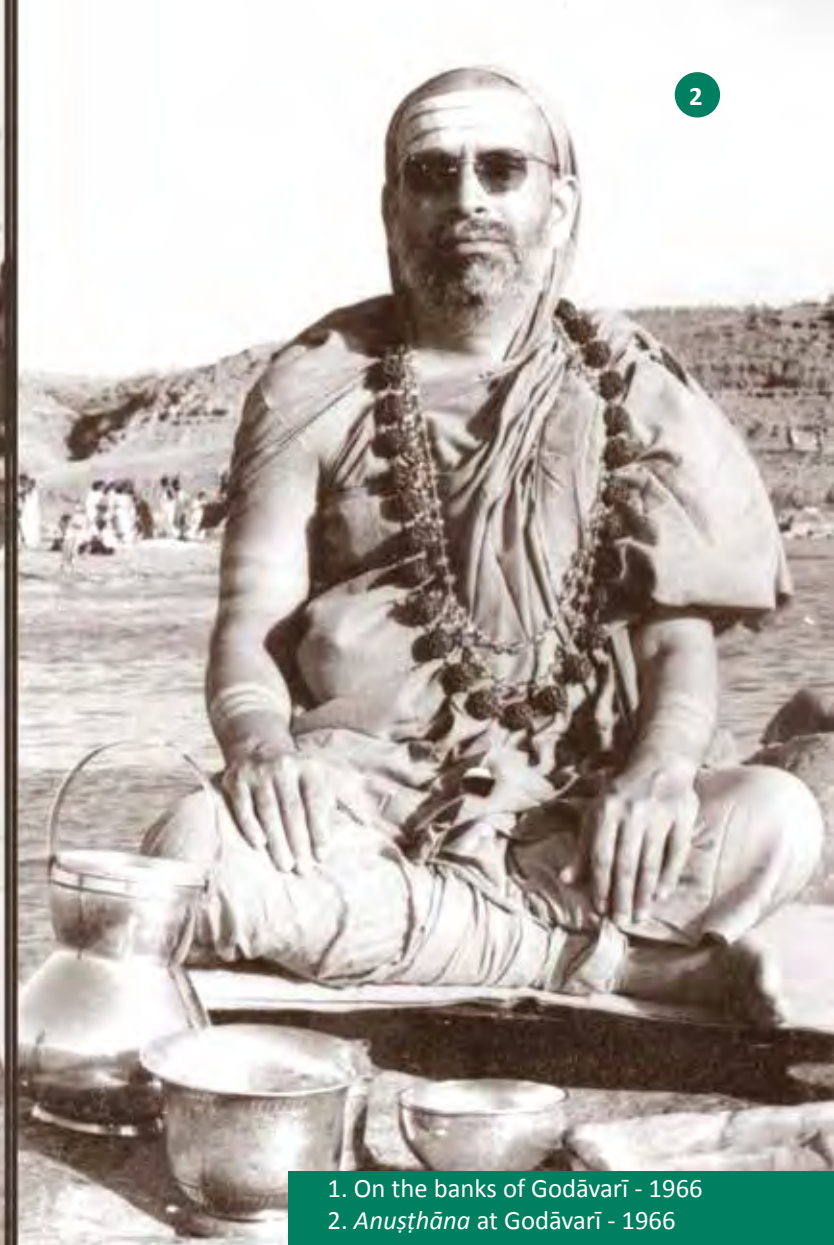
1,2. Guntur - 1966

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66





1. On the banks of Godāvarī - 1966  
2. Anuṣṭhāna at Godāvarī - 1966

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66



At Godāvārī - 1966

The 4th Tour (All India) - South India - 1964 - 66

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		Andhra Pradesh. Here the State officials paid their respects and gave a warm send-off to His Holiness. On the other side of the border, He was received by the officials of the Maharashtra Government.
04.06.1966 to 15.06.1966	Nagpur	At Rajura in Maharashtra Border, His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin was duly received by Government Officials. After paying short visits to Chandrapur and Hinganghat, the <i>Jagadguru</i> arrived at Nagpur (on the 7th) where He was taken in a grand procession around the city. At Nagpur, His Holiness stayed at Sarasvati Vidyalaya and visited various localities and Institutions.
15.06.1966 to 22.06.1966	Pandhurna	Arriving from Nagpur, His Holiness visited Pandhurna. He then travelled to the source of the river Tāptī. After visiting Betul, His Holiness reached Shahapur and Hoshangabad on the banks of the river Narmadā, followed by Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh.
22.06.1966 to 29.06.1966	Bhopal	A grand reception was given to His Holiness at Bhopal by Sri K. Chengalaraya Reddy, the Governor of Madhya Pradesh, Sri Dwarka Prasad Mishra, the Chief Minister, Government Officials and devotees. He visited the Lakshminarayana Temple constructed by the Birlas, and also the Shiva Temple at Lalghati on the 23rd. He visited Pipalani (the Bharat Heavy Electrical Factory and Township) and accepted <i>pādapūjā</i> and <i>bhikṣā</i> offered by the members of the community on the 24th.
29.06.1966 to 30.09.1966	Ujjain	Leaving Bhopal on the 25th and after visiting Ashta, Dewas and Indore, the <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Ujjain on the 29th, for observing the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> . His Holiness performed worship at Sri Mahakaleshwara, Kali and the Durga Temples. His Holiness also visited Kṣīprā River at Ujjain. The <i>Jagadguru</i> took up residence at Kalideh Palace of Her Highness, the <i>Rājamātā</i> of Gwalior, which is situated 7 miles away from the city.
-do-	-do-	During the mornings, He taught the <i>upaniṣads</i> to the numerous <i>saṁnyāsins</i> and other earnest disciples who had gathered, and in the evenings, He found time for deep meditation. The Government had made special transport arrangements and people from the city flocked to see the <i>pūjā</i> and have <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness. Once a week, He gave a discourse to the general public in the lawn facing the palace. It is here in Ujjain that Sri Sitarama Anjaneyulu, (the present <i>Jagadguru</i> of Sri Sringeri Sharada Peetham, Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin in His <i>pūrvāśrama</i> ), at the age of

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		15, came away from His home in Andhra Pradesh seeking the blessings of and instruction in the <i>śāstras</i> from His Holiness. The annual <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was conducted here from the 18th till the 26th of September.
01.10.1966 to 12.10.1966	Rajasthan	From Ujjain, His Holiness left for Dewas where He was received by the royal family members. Subsequently, He left for Omkareshwar and worshipped the <i>Jyotirlinga</i> there. Later, the <i>Jagadguru</i> left for Ratlam, and then visited Dhar and Mandasaur. Rajasthan was the next state He toured. His Holiness arrived Jhalawar on the 7th of October. From there, He toured Kunjer, Rajgarh, Guna, Shivpura, Kota, Baran, Panwar and Neemuch. The tour of Rajasthan lasted for 7 days.
12.10.1966 to 27.10.1966	Gwalior	The city of Gwalior offered a magnificent welcome to His Holiness on the evening of the 12th of October. Under the patronage and personal direction of the <i>Rājamātā</i> , Vijaya Raje Scindia, a Swagata Samiti had been formed consisting of a hundred members and headed by the young Maharaja of Gwalior, Madhavarao Scindia. The young Maharaja of Gwalior received His Holiness at the Palace gate and conducted Him to the special <i>shamiana</i> where <i>dhūli-pādapūjā</i> was conducted. His Holiness arrived at the Sanatan Dharam Mandir at about 6 p.m. The <i>Navarātri</i> festival of the year was celebrated in the divine presence of His Holiness at Gwalior.
-do-	-do-	After a brief halt there, He was taken in procession to the Palace, a mile and a half away. Three caparisoned elephants heralded the procession, followed by twelve horses and an equal number of cows and a vast column of volunteers and <i>sevikas</i> marching alongside, with the members of the committee and the citizens accompanying the palanquin on foot. The procession took two hours to wind its way through the busy thoroughfares of the city, before it reached the reception <i>pandal</i> at the palace. A crowd of nearly forty thousand thronged the precincts and listened with devotion to the Maharaja reading the address of welcome. The <i>ārāadhanā</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin was celebrated between the 13th and the 15th of October. Subsequently, the <i>Navarātri-utsava</i> was celebrated in a grand manner from the 14th to the 22nd. On the last day, the <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> of the <i>Caṇḍī-homa</i> was conducted. A royal send-off was given to the <i>Jagadguru</i> by the members of the Scindia family and devotees.
27.10.1966 to 06.11.1966	Vrindavan, Mathura	Visiting Morena, Agra and Bharatpur, His Holiness arrived at Vrindavan, Mathura, on the 31st of October. He had a tight schedule at Agra where He stayed for two days. He addressed a mammoth gathering at the premises of the Sanatana Dharma Sabha in Agra Cantonment. At Vrindavan, He

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		was received with honours by the citizens including the members of the Municipal Council. A large number of <i>saṁnyāsins</i> and <i>sādhus</i> were also present on the occasion.
27.10.1966 to 06.11.1966	Vrindavan, Mathura	The next day, He was taken around the temples of Mathura and the birth place of Śrī Kṛṣṇā. His Holiness was thrilled at the sight of Gokula and the places where the Lord disported Himself with the Gopis and exhibited divine powers in several startling ways. His Holiness had a holy dip in the river Yamunā and visited Govardhana Giri which the Lord held aloft to ward off the flooding rain. On the final day, He delivered a special address to the devotees and <i>sādhus</i> who were present. At this place, Sri R. Krishnaswami Iyer was given permission to embrace <i>saṁnyāsa-āśrama</i> with the <i>dīkṣa</i> name of 'Jñānānanda Bhāratī'. The ceremonies took place in the banks of the river Yamunā with the blessing of His Holiness. Leaving Mathura, His Holiness visited Hodal and Ballabgarh before arriving in New Delhi.
06.11.1966	New Delhi	His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin arrived in New Delhi on the afternoon of the 6th of November. He was taken in procession and led to a special shamiana where thousands had thronged to have His <i>darśana</i> . Sri Aditya Nath Jha, Lt. Governor of Delhi, welcomed Him in a speech in Sanskrit and Sri Nooruddin Ahmed, the Mayor of New Delhi, in Urdu. Amongst others who welcomed His Holiness were Sardar Santosh Singh, Sri C.R. Pattabiraman, Sri P. Govinda Menon, Dr. K.L. Rao, Sri S.V. Krishnamoorthi Rao. Sri G.L. Goswamy, Sri Jaisuk Lal Hathi and Dr. P.S. Lokanathan. Messages of welcome from the President, Vice-President and Prime Minister were read on the occasion. Later, the <i>Jagadguru</i> went on foot in a procession to the chanting of <i>Vedic</i> hymns to His camp at No. 10, Akbar Road.
08.11.1966	New Delhi	A three-day <i>Rudra-yajña</i> for bringing prosperity to the country and promoting amity between the various sections of the Indian society was initiated on the 8th of November by His Holiness. It concluded on the 11th at 12 noon, synchronising with the <i>Jagadguru's</i> 50th <i>Vardhantī</i> .
11.11.1966	-do-	On the occasion of the 50th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the President of India and Smt. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister, called on Him to felicitate Him and pay their respects. There was a special meeting in the evening attended by thousands of persons and addressed by national leaders. The President expressed the hope that people in the country would follow the footsteps of the great spiritual leader of Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham and march

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		forward. Smt. Indira Gandhi sought the blessings of the <i>Jagadguru</i> to give the nation sufficient strength to tide over its various problems.
13.11.1966	New Delhi	At the time His Holiness was in Delhi, the problem of cow slaughter and of enacting compulsory legislation to prevent it was agitating the country. The Śāṅkarācārya of Puri had undertaken a fast unto death to achieve this end. His Holiness was deeply concerned both for the health and well being of the <i>Ācārya</i> of Puri and about the violent turn that the agitation was taking in various parts of India especially in the capital city. To Him violence and compulsion were always abhorrent. He had always maintained that the <i>dhārmic</i> ideal applied to means as well as ends. However, in response to the demands of various devotees, He gave a special message.
20.11.1966	-do-	President Dr. S. Radhakrishnan laid the foundation stone of the Shankara Vidya Kendra, on Sunday the 20th November, in the august presence of the <i>Jagadguru</i> . Among those who attended the function were Queen Frederica and Princess Irene of Greece. Messages sent by the Vice President and the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, were read out on the occasion. During the stay of His Holiness in Delhi, several distinguished persons including Sri. Moraji Desai, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Supreme Court and the High Court Judges, Mr. Hanumanthaiah, the former Chief Minister of Mysore, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, Minister of the State of Andhra Pradesh, and many other dignitaries had <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness and received His blessings.
1.12.1966	-do-	His Holiness paid a visit to the Television branch of All India Radio where Information and Broadcasting minister Sri C.R. Pattabhiraman received His Holiness and took Him around the Station.
15.12.1966	-do-	A gathering of pandits ( <i>vidvat-sadas</i> ) was convened in New Delhi under the guidance of His Holiness for three days from the 14th. It was an all-India meeting of eminent scholars. They were welcomed by Sri S.V. Krishnamoorthy Rao, Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha. Mr. Bali Ram Bhagat, Minister of State for Planning and Finance, presented awards to the scholars.
21.12.1966	Kurukshethra	An important visit made by the <i>Jagadguru</i> during His Delhi stay was to Kurukshetra on the 21st. The University authorities of the place had made elaborate arrangements for His reception. He had

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		His holy bath at the <i>tīrth-sthal</i> , in Surya Kund and also worshipped at the shrines of Kurukshetra. He also delivered an address at the Kurukshetra University.
01.01.1967 to 03.01.1967	Modinagar	Leaving Delhi on the 1st of January 1967, He spent the next day at Modinagar which has 16 temples constructed by Raja Bahadur Gujar Mal Modi.
03.01.1967 to 07.01.1967	Meerut, Muzaffar- nagar, Haridwar	Visiting Meerut, the <i>Jagadguru</i> halted at Muzaffarnagar. Then His Holiness reached Haridwar where He bathed in the Gaṅgā. Then He returned to Muzaffarnagar.
07.01.1967 to 14.01.1967	Garhmukte- shwar to Naimisaranya	His Holiness had a two-day camp at this place. From there, He proceeded to Moradabad, Rampur, Bareilly and then to Shahjahanpur where He addressed the citizens. His next halt was at Sitapur from where He visited the legendary Naimisharanya forest, about 20 miles away.
14.01.1967 to 18.01.1967	Lucknow	His Holiness reached Lucknow on the 14th and was received with due honours by the Government authorities of U.P. The Governor of U.P., Sri Biswanath Das, had several meetings with Him. On the 16th, His Holiness delivered a discourse in chaste Hindi.
18.01.1967 to 26.01.1967	Kanpur, Barabanki	He travelled to Kanpur on the 18th and stayed in the Radhakrishna Mandir (J.K. Temple). His Holiness addressed several meetings in Kanpur including at the Rotary Club. On the 22nd, He visited the Brahmavart Kshetra where Sage Valmiki is said to have performed penance. His Holiness appreciated Sir Padampat Singhanian, the founder of the local Sri Radha Krishna Temple, for his philanthropic outlook. Leaving Panduranganagar at Kanpur on the 26th, His Holiness arrived at Barabanki and laid the foundation stone for a primary School there.
29.01.1967 to 01.02.1967	Ayodhya	The <i>Jagadguru's</i> next important visit was to Ayodhya, where He was received by Śrī Sītārāmji Mahant at Lakshmana Villa on the banks of the river Sarayū. The next day, after the holy bath in the river, His Holiness worshipped at the place of Śrī Rāma's birth and also at the other places of importance like Kanaka Bhavan, Ambaji Mandir and Ayodhya Raja Mandir.
01.02.1967 to 04.02.1967	Basti	His Holiness reached Basti and stayed there for two days. He laid the foundation stone for a TB Hospital. From Basti, He journeyed to Mehdawal and stayed there.



## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
04.02.1967 to 08.02.1967	Gorakhpur	At Gorakhpur, He was received with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> and other usual honours by Sri Hanuman Prasad Poddar and his family. He was given a rousing reception in the Gita Press Guest House where He performed the <i>Śāradā-candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> at night. On the 7th of February, His Holiness was given an address of welcome by the staff and students of the Gorakhpur University.
08.02.1967 to 11.02.1967	Deoria	At Deoria, His Holiness stayed the night at the Baba Raghav Das Degree College. On the 9th, He delivered a lecture at the Deoria Town Hall where He was honoured by the elite of the town. In the afternoon, He departed to Mirganj where He was received by Sri Kothari, the Chairman and the staff of the Sri Krishna Gyanoday Sugar Factory.
11.02.1967 to 14.02.1967	Siwan, Sonapur	His Holiness halted at the SKG Sugar Factory in Siwan on the 11th. His Holiness delivered a discourse at DAB Elementary High school on the 12th and left for Sonapur on the 13th where He was received with full honours. During His short stay at Sonapur, He visited the Hariharanath Temple where <i>Vasanta-pañcamī</i> festival was going on, and offered worship at the Goddess Sarasvati Temple as also in the Gajendra-moksha Temple.
14.02.1967 to 27.02.1967	Patna	He was then escorted by river boat and arrived at Mahendrughat in Patna in the evening. Elaborate arrangements had been made by Baba Hiralal Jalan Sait in his palatial bungalow for the daily <i>pūjās</i> . The Bihar State Sanskrit Sahitya Sammelan paid respects to the <i>Jagadguru</i> on the 17th. Ballia was the next halting place. He then left for Buxar where the welcome address was presented by the Maharishi Vishwamitra Mahavidyalaya. He arrived at Ghazipur on the 23rd. There He laid the foundation stone for Sarasvatī Bhandara in the Gangaji Mandir School. Visiting Arrah, His Holiness got back to Patna. From Patna, His Holiness visited the surrounding villages and houses of devotees. His Holiness left for Muzaffarpur on the afternoon of the 27th of February.
27.02.1967 to 02.03.1967	Muzaffarpur Motihari	The <i>Jagadguru</i> stayed at Muzaffarpur during the period 27th February to 1st March. The next halt was at Motihari in Bihar. His Holiness left for Hitauti in the evening on the 2nd.
02.03.1967	Hitauti	His Holiness had a strenuous journey of 100 miles on the 2nd, to Hitauti. En route, He was given a special reception at Raxaul at the Indian border. Sri Taraprasad Upadhyaya, Chief Administrator of Guthi Sansthan, and his party welcomed His Holiness at the gateway of Nepal. A vast gathering welcomed His Holiness in a special <i>pandal</i> which had been erected at Birgunj. At Hitauti, His Holiness was welcomed by the Principal of the Forest Rangers' Training College.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
03.03.1967	Kathmandu	King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev of Nepal requested <i>Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin</i> to conduct the <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> celebrations in Nepal and a formal invitation was extended to His Holiness to this effect. His Holiness acceded to the royal request. He left for Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal on the afternoon on the 3rd. Royal welcome in Nepal was given to His Holiness under the direct supervision of King Mahendra. En route, He was received by the Chairman of the Guthi Trust, Sri Bada Guruja Khagendra Raj Pande, members of the Trust, local officials and devotees when He arrived at Kalanki in the evening. After attending a function at Kalanki, His Holiness was escorted in an open car in procession to Murari Bhawan at Battisputali. In the evening, His Holiness visited Sri Pasupatinath Temple.
04.03.1967	Kathmandu	The next day (the 4th), He again visited the Pasupatinath Temple for worship, as also several other temples in the vicinity of the sacred Bāgmatī River. A <i>Mahārudra-yajña</i> was commenced under His Holiness's guidance and supervision for five days. On the early morning of the 5th, His Holiness proceeded to Bhaktapur where He visited the famous Dattatreya Temple.
05.03.1967 to 07.03.1967	Kathmandu	His Holiness worshipped the ' <i>Saptamātrikās</i> ' (seven Mother Goddesses) there. Thereafter, He was taken to the Guhyeswari Temple also known as the Sidheshwari Temple. Next, He visited the Tulja Bhavani Mandir. In the evening, He went to worship at the shrines of Budhanilakantha Temple and the Balaji Mandir. He addressed a mammoth gathering at the premises of Murari Bhawan. All the leading persons and dignitaries including the Indian Ambassador were present on this occasion. The next day, being <i>ekādaśī</i> , was the day of silence for His Holiness. There were a large number of visitors, the next day (the 7th). In the evening, He was taken to the Indian Embassy where He delivered a discourse in Hindi to the assembled gathering. The Ambassador thereafter offered <i>pādapūjā</i> at his residence.
08.03.1967	Kathmandu	The next day was spent in the usual round of blessing visitors and visiting the homes of devotees for <i>pādapūjā</i> . In the evening, His Holiness went to the Balaju Industrial Estate and the Museum, where He saw the large stone idols of Lord Lakṣminārāyaṇa seated on Ādiśeṣa. He then proceeded to Tribhuvan University. His Holiness was greatly impressed by the manner in which boys of eight to ten years of age chanted the <i>Vedās</i> . So pleased was He that He gave special presents in cash to the teachers and the students. He then addressed a vast gathering in the premises of the military grounds. Thereafter, He visited the Bhagavath Bhavan. His Holiness returned to Murari Bhavan

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		after visiting the Swayambhu, one of the holiest Buddhist <i>Chaityas</i> in Nepal. It is said to have evolved spontaneously more than 2,000 years ago.
09.03.1967	Kathmandu	On the <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> day, His Holiness went on foot to Sri Pasupatinath Temple followed by thousands of pilgrims and devotees to the accompaniment of <i>Vedic</i> chant. He offered worship at the temple and partook of the <i>maṅgalārati</i> . His Majesty the King of Nepal and the Queen had <i>darśana</i> of the <i>Jagadguru</i> and paid their respects to Him. They held a long conversation with Him and departed after receiving His blessings. The <i>Śivarātri-pūjā</i> that lasted throughout the night was performed by His Holiness in the presence of a huge gathering. Devotees had come from all over India for the occasion.
10.03.1967	Kathmandu	The ' <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> ' of the <i>Mahārudra-yajña</i> was performed on the forenoon of the 10th in the midst of a vast and distinguished gathering which included Their Majesties and the Indian Ambassador. The King of Nepal gave a silver casket together with a silver replica of the Pashupatinath Temple to His Holiness. There was mass feeding in the afternoon. A weighty bronze bell was specially presented to the Math. It is significant that the entire expenses of the <i>Mahārudra-yajña</i> were met by His Majesty, the King. A rare recognition was given to the visit when the Nepal Government decided that a large plaque commemorating His Holiness's visit should be suitably inscribed and kept in the Pasupatinath Temple for one and all to see and recapture the thrilling memory.
11.03.1967	Kathmandu	His Holiness left Kathmandu on the afternoon of the 11th, for Hitauti, en route Motihari in Bihar. A grand send-off was given to His Holiness on the eve of departure to India. Before leaving for Motihari in Bihar, His Holiness again worshipped at the Pasupatinath Temple. During His stay, His Holiness gave half a dozen public discourses which were attended by over 30,000 people.
11.03.1967 to 14.03.1967	Motihari	After a day's halt at Hitauti, the <i>Jagadguru</i> arrived at Motihari, where He was accommodated by Sri Radhakrishna Sikaria. He departed for Muzaffarpur on the evening of the 13th, and camped in the premises of T.R. Flour Mills, four miles away from the town.
14.03.1967 to 15.03.1967	Darbhanga	He left for Darbhanga the next afternoon on the 14th, reaching the destination late in the evening. He was received with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> and other traditional honours by the Raja of Darbhanga who was present throughout the evening <i>pūjā</i> . His Holiness met the members and staff of the Chandradhari Mithila Science College and blessed them.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
16.03.1967 to 18.03.1967	Samastipur	On the 16th, His Holiness addressed a vast gathering at Samastipur. The next camp was at Monghyr, Bihar School of Yoga. Śrī Satyānanda Sarasvatī Svāmin received His Holiness. The next day, the 18th of March, His Holiness granted interviews to several distinguished persons and left for Deogarh in the afternoon.
18.03.1967 to 21.03.1967	Deoghar	His Holiness visited Sri Vaidyanath Temple on the 19th. The <i>liṅga</i> in this temple is one of the famous <i>Jyotirliṅgas</i> of India. After worshipping at the temple, the <i>Jagadguru</i> paid a visit to the Balaji Mandir where <i>puruṣa-sūkta</i> and <i>śrīsūkta-homa</i> were conducted. Later, His Holiness proceeded to Chittaranjan. He was received with honours at the Town Hall. <i>Dhūli-pādapūjā</i> was performed by Sri N.K. Srinivasan of the Chittaranjan Loco Works. The next day, after the morning ablutions, He blessed those in the Loco Works. Afterwards, His Holiness proceeded to Sindri. On the way, He saw the Damodar Valley Project and the gigantic irrigation works and the dam. He arrived at Sindri late at night in rainy weather. A large gathering was present to receive Him and He was taken in procession to the beautifully decorated <i>pandal</i> to the Sindri Colony.
21.03.1967 to 22.03.1967	Sindri	His Holiness visited the Sindri Fertilizer Works on the forenoon of the 21st. He addressed a vast gathering in the evening at Sri Ram Temple.
22.03.1967 to 23.03.1967	Durgapur	He proceeded to Durgapur on the evening of the 22nd. The next day, after visiting the Steel Plant and receiving the offerings of many devotees, He left for Tarakeshwar in the evening.
23.03.1967 to 25.03.1967	Tarakeshwar	At Tarakeshwar, He was taken in a grand procession to the accompaniment of music and <i>Vedic</i> recital to the Tarakeshwar Math. The next day (the 24th), He proceeded to Tarakeshwar Temple. He personally performed <i>arcana</i> to Lord Tāraknāth. In the afternoon, there was a public reception to honour the <i>Jagadguru</i> . The Tarakeshwar Mahant presented His Holiness with a silver <i>triśūla</i> .
25.03.1967 to 04.04.1967	Kolkata	His Holiness arrived in Kolkata on the 25th of March. Two days earlier, when the <i>Jagadguru</i> had reached Tarakeshwar, a hundred families from Kolkata proceeded to that holy place to have the <i>darśana</i> of the <i>Guru</i> and to escort Him to Kolkata. On the afternoon of the 25th, a cavalcade of cars left for Kolkata, in spite of the inclement weather a very large crowd had gathered to welcome His Holiness. He was first taken to the National High School, South Kolkata, where a special reception

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Date	Place	Events
		was accorded. Later, He went in a procession in a palanquin. His Holiness's stay in Kolkata was marked by visits to numerous places, discourses and discussions.
04.04.1967 to 15.04.1967	Kolkata	On the 2nd of April, His Holiness proceeded to the Government Sanskrit College, Kolkata, at the invitation of its Principal. The next day, He visited the Birla Planetarium, where He was showed the movements of the celestial objects. His Holiness visited the Andhra Association and the Mysore Association and also gave a message to the nation on the occasion of the <i>Ugādi</i> (10th). The 11th was the day of the <i>ārāadhanā</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhārati Mahāsvāmin. His Holiness inaugurated the Shankara Hall and Shankara Institute of Philosophy and Culture on the 12th. On behalf of the Institute, Justice P.B. Mukherji extended a hearty and cordial welcome to His Holiness.
15.04.1967 to 18.04.1967	Kolkata	On the 15th, a <i>Śatacaṇḍī-homa</i> was started under His Holiness's personal guidance. A <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was also arranged on the 17th and the 18th. The participants were mainly from the Sanskrit College, Kolkata and included eminent scholars such as Acharya Gowrinath Sastri and Dr. Madhusudana Bhattacharya. The 18th being the day of <i>Rāmanavamī</i> , His Holiness performed special <i>pūjā</i> to Śrī Rāma in the afternoon. At the conclusion of the <i>vidvat-sadas</i> that evening, His Holiness conferred titles on and gave away presents to the scholars.
19.04.1967 to 21.04.1967	Kolkata	The <i>Śatacaṇḍī-homa</i> which began on the 15th concluded at midday on the 19th. His Holiness visited the famous Kalighat Kali Temple where He was received with due honours and dignity by the temple authorities. He visited the famous Vaikunthanath Temple and also made a visit to Dakshineswar. On the 21st, His Holiness left Kolkata.
21.04.1967 to 22.04.1967	Kolaghat	According to the original programme His Holiness was to have gone to Kharagpur from Kolkata. On the way, there is a strait at a place called Kolaghat where the cars had to be transported to the other bank over the boats. The <i>Jagadguru</i> came to this spot with His followers at 5 p.m. But the boats could not be rowed due to problems with the water level. The <i>Jagadguru</i> decided to camp there for the night (Friday) <i>pūjā</i> . The Kolaghat Bridge (Railway) was then in progress there. The Friday <i>pūjā</i> was performed by the <i>Jagadguru</i> at the place, a little away from the bridge line. The Engineers of Gannon Dunkerly Co. represented to the <i>Jagadguru</i> that the construction work had to be stopped many times due to engineering impediments and requested the <i>Guru</i> to bless them with success in their efforts. His Holiness said that things would not go wrong thereafter and gave

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Date	Place	Events
		them <i>prasāda</i> . The work was thereafter completed without any difficulty. A stone inscription to this effect was put up by the Railway Authorities at this place. It looked as though His Holiness had to halt there just to bestow His benediction on these earnest souls!
21.04.1967 to 22.04.1967	Kolaghat	The elaborate Friday <i>pūjā</i> was conducted there and the <i>Jagadguru</i> blessed the engineers and workers. In spite of the adverse weather, more than 300 persons gathered to witness the <i>pūjā</i> ! His Holiness cancelled the Kharagpur programme and proceeded to Burdwan on the 22nd of April where He stayed at the residence of Dr. Sailendranath Banerjee. Dr. Banerjee's wife offered to His Holiness with devotion, the sacred water that she had brought all the way from Lake Manasarovar.
23.04.1967 to 24.04.1967	Jealgora	The next day, He proceeded to Jealgora in Dhanbad District.
24.04.1967 to 25.04.1967	Ranchi	The 24th of April was the day of lunar eclipse which commenced at 3:30 p.m. and terminated at 7:18 p.m. The <i>Jagadguru</i> performed special rituals during this period. He left for Ranchi (25th) where He was received with due honours by the employees of Ranchi Machine Tool and Implements Factory.
25.04.1967 to 29.04.1967	Gaya	In the evening, His Holiness proceeded to Gaya. The reception accorded at Gaya to the <i>Jagadguru</i> was truly an impressive one. More than two lakhs of people had gathered in a vast ground. As soon as He reached Gaya, He was escorted to the dais. The Chief Minister of Bihar, Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, addressed the meeting and then the <i>Jagadguru</i> spoke and expressed His deep sympathy for the people of Bihar who were suffering for want of adequate rains. He invoked the blessings of Śrī Śāradā Candramaulīśvara to give unto the people peace and prosperity. His Holiness worshipped the Vishnupada Mandir and Gayeswari Kali Mandir on the 27th. The next day He visited Bodh Gaya and saw the place where Buddha received enlightenment. Mahant Sadānandguru of Bodh Gaya and Saint Gangadhar Dalmia offered <i>pādapūjā</i> . He proceeded to Dalmianagar in the evening after giving suitable rewards to the priests and <i>vidvāns</i> at Gaya. The next day, the Chairman of Rohtas Industries Limited performed special <i>pūjā</i> and in the afternoon, the employees of Dalmia Cement Factory received His Holiness's blessings. The <i>Jagadguru</i> left for Vindhychala in the evening.

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Date	Place	Events
29.04.1967 to 30.04.1967	Vindhyachala	His Hoiness visited Vindhyavasini Devi Temple the next morning and offered worship to the Divine Mother. He also visited the shrines of Goddess Mahākālī, Durgāmbā and Maheśvara.
30.04.1967	Varanasi	In the afternoon, a deputation led by Sri Babulaji Dhan Dhaturya, proprietor of Sri Annapurna Mill, Varanasi, waited on His Holiness and requested Him not to postpone His visit to that sacred city. His Holiness reached the Shankara Math in the Kedar Ghat in the evening. He was given a rousing reception by the citizens. After supervising the arrangements in the <i>Maṭha</i> for the installation of Śrī Śāradāmbā, He gave <i>darśana</i> to the persons assembled and returned to His camp at Sri Annapurna Mill.
01.05.1967	-do-	On the 1st of May, His Holiness proceeded to the river Gaṅgā very early in the morning for a bath in the holy waters. He performed His morning ablutions and prayers on the banks of the sacred river, sitting in silent contemplation for nearly three hours, lost to the world and in communion with the Infinite. Returning to the mundane world, He went to the Shankaracharya Math at the Kedar Ghat. Thereafter, He visited the residence of a number of persons in the Kshemeshwara and Hanuman Ghats ending with a visit to the Palace of the <i>Rājamātā</i> of Burdwan, who received Him with great devotion and performed <i>Sahasranāma-pādapūjā</i> . In the evening, He proceeded to Kshemeshwar Ghat where the leading Pandits of the city and elsewhere had gathered in a <i>sadas</i> . An assembly of <i>Vedic</i> scholars including renowned persons like Nyāyācara Pandit Sri Rajeswara Sastri Dravid had been specially arranged and several knotty points in the scriptures were discussed in detail. It was indeed a great sight to see His Holiness guiding these deliberations from a pedestal of infinite erudition to the delight of the assembled scholars and laymen alike. He then distributed rewards in cash to nearly 160 scholars.
02.05.1967	-do-	On the morning of the 2nd of May, His Holiness visited the Dashashwamedh Ghat and after a holy bath in the river, He worshipped in the shrines of Lord Kāśī Viśvanāth, Goddess Annapūrṇā, Dhunḍi Vināyaka and other deities and then returned to the camp. On this second day of His Holiness's stay in Varanasi, another <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was convened in the premises of Annapurna Mills. The discussions were brilliantly guided by His Holiness. After the <i>sadas</i> was over, He addressed a mammoth gathering of people.

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Date	Place	Events
03.05.1967	Varanasi	On the 3rd, He visited the Varanaseeya Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya and addressed the staff. He also visited the Sangaveda Vidyalaya and the Banaras Hindu University. At the University, the Principal read an address of welcome in Sanskrit. Thereafter, in the evening, He proceeded to the palace of the Raja of Kashi at the Raja's request. The young prince of eight years along with his father offered <i>pādapūjā</i> . After distributing <i>prasāda</i> , His Holiness left for Allahabad.
03.05.1967 to 05.05.1967	Allahabad	The <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Allahabad late in the evening. A special shamiana had been erected and the ceremonial welcome included an array of elephants and camels. Early in the morning of the 4th, His Holiness went to the <i>triveṇi-saṅgama</i> (the confluence of the three rivers - the Gaṅgā, the Yamunā and the Sarasvati, the last one flowing underground). He worshipped the sacred banyan tree ( <i>akṣayya-vaṭa-vṛkṣa</i> ) Goddess Sarasvatī and other deities. Then He gave away gifts to the priests assembled. In the evening, He gave interviews to several distinguished visitors including the Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University, the Chief Justice of the High Court, Sanskrit Professors and others. The next morning His Holiness once again proceeded to the Triveni to have a bath at the confluence. In the evening, His Holiness blessed the devotees in Allahabad and proceeded to Kanpur. Then He went to Kannauj and to Aligarh.
05.05.1967 to 08.05.1967	Kanpur, Aligarh	His Holiness arrived at Kanpur and stayed at the Radha Krishna Mandir. The next camp was at Aligarh in the <i>Rāma Mandir</i> . From Aligarh, the <i>Jagadguru</i> left for Delhi.
08.05.1967	New Delhi	The citizens of Delhi gave an enthusiastic and loving welcome to His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin as they were conscious of the great blessing bestowed on them in the <i>Jagadguru</i> agreeing to come to Delhi to celebrate the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> .
10.05.1967 to 16.05.1967	-do-	The first highlight of the visit of His Holiness this time was the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations held from the 10th to the 14th of May, and the second was the <i>vidvat-sadas</i> held during those five days. The usual presents in cash and kind were distributed to the Pandits who were present and the title of ' <i>Vidyā Ratnākara</i> ' was conferred on Dr. Mandan Mishra in recognition of his scholarship. The concluding session of the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> function was addressed, among others, by Sri R.K. Khadiilkar, Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha, and Sri K. Hanumanthaiyah, Chairman, Administrative Reforms Commission. At 6:30 p.m., a procession of Ādi Śaṅkara, decked in a beautiful chariot was



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Date	Place	Events
		taken around. It was a memorable event. His Holiness led the procession for some distance, followed by thousands of devotees. One of the highlights of His Holiness's stay was the President elect. Dr. Zakir Hussain, calling on Him to pay respects and seek blessings.
16.05.1967 to 18.05.1967	New Delhi	Another notable event was the ' <i>dharm-upanayana</i> ' of about thirty young boys which was performed in His Holiness's immediate presence and with His blessings. He left on the 16th to continue His pilgrimage to Haridwar, Kedarnath and Badrinath. In a moving farewell function two speeches were made, one by Mr. C.M. Poonacha, the Minister for Railways, and the other by Dr. P.S. Lokanathan. On the 18 <sup>th</sup> , His Holiness left for Muzaffarpur.
18.05.1967 to 19.05.1967	Muzaffarpur	His Holiness camped at Muzaffarpur.
19.05.1967 to 21.05.1967	Haridwar	His Holiness reached Haridwar on the afternoon of the 19th of May. He was received with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> and other ceremonial honours at the outskirts of the city and was escorted to the Hari-ki-Pauri where He worshipped at the Shankaracharya Math. Having addressed devotees, He returned to His camp in J.K. Home. The night <i>pūjā</i> was performed at Bhologiri Ashram where thousands of devotees had gathered. On the 20th early morning, His Holiness had His bath in the holy Gaṅgā and observed silence during the day as it was <i>ekādaśī</i> . The next day, in the city, He visited various institutions like the Krishna Nivas Ashrama, the Ashrama of Mahamandaleshwar Maheswarananda Puriji at Kankhal, Sri Ayyappa Niwas Mandir and the Karnataka Dharmashala.
21.05.1967 to 22.05.1967	Rishikesh	He left Haridwar the same afternoon for Rishikesh and reached there by about 3:30 p.m. He stayed the night at the Andhra Ashrama. Śrī Cidānanda Sarasvatī Svāmin of the Divine Life Society (Sivananda Ashrama) had arranged a public meeting. The next day (22nd), after His bath in the holy Gaṅgā, His Holiness was taken around the Sivananda Ashram. Subsequently, He crossed the river and visited the Gita Bhawan, Paramarth Niketan, Swarg Ashram and other monuments of the Hindu way of life. He then returned to His camp and performed special <i>pūjā</i> in the afternoon, it being the day of <i>Nṛsimha-jayantī</i> .
22.05.1967 to 23.05.1967	Rudraprayag	After the distribution of <i>prasāda</i> , the <i>Jagadguru</i> commenced His Himalayan journey, the first step of which was Rudraprayag. Rudraprayag is considered to be as important as the Triveni Sangam (Prayag - Allahabad) in the plains. Here, the Mandākinī flowing from Kedarnath meets the

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Date	Place	Events
		Alaknandā which flows down from Badrinath, and along with the underground Sarasvati, they form a triple confluence to which immense sanctity is attributed. The rivers meet in a fierce and turbulent flow and then roll down towards the plains. There is a steep rocky crest just above the confluence and one has to go down this cliff step-by-step. Situated on a spacious ground above the river is the temple of Lord Rudranāth, the presiding deity of Rudraprayag. His Holiness performed the night <i>pūjā</i> in the temple premises.
23.05.1967 to 24.05.1967	Guptkashi	In the afternoon, His Holiness left for Guptkashi which He reached by about 8 p.m. The important temple in this place is dedicated to Lord Viśvanāth. His Holiness worshipped Lord Viśvanāth and also visited the places of religious importance in the vicinity. Arrangements were then made for His departure to Kedarnath.
24.05.1967	Guptkashi	The distance from Guptkashi to Kedarnath is 29 miles and has to be covered either on foot or on horse-back. The <i>Jagadguru</i> left on foot for Kedarnath with a pick of His camp followers. A number of ponies and hammocks were arranged for the less-abled devotees.
24.05.1967 to 25.05.1967	Guptkashi to GauriKund, Rambara	The trek from Guptkashi began on the morning of the 24th. En route, the halting places were Phata on the 7th mile, Rampur on the 14th, Sitapur on the 15th, Gauri Kund on the 20th, Rambara on the 26th mile. It was 4 p.m. when Rampur was reached. After ablutions and <i>bhikṣā</i> there, the journey was resumed and Gauri Kund was reached at 9 p.m. This was the most strenuous journey, but it was relieved by the rustle of the river and the roar of the wayside cascades and the exultation of walking with His Holiness. By the time the party reached Gauri Kund, it was raining cats and dogs. In spite of the late hour and the inclement weather, the local inhabitants turned out en masse. His Holiness immediately had His bath in the Tapta Kund and sat for <i>pūjā</i> which concluded by midnight.
25.05.1967 to 26.05.1967	Rambara to Kedarnath	The next day, the last lap of the journey to Kedarnath commenced just before noon. Although the distance was only 9 miles, the ascent was steep and the progress slow. His Holiness climbed the steep and mountainous road from Gauri Kund to Kedarnath of about nine miles in distance, barefooted and reached Kedarnath in the night.

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Date	Place	Events
26.05.1967 to 28.05.1967	Kedarnath	The Kedarnath Temple is said to have been built by the Pāṇḍavas and revived by Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarācārya and is one of the 12 <i>Jyotirlingas</i> . The natural background to the temple is a scene of white effulgent light which is awe-inspiring. By the time His Holiness reached Kedarnath, several of His followers had lagged behind and only a few strong-willed persons were left with Him. On the evening of the 27th, however, all the followers managed to join Him and it was during the same evening that His Holiness personally performed <i>pūjā</i> to Lord Kedārñāth. After the <i>pūjā</i> was over, He stood before the Lord in enraptured silence, His mind filled with adoration in the presence of the Supreme Lord of the Himalayas.
28.05.1967 to 30.05.1967	Gauri Kund	After staying for a day at Kedarnath, His Holiness started on His downward journey to Guptkashi through Gauri Kund, Rampur and Phata. He reached Guptkashi on the evening of the 28th, halting for half a day at Gauri Kund. On the morning of the 29th, He had His sacred bath in the Gaṅgā and Yamunā Dhārā, opposite to the temple and after worshipping Lord Viśvanāth, He granted interviews to the Rawal and other distinguished personages.
-do-	Joshi Math	After finishing His <i>bhikṣā</i> in the early afternoon, He started for Joshi Math through Rudraprayag and reached the place late at night. He was received by the <i>Jagadguru</i> of Joshi Math with acclamation and joy. Near the riverbed of Alaknandā is situated the temple of Lord Nṛsimha and the <i>śālagrāma</i> which is installed there is said to have been worshipped by Ādi Śaṅkara. His Holiness also visited the temples of Nava Durgā, Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu on the 30th. The path to the famous Tapovan starts from Joshi Math. His Holiness visited the various shrines and other important places in and around the <i>Maṭha</i> and in the afternoon granted interviews to many distinguished persons including Sri Gulzarilal Nanda. After a long and cordial conversation with Shāntānanda Sarasvatī Svāmin, the Pontiff of Joshi Math, His Holiness left for Badrinath in the evening.
30.05.1967 to 31.05.1967	Badrinath	In Badrinath, His Holiness was received by Agnihotri Devi Parsad Tripathi, the Executive Officer of the temple, with all honours. The <i>Jagadguru</i> had His first vision of Lord Badrinārāyaṇa in splendid isolation. Early in the morning of the 31st, He again proceeded to the temple and received the <i>ārati</i> . He offered flowers at the feet of the Lord and performed <i>arcana</i> . He then went on to visit the important places in and around Badri followed by half a dozen <i>saṁnyāsins</i> from different parts of India. He also offered worship at the shrine of Śrī Mahālakṣmī on the right flank within the precincts of the Badri Temple.

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Date	Place	Events
31.05.1967 to 01.06.1967	Badrinath	The 'Pancha Silas' are Narada Sila, the Garuda Sila, the Markandeya Sila, the Varaha Sila and Narasimha Sila. These are situated within easy distance of Tapta Kund and His Holiness visited them before He had His bath in the Tapta Kund. Like the Pancha Silas, there are Pancha Theerthas also in Badrinath. These are the Prahalaḍ Dhara, Kurma Dhara, Brighu Dhara, Urvashi Dhara and the Indira Dhara. His Holiness visited these also. Again there are Pancha Badris, viz., the main Badri Vishal, Adi Badri, Vridha Badri, Bhavishya Badri and Yogadhyān Badri.
-do-	-do-	After visiting several holy places in and around Badri, His Holiness proceeded to Brahma Kapala which is the spot sacred to one's ancestors or <i>pitṛs</i> . This is a big rock, shaped like an inverted palm and is washed by the Alaknandā at its base. Finally, He visited Mata Murti, a village on the right bank of the river where there is a temple dedicated to Mātā Mūrti, the wife of Dharma Prajāpati and the mother of sages Nara and Nārāyaṇa. He also visited Charan Paduka, a place situated about two miles to the west of Badrinath towards the foothills of the Nilakantha peak. On the 1st of June, the <i>Jagadguru</i> proceeded to the Vasudhara Teertha where the eight Vasus are said to have performed penance. This path leads to Mana Pass, Tibetan Indian Border. Here, the <i>Jagadguru</i> gave <i>darśana</i> to some buddhists and acquainted Himself with their language and their way of life.
01.06.1967 to 03.06.1967	Badrinath to Rishikesh	On the 1st of June, the <i>Jagadguru</i> , after finishing His early morning ablutions in the Alaknandā, and a visit to the Badrinarayana Temple, resumed His journey to Rishikesh via Pandukeshwar, Pipalkoti, Joshi Math, Rudraprayag, Srinagar and finally Devaprayag. He arrived at Rishikesh on the evening of the 3rd of June.
03.06.1967 to 04.06.1967	Rishikesh and Haridwar	On the morning of the 4th, His Holiness visited Haridwar and after a bath in the holy Gaṅgā, returned to Rishikesh. He then visited the vast building of the Sivananda Ashram and also had a meeting with Cidānanda Sarasvatī Svāmin and other members of the Divine Life Society. Thereafter, His Holiness proceeded to the newly constructed <i>Maṭha</i> building at Haridwar and gave instructions about the future work to be done there. After a detailed scrutiny of the building, He proceeded to Dehradun in the evening.
04.06.1967 to 07.06.1967	Dehradun, Ambala, Jalandhar	The next day (the 5th), His Holiness went to Sahastradhara in Dehradun, in the morning, and had a bath in the holy waters. He arrived at Ambala Cantonment in the evening and stayed in the Lakshminarayan Mandir. The next day, the <i>Jagadguru</i> went to the Sanatan Dharm Institute for the

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Date	Place	Events
		Blind. There He delivered a moving and sympathetic speech which touched the hearts of those present. He also gave a liberal monetary contribution to the Institute. In the evening, He proceeded to Jallandhar, which He reached at about half past seven. Jallandhar City accorded His Holiness a royal reception.
07.06.1967 to 10.06.1967	Jammu	The next afternoon, the <i>Jagadguru</i> proceeded to Jammu which He reached at 8 p.m. He stayed in Jammu for two days which were spent mainly in granting interviews to administrators, military commanders and tourists who flocked to see Him and take His advice. Early in the afternoon of the 9th, His Holiness left for Ramban and there He worshipped at the Rama Temple. The next day was the <i>ārādhanā</i> of Śrī Vṛddha Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin. In the afternoon, His Holiness left for Srinagar and reached there by about 7:30 p.m.
10.06.1967 to 14.06.1967	Srinagar	On the 11th, accompanied by His followers, He went to visit Sri Shankaracharya temple which is situated on a hill near Srinagar. The temple contains a massive <i>Bāṇaliṅga</i> . He worshipped at the shrine and returned to His camp for <i>bhikṣā</i> . In the afternoon, He proceeded to the Martanda Temple, dedicated to the Sun, which is situated about forty miles away from Srinagar. The next morning was occupied in giving ' <i>Dīkṣa-upadeśa</i> ' to the priest-elect of the Rameswaram Temple, a right which rests exclusively to the Pontiffs of the Sringeri Math. The priest had come from Rameswaram to receive the <i>dīkṣa</i> . During the day, several distinguished Ministers and Officers came to visit and pay their respects to Him. He proceeded to Abhedananda Ashram in the morning (13th), where He addressed a public meeting of the citizens. He delivered an address to the military and civil officers and the public of the town (14th). The same evening He commenced His return journey.
14.06.1967 to 16.06.1967	Jammu, Pathankot, Amritsar	After halting at Jammu for a day, the <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Pathankot at about 6:30 p.m. on the 15th and camped there. Here He worshipped the Pañcamukhī Hanumān. He left for Amritsar on the afternoon of the 16th of June.
16.06.1967 to 17.06.1967	Amristar	Soon after His arrival at Amritsar, His Holiness proceeded to the Sri Laxminarayan Dham Mandir and stayed there. He left Amritsar for Ludhiana the same afternoon.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
17.06.1967 to 20.06.1967	Ludhiana , Karnal and others	At Ludhiana, His Holiness was welcomed and taken to Dandi Swami Tapovan Ashram. The <i>Svāmin</i> welcomed Him with due devotion. The next day being <i>ekādaśī</i> , His Holiness observed silence. The following day, He addressed a vast gathering. His Holiness left Ludhiana for Karnal in the evening, where too, He addressed a vast gathering. The next day He gave His blessings to the Eye and General Hospital run by the Sanatana Dharam Sabha. He left for New Delhi in the evening and reached the city at about 7:00 p.m.
20.06.1967	New Delhi	Sri Kanuru Lakshmana Rao, Minister of Irrigation and Power, was one of the dignitaries who welcomed His Holiness. One of the purposes of the visit to New Delhi was to perform the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the deities Śāradāmbā and Śaṅkara in Sri Shankara Vidya Kendra.
22.06.1967 to 24.06.1967	New Delhi, Haridwar and back	The consecration took place on the 22nd. Thousands of persons including several Ministers, Officers of State and distinguished scholars from all over the city and elsewhere gathered to witness the ceremony. After the ceremony was over, His Holiness addressed the assembly and then proceeded to Haridwar, after performing the <i>Śāradā-candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> in the night (the 23rd). He reached Haridwar late at night. The next day, He opened the newly constructed Sri Sringeri Shankara Math at Bhima Goda Road and returned to Delhi at about 4:30 p.m. The Śaṅkarācārya of Puri, Śrī Nirañjana Deva Tīrtha, called on His Holiness and had a private conversation with Him. After blessing the devotees present, He departed for Hodal.
24.06.1967 to 26.06.1967	Hodel and Alwar	His Holiness reached Hodal at 8:30 p.m. He then visited Alwar and proceeded to Jaipur.
26.06.1967 to 29.06.1967	Jaipur	He left for Jaipur the next afternoon, arriving in that city at about 7 p.m. He was given a rousing reception by the public of Jaipur in the National Institute of Ayurveda. He was then taken to the Gujarat School where He was offered <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> and other ceremonial honours. His Holiness left for Ajmer on the 29th of June.
29.06.1967 to 30.06.1967	Ajmer, Pushkar	After arriving at Ajmer, His Holiness proceeded to Pushkar, a hilly place, and stayed there. The next morning, He proceeded to Pushkar Kshetra. He had a holy bath in the Brahma Pushkar. His Holiness then visited the temple which contains the idol of Rishyashringa made of black stone. The <i>Jagadguru</i> proceeded to Jodhpur in the afternoon.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
30.06.1967 to 03.07.1967	Jodhpur, Bhilwara	He left Jodhpur for Bhilwara (the 2nd). He then proceeded to Chittorgarh the next day and reached there at about 7 p.m.
03.07.1967 to 04.07.1967	Chittorgarh	At Chittorgarh, after crossing the seven massive wooden gates which had been built in the days of Maharana Pratap and Rani Padmini, He reached the Birla Dharamshala on the top of the hillock and stayed there for the night. The next day, He went to bathe in the Pushkarani called Gomukh Kund, where the water flows through a <i>Gomukha</i> or cow's mouth. His Holiness visited the Kali Temple near Padmini's palace and then came down to the fort, where the people of Chittorgarh had assembled to welcome Him. He departed for Udaipur in the afternoon.
04.07.1967 to 06.07.1967	Udaipur	He reached Udaipur in the evening and was accorded a ceremonial welcome with <i>pūrṇa-kumbha</i> . He was escorted by a cavalcade of motorcars and was then taken in procession, seated on a special chariot, accompanied by the leading officials of the State, mounted horses, and caparisoned elephants and camels. Sri Murali Mohan Charan, the Mahant, welcomed His Holiness in the gathering and paid tributes to Him. The <i>Rājamātā</i> of Udaipur and the Mahant offered <i>pāda-kāṇikā</i> to the <i>Jagadguru</i> (the 5th).
-do-	-do-	The next day He went to Sri Eklingji (Ekalingeswara) Temple and personally performed <i>pūjā</i> to Lord Śiva amidst the vociferous rejoicing of the gathered crowd. While at Udaipur, His Holiness gave an audience to Sri Mohanlal Sukhadia, Chief Minister of Rajasthan, and other Ministers, held conversations with several <i>sādhus</i> , spent a few minutes with press correspondents and blessed many of the leading citizens of the place. He left for Dungarpur in the evening and stayed at the Mahant's <i>āśram</i> . En route, He visited the Tribhuvaneswara Mahadeva Tirtha and also the Shamlaji Temple here. He then left for Himmatnagar.
06.07.1967 to 07.07.1967	Himmatnagar	In Himmatnagar, He was taken in procession with royal honours. On the way, He halted at Hajipur and blessed the inhabitants.
07.07.1967 to 12.07.1967	Ahmedabad, Vadodara	At Ahmedabad, His Holiness stayed at Sri Ramanlal Patel's bungalow. On the 10th, the <i>Jagadguru</i> was accorded a reception at Shree Bruhad Gujarat Sanskrit Parishad before a distinguished gathering which included the Governor of Gujarat, Sri Nityanand Kanungo. After visiting other places, His Holiness left Ahmedabad for Vadodara in the evening. En route, He alighted for a few

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		minutes at Dakor where He prayed silently at the shrine of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the presiding deity of that place. At Vadodara, He was received by the Mayor and other dignitaries. He stayed in the palace of the Maharaja. His Holiness was given a reception by the authorities of The Maharaj Sayajirao University of Baroda on the 11th. The Vice-Chancellor welcomed the <i>Jagadguru</i> in the gathering. He went to the factory of Hindustan Tractors Limited on the 12th. In the afternoon, He gave an interview to the <i>Rājamātā</i> of Vadodara and then blessed hundreds of devotees who had gathered to see Him. He left Vadodara at 5 p.m.
12.07.1967 to 14.07.1967	Bharuch, Surat	His Holiness arrived at Bharuch at 7 p.m. He camped at Ashoka Ashrama. In the morning, His Holiness bathed in the Narmadā that flows behind the ashram. He then went to Surat in the afternoon and camped there for two days. At Surat, He was conducted in procession to the Nava Ram Dwara Temple. His Holiness was accorded reception at the Shree Swamy Narayan Temple (14th) by several <i>Mahants</i> . Leaving Surat in the evening, His Holiness proceeded to Dadra.
14.07.1967 to 17.07.1967	Panchavati - Nashik	His Holiness arrived at Dadra. Leaving Dadra on the 15th July, His Holiness and the retinue proceeded towards Nashik. His Holiness reached Nashik at about 10:30 p.m. He performed His night <i>pūjā</i> in the premises of the Sringeri Shankara Math branch at Panchavati. There was a huge crowd at the <i>pūjā</i> and it was well after midnight that the <i>pūjā</i> was over. The 16th of July was the day of <i>Kaṭaka-ravi-saṅkramaṇa</i> . His Holiness had a bath in the Godāvarī at Ramkund. Later, He proceeded to the Nashik General Library which goes by the name of 'Swadhyay Kendra'. His Holiness's name was chiseled in the marble and fixed on the wall of the main hall. The next day, He motored to Triambakeshwar, 18 miles away from Nashik and reached Kushavarta Kund, a holy Theertha. He returned to the temple of Lord Triambakeshwar and performed ' <i>aṣṭottarapūjā</i> ' with silver flowers.
17.07.1967 to 18.07.1967	Nashik	On returning to Nashik, His Holiness was informed that the public of that place were very keen to take Him in procession through the city as they could not do so when He arrived. The <i>Jagadguru</i> agreed and the procession started from the <i>Maṭha</i> premises at about four in the afternoon. It wound its way through the city and ended at Sri Kapaleshwar Mahadev Mandir at Panchavati. His Holiness performed <i>pūjā</i> to Lord Kapāleśvar and then the procession proceeded to Sri Kalaram Temple at Panchavati, halting at the Chettiyar Math on the way. On the 18th afternoon, the <i>Jagadguru</i> left for Kalyan.



## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
18.07.1967	Mumbai	A magnificent reception was accorded to the <i>Jagadguru</i> at the Vishnu Mandir, Kalyan. The next day, His Holiness visited Bhiwandi, Mulund, Bhandup and Ghatkopar and arrived in Mumbai. The stay of His Holiness in Mumbai was a memorable one. An influential and representative Reception Committee was formed with Kulapati Dr. K.M. Munshi, as its Chairman. The institutions included in the Reception Committee numbered more than thirty-five and covered practically every serious minded group in the city. Sri B. Narayanaswamy, Sri S. Ramakrishnan, Sri V. Kumara Krishnan and Sri M. Sundaresan were appointed Joint Organizing Secretaries.
21.07.1967 to 30.09.1967	-do-	The <i>Jagadguru</i> commenced <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> in the Tamil Sangam Hall on Friday, the 21st of July, which ended on the 18th of September. During His stay in Mumbai for the <i>Cāturmāsya</i> and beyond, the <i>Jagadguru's</i> time was fully occupied by the <i>pūjās</i> incidental with the period, by granting interviews to many distinguished persons, in blessing devotees and in giving discourses to huge gatherings of devotees. The Maharaja of Mysore called on the <i>Jagadguru</i> on the 24th and 25th of July. <i>Somavāra-pūjās</i> were conducted by His Holiness on the 7th, the 14th, the 21st, the 28th of August and on the 4th of September. The <i>Varamahālakṣmī-vrata</i> was observed by His Holiness on the 18th of August. The Mumbai Branch of the Shankara Seva Samithi was inaugurated by Dr. K.M. Munshi in the august presence of His Holiness at Tamil Sangam. The 21st Volume of ' <i>Jagadguru Granthamālā</i> ' series was submitted at the lotus feet of His Holiness and subsequently released. The annual 11 day <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was commenced on the 7th, and was concluded on the 17th.
-do-	-do-	The <i>Gaṇapati-vidvat-sadas</i> in Mumbai commenced on the 7th of September, inaugurated by Dr. K.M. Munshi. The Maharaja of Mysore again called on the <i>Jagadguru</i> on the 2nd and the 3rd of September. The <i>Jagadguru</i> continued to camp at Sion Tamil Sangam Hall till the 30th. From there, He visited various suburbs including as Chembur, Matunga, Wadala, Sion, Colaba, Pedder Road, Dadar and Thana. His Holiness was given a grand reception at Matunga Shankara Math (the 24th).
01.10.1967 to 15.10.1967	-do-	The Mumbai Tamil Sangam and the South Indian Bhajan Samaj accorded reception to His Holiness on the 1st of October. The <i>Navarātri</i> of the year was celebrated by His Holiness at the National Kannada Educational Society High School, Sewri, Wadala Estate, from the 4th of October to the 13th, during the last five days of which a <i>Śatacaṇḍī-mahāyajña</i> was also conducted. The function

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		started with the <i>ārādhana</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Candrasekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin (the 2nd). The <i>Śatacaṇḍī-homa</i> commenced on the 8th. The <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> of the <i>Śatacaṇḍī-homa</i> was performed on the 12th.
15.10.1967 to 23.10.1967	Mumbai	His Holiness left Kannada School on the 15th and paid a visit to Matunga Sri Astika Samaj. In the evening, the <i>Jagadguru</i> was given a warm reception at the Mysore Association. That night's <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> was conducted by His Holiness at Gita Govinda Hall. On the evening of the 17th of October, His Holiness shifted His camp to Khar Road. Śrī Cinmayānanda Svāmin had <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness during His stay at this camp. His Holiness visited Bandra on the 19th October and Goregaon on the 20th. The <i>Jagadguru</i> arrived at Andheri Ramnagar Colony on the 21st and stayed there upto the 23rd October. His Holiness had a five day camp starting on the 23rd to 27th October at Chembur at Murugan Society buildings. From Chembur, the <i>Jagadguru</i> visited the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan where He was given a warm reception by Dr. K.M. Munshi.
29.10.1967 to 06.11.1967	-do-	The 51st <i>Vardhantī</i> celebrations of His Holiness Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin was celebrated in a grand style at the National Kannada Educational Society High School building at Wadala Estate. On the 4th of Nov, His Holiness visited Ghatkopar where the night <i>pūjā</i> was conducted. On the 5th, His Holiness accepted the honor offered by Mulund Samaj. On Monday, the 6th, the <i>Jagadguru</i> left Mumbai after a warm send-off given by the people of Mumbai at Bhandup. Although it was a working day, thousands of people had gathered to take leave of His Holiness and to receive His blessings.
06.11.1967 to 13.11.1967	Mumbai to Pune	From Mumbai, His Holiness visited Lonavala. Leaving Lonavala after distributing <i>mantrākṣatā</i> , His Holiness left for Pune the next evening. On the way to Pune, He visited the milk-processing plant at Induri near the village of Talegaon on the 6th. It was nearing sunset when He entered Pune on the 7th. A grand reception was given to His Holiness at the Town Hall. It was one of the most enthusiastic receptions received during His long tour. At the Fort, devotees of the <i>Jagadguru</i> including Sri V.A. Gadgil, Founder of 'Sharada' Sanskrit Patrika, paid their respects to Him and Sri Narayan Ganesh Gore, Mayor of Pune, read an address of welcome. His Holiness was then escorted in a procession led by a caparisoned elephant, through the principal streets of the city to the accompaniment of <i>Vedic</i> chant and <i>bhajans</i> . The procession terminated at Shaniwar Wada Fort.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
13.11.1967 to 21.11.1967	Various places en route to Hyderabad	Departing from Pune, the next important halt was at Hyderabad. En route, His Holiness halted at Khurdwadi, Solapur, Umarga, Humnabad and Bidar. The journey from Pune to Hyderabad took 10 days, between the 13th and 21st of November. He left for Hyderabad on the 21st.
21.11.1967 to 26.11.1967	Hyderabad	At Hyderabad, His Holiness was given a rousing reception by the committee of devotees headed by Sri Brahmananda Reddy, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao, Minister of Health, and others. His Holiness stayed at the Sringeri Math branch at Nallakunta in Hyderabad city. Several institutions in the city offered their respects to His Holiness. The <i>Jagadguru</i> visited the houses of the devotees and blessed them. On the 26th, at a function in Hyderabad, Sri Brahmananda Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, participated and offered his respects to the <i>Jagadguru</i> .
26.11.1967 to 28.11.1967	Hyderabad	His Holiness visited the camp of the Rajaputana Rifles where Colonel Harbans Singh performed <i>pādapūjā</i> . The soldiers joined and sang <i>ārati</i> together. His Holiness spoke to them and said that just as an ascetic abandoned the life of an ordinary householder to foster <i>dharma</i> , so also the soldiers joined the army to maintain righteousness in the land. He illustrated this statement by numerous quotations from the <i>Rāmāyaṇa</i> , the <i>Gīta</i> and other scriptural texts. His Holiness stayed for a day in Raja Limbekar's house at Himayatnagar and left Hyderabad for Suryapet on the 28th.
28.11.1967 to 01.12.1967	Suryapet	Leaving Suryapet, His Holiness arrived at Rajahmundry and started from there on the 1st of December.
01.12.1967 to 08.12.1967	Antarvedi, Annavaram, Visakha- patnam	Leaving Rajmundry, His Holiness proceeded to Antarvedi. At Antarvedi, He was welcomed by Sri Ramalinga Raju, the State Minister of Law. He also laid the foundation stone of Gitamandir on the 2nd. He subsequently visited the famous pilgrimage centre of Annavaram on the same day, where He performed <i>pūjā</i> at the shrine of Lord Śrī Satyanārāyaṇa situated on a hillock. His Holiness visited Visakhapatnam on the 4th, where He was taken in a procession in a palanquin. After visiting Sri Venkateswara Temple built by the Shipping Corporation, He left for Kakinada. His Holiness visited Rama Rao Peta in Kakinada on the 5th and then visited the Sanskrit College in Agiripalli. He then proceeded to Vijayawada.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
08.12.1967	Vijayawada	After a couple of halts the <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Vijayawada on the 8th, and camped at the Shankara Math at the foot of the hill temple of Kanakadurga. He visited Brahmajnana Mandira and Sri Gayathri Ashrama on the 9th. Having visited Guntur, His Holiness returned and stayed at Sri Venkateshwara Swamy Temple campus at Labbipet. He again visited Guntur from where He visited Kunchavaram, Tenali and other places. At Guntur, He paid a visit to Śrī Veda Smārta Pāṭhaśālā and also declared open the Kalyana Mandapa of Sri Rama Nama Kshetram. From Guntur, He also visited Vinukonda.
16.12.1967 to 20.12.1967	Srisailam	His Holiness paid a special visit to Srisailam on the 16th. He was received with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> , to the accompaniment of <i>nādasvara</i> music and <i>Vedic</i> chants and escorted to the Sri Mallikarjuna Temple. After worshipping at the shrines of the God and Goddess, He returned to the Shankara Math. The main purpose of the visit to Srisailam was to install and consecrate the idol of Bhagavatpāda at the Sringeri Math branch. This function took place on the 18th. At Umamaheshwaram, He installed the <i>dhvaja-sthambha</i> and a new <i>Liṅga</i> on the 19th. He visited Rangapur before reaching Mahbubnagar on the 20th.
20.12.1967 to 01.01.1968	Mahbubnagar	Camping for a day at Mahbubnagar and visiting Narayanpet on the 21st and Sindagi on the 22nd, His Holiness travelled to Bijapur on the 23rd. His Holiness then visited Jamkhandi on the 25th and stayed there for a day. Ghataprabha was the next camp. Staying there for two days, His Holiness visited Athani. Then the halts were at Chikodi (the 29th) and Belagavi (the 30th). He left Belagavi on the 1st January 1968.
01.01.1968 to 04.01.1968	Various Places	The <i>Jagadguru</i> camped at Ramdurg for a day. He worshipped at Sri Banashankari Temple at Badami on the 2nd. He visited Nargund on the 3rd and arrived in Dharwad on the 4th.
04.01.1968 to 10.01.1968	Hubballi	After camping at Dharwad for three days, His Holiness visited Haliyal. Then, His Holiness went to Hubballi and stayed there for two days. On the 9th, He visited Gadag.
10.01.1968 to 12.01.1968	Hosepete, Hampi	On the 10th, His Holiness was taken in a grand procession to the Chintamani Math at Hosepete. At Hampi, His Holiness worshipped at the Virupaksha Temple and also visited the <i>Samādhi</i> of Śrī Vidyāraṇya on the 11th. His Holiness then proceeded to Anegundi.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
12.01.1968 to 01.02.1968	Ballary to Shivamogga	Arriving at Ballary, His Holiness camped there for two days. Subsequently, His Holiness reached Anantapur. He visited Sri Lakshminarasimha Swami Temple in the town of Penna Ahobilam on the 15th. Then the <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Uravakonda where He visited the temples of Subrahmaṇya and Āñjaneya. He also visited the temple of Śrī Kodanḍa Rāma at Kalyanadurg. Then He visited Rayadurg. On the 18th, His Holiness arrived at Kudligi. From the 20th to 22nd, His Holiness stayed in Davangere. The next halt was at Ranebennuru. The <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Hangal on the 24th, halting next at Haveri. His Holiness reached Harihar on the 28th and worshipped at the Harihareshwara Temple. His Holiness then visited Malebennur on the 30th and Hirekerur on the 31st. On February 1st, His Holiness reached Shivamogga.
01.02.1968 to 09.02.1968	Lakkavalli, Kadur	At Shivamogga, His Holiness was given a grand reception. On the 4th of February, His Holiness laid the foundation stone for the Sringeri Shankara Math Branch. After camping at Shivamogga for nearly a week, His Holiness visited Lakkavalli and left for Kadur from there on the 8th. From there He proceeded to Arsikere.
09.02.1968 to 15.02.1968	Arsikere, Tiptur, Honnavalli	At Arsikere His Holiness camped for two days. Subsequently, His Holiness travelled to and halted at Tiptur and Honnavalli. He then returned to Tiptur on the 15th.
15.02.1968	Shivaganga	His Holiness visited the newly constructed Subramanya Swamy Temple and the library.
16.02.1968 to 10.03.1968	Bengaluru	From Shivaganga, His Holiness arrived at Yeshwanthpur, Bengaluru. At Yeshwanthpur, the reception committee members along with Minister Sri B.D. Jatti gave a rousing welcome to the <i>Jagadguru</i> . His Holiness stayed in the Shankara Math at Shankarapuram and visited the various localities of Bengaluru and blessed the people. On the 25th, His Holiness conducted the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of Sri Subrahmanya Swamy Temple in Seshadripuram. The <i>Jagadguru</i> performed <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> on the 26th of February. On the 6th of March, His Holiness performed the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the new <i>gopurams</i> above Śrī Śāradāmbā and Śaṅkara shrines at the Shankara Math, Bengaluru. In a reception accorded to the <i>Jagadguru</i> at the Town Hall public function, the Governor of Mysore State, Sri G.S. Pathak, presided over. People thronged the <i>Maṭha</i> on all days and were delighted by the <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness and His devout performance of the <i>pūjās</i> . Sri G.S. Pathak, the Governor of Mysore State, Sri Brahmananda Reddy, the Chief Minister of Andhra

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Ujjain  
Sri Mahakaleshwar Temple*



*Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh,  
Sri Omkareshwar Temple*



*Mathura  
Sri Krishna Janmasthan Temple*



*Ayodhya  
Sri Ram Mandir*



*Badrinath  
Sri Badrinarayana Temple*



*Kedarnath  
Sri Kedareshwara Temple*



*Kathmandu  
Sri Pasupathinath Temple*



*Varanasi  
Sri Viswanath Temple*



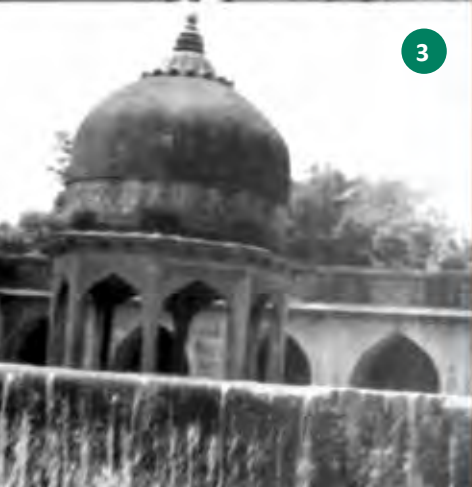
*Kalighat, Kalkata,  
Sri Kali Temple*



*Rishikesh  
Sri Tryambakeshwar Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



1,4. Pūjā at Ujjain - 1966  
2,3. Holy bath in Kṣīprā River - 1966

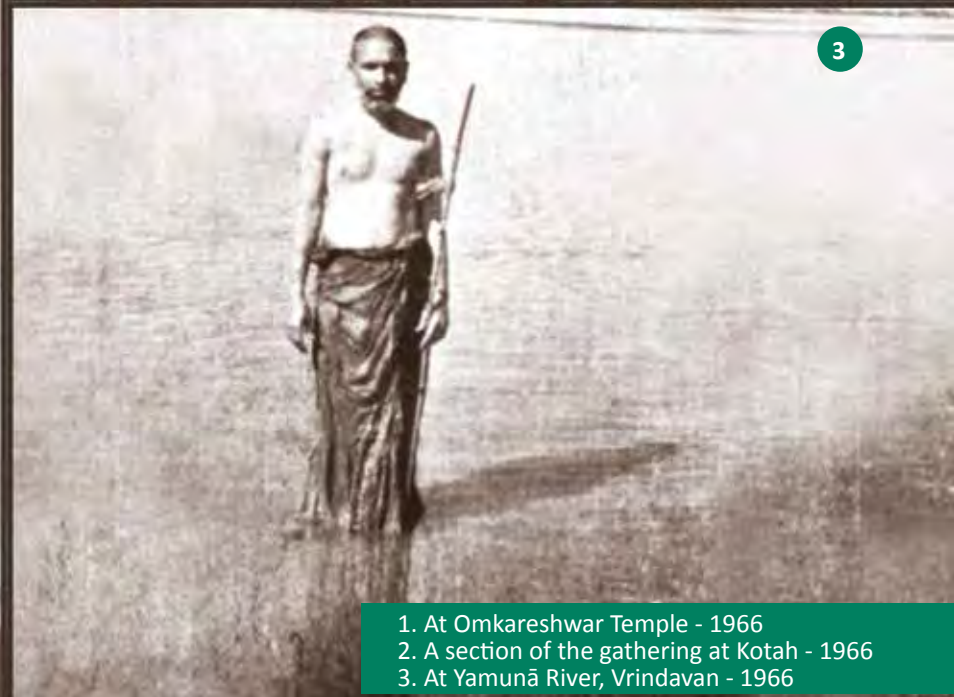
The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



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- 1. At Omkareshwar Temple - 1966
- 2. A section of the gathering at Kotah - 1966
- 3. At Yamunā River, Vrindavan - 1966

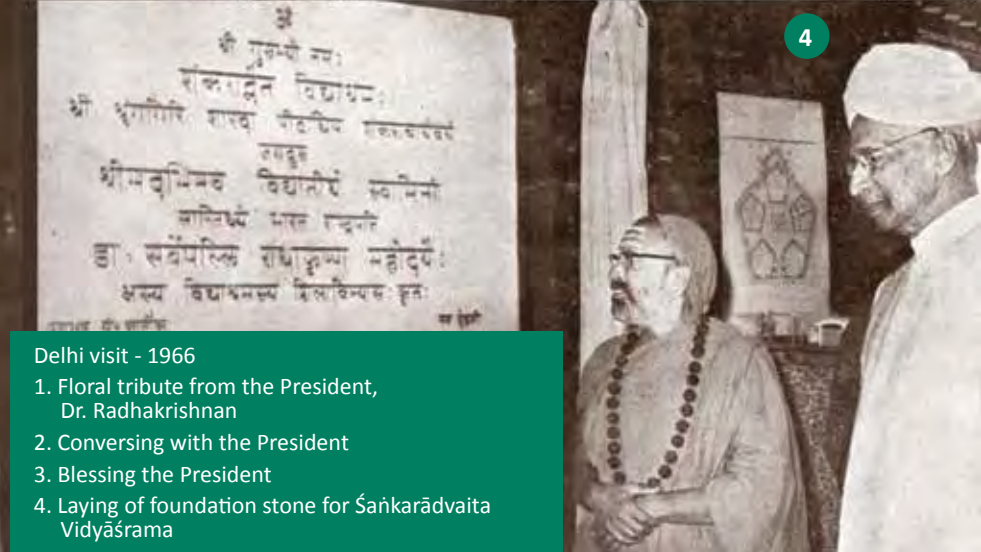
The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68





Delhi visit - 1966  
Reception

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



Delhi visit - 1966

1. Floral tribute from the President, Dr. Radhakrishnan
2. Conversing with the President
3. Blessing the President
4. Laying of foundation stone for Śaṅkarādvaita Vidyāśrama

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



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4

Delhi visit - 1966  
1. With the Prime Minister, Smt.Indira Gandhi  
2. Delivering a benedictory address  
3. Sri A.N. Jha, Lt. Governor, Delhi paying respects  
4. With the President at the *Rudra-yajña*

## The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



Visit to NCAER, Delhi 1966  
1. Arrival at NCAER, Delhi 1966  
2. Watching the IBM Card-punch machine  
3. Examining a computer print-out

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



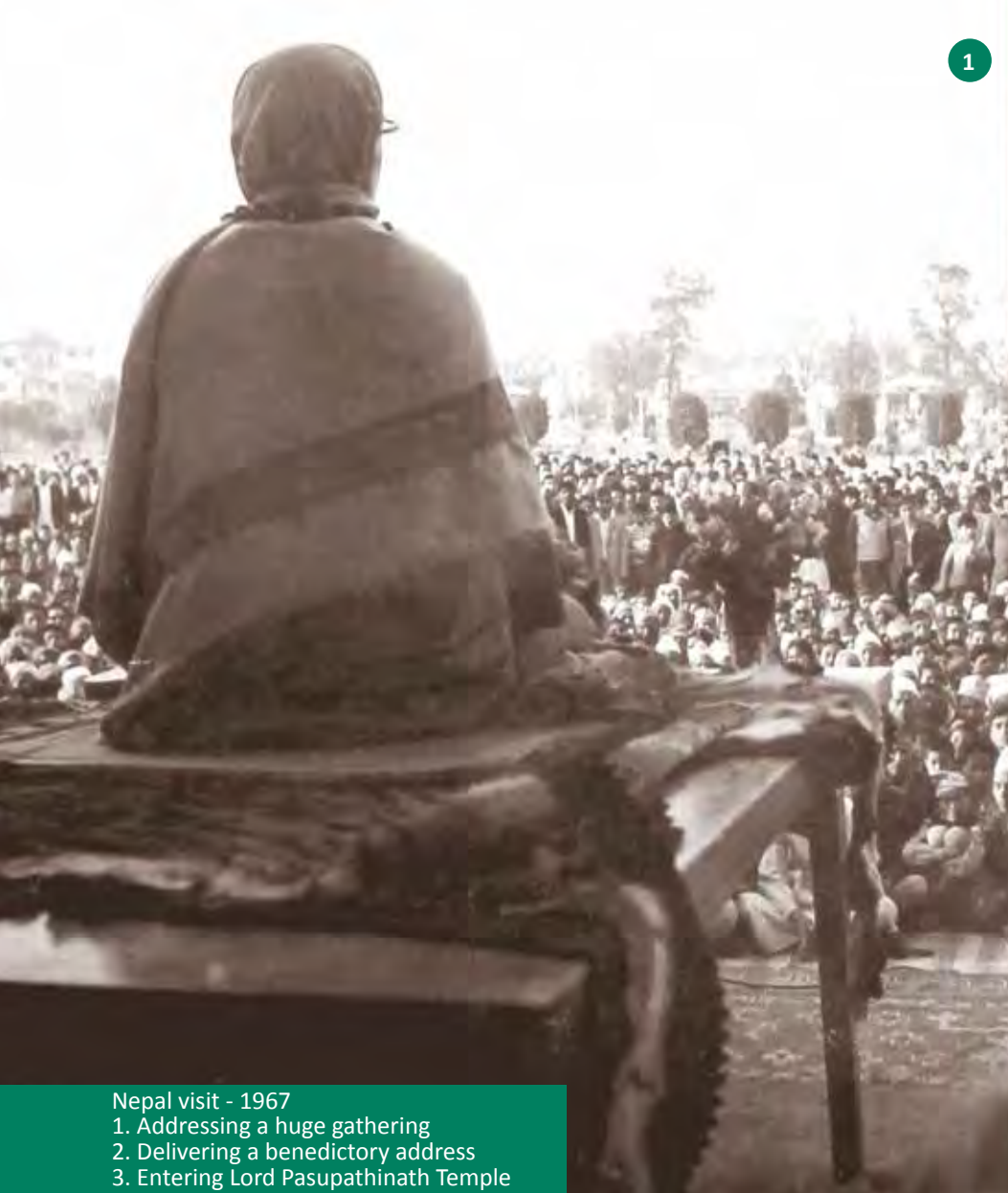
At NCAER, New Delhi - 1966

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



At NCAER, Delhi 1966  
1. Looking at periodicals  
2. With scientists

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



1



2



3

Nepal visit - 1967

1. Addressing a huge gathering
2. Delivering a benedictory address
3. Entering Lord Pasupathinath Temple

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



Nepal visit - 1967  
1. Appreciating a river  
2. At Sri Pasupathinath Temple

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68





1



2

Nepal visit - 1967  
At Kathmandu

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68

1



2



Nepal visit - 1967  
1,2. Blessing the Royal family

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



1



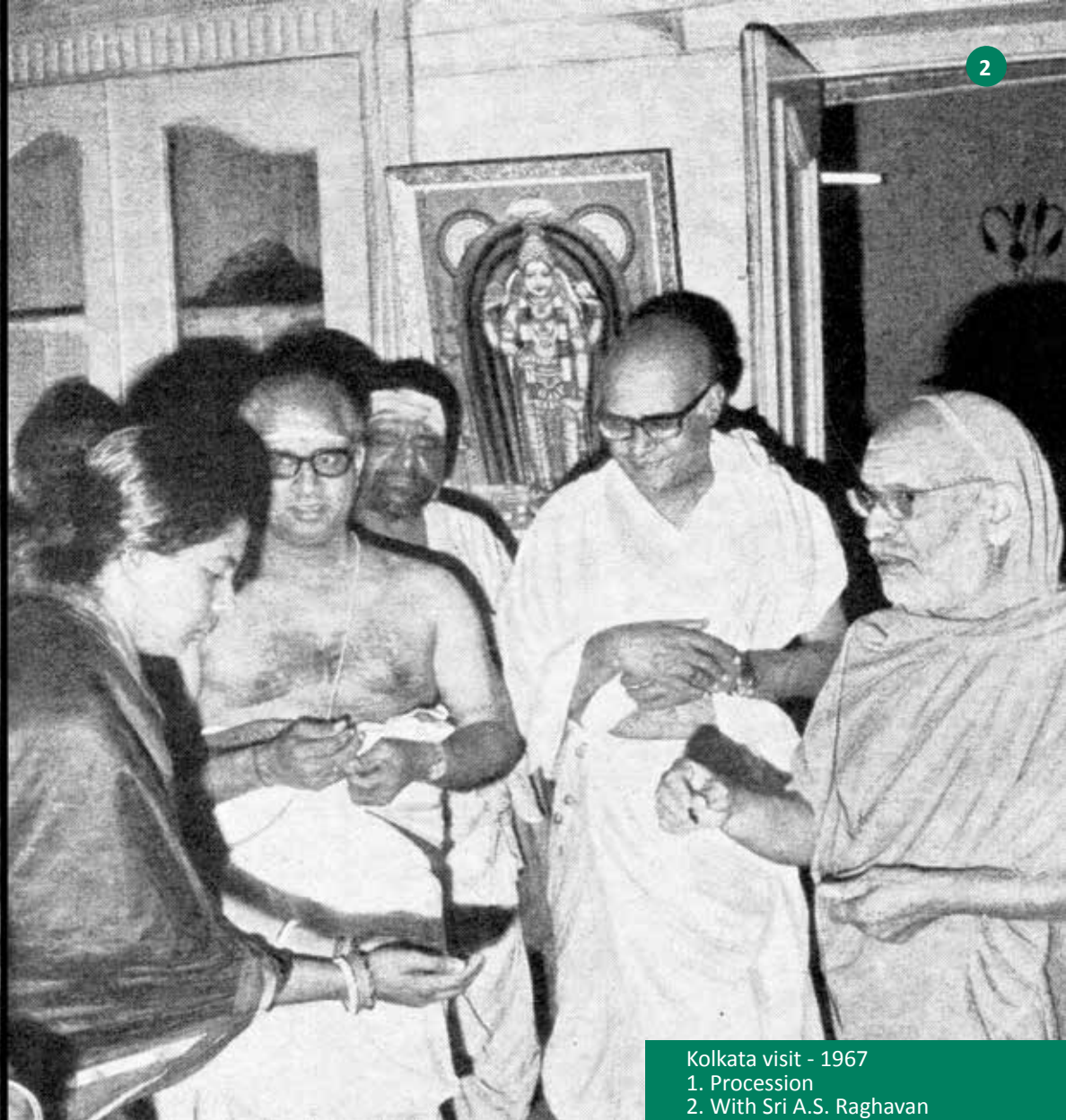
2



3

Nepal visit - 1967  
1. With dignitaries  
2. Audience with the King and Queen of Nepal  
3. With the *Rājaguru* of Nepal

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



Kolkata visit - 1967  
1. Procession  
2. With Sri A.S. Raghavan

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68

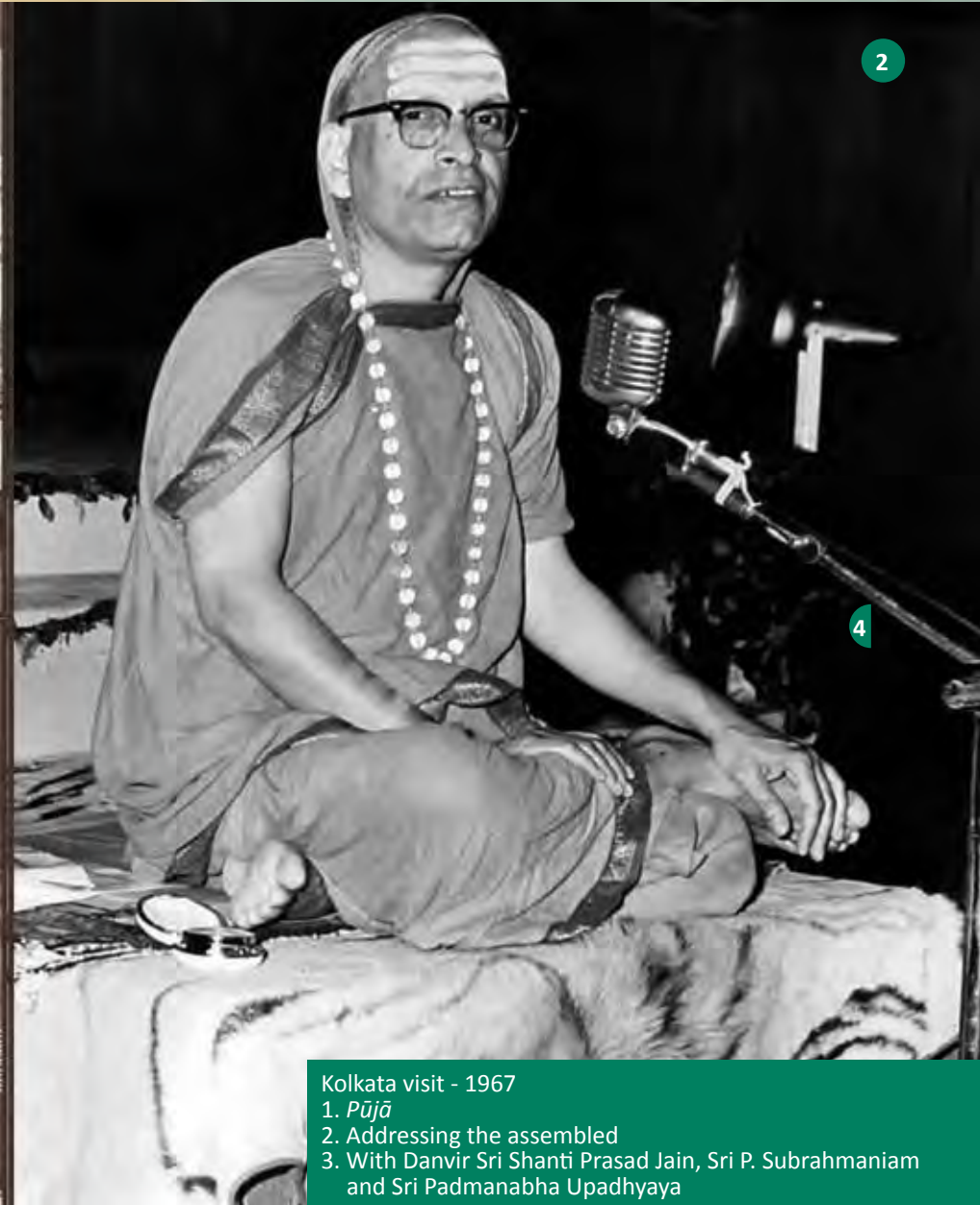


Kolkata visit - 1967

1. Addressing the devotees

2. With the Mahant of Tarakeswar Math

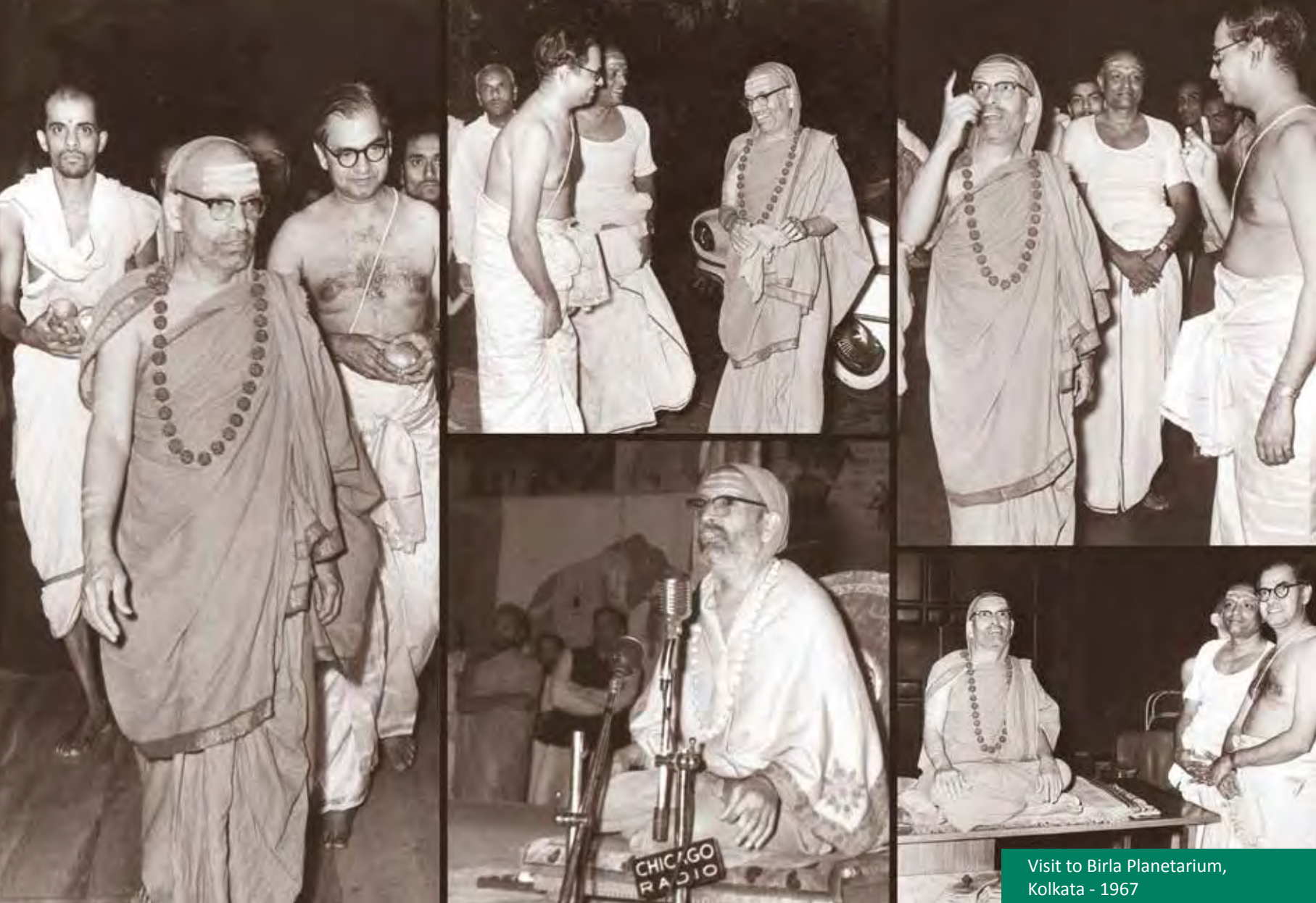
The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



Kolkata visit - 1967

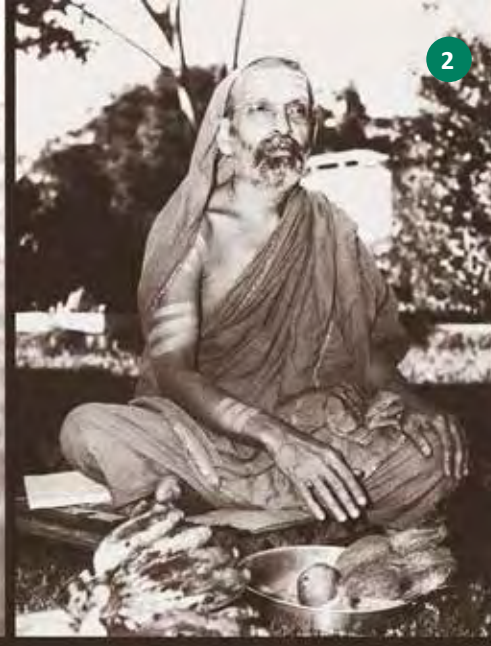
1. *Pūjā*
2. Addressing the assembled
3. With Danvir Sri Shanti Prasad Jain, Sri P. Subrahmaniam and Sri Padmanabha Upadhyaya

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



Visit to Birla Planetarium,  
Kolkata - 1967

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



Varanasi visit - 1967  
1. On the banks of Gaṅgā  
2. *Darśana* to devotees  
3. *Vidvat-sadas*  
4. Holy bath at Gaṅgā

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



Haridwar visit - 1967  
1. Haridwar  
2. *Gaṅgā-pūjā*  
3. A sacred bath at Gaṅgā



The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



Rishikesh visit - 1967  
1. Holy bath at Gaṅgā  
2. With Śrī Cidānanda and other *sādhus*  
3. Rishikesh Sri Tryambakeshwar Temple

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



In the Himalayas - 1967  
1. At Rudraprayag  
2. At Kedarnath with *sādhus*  
3. Kedarnath

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68

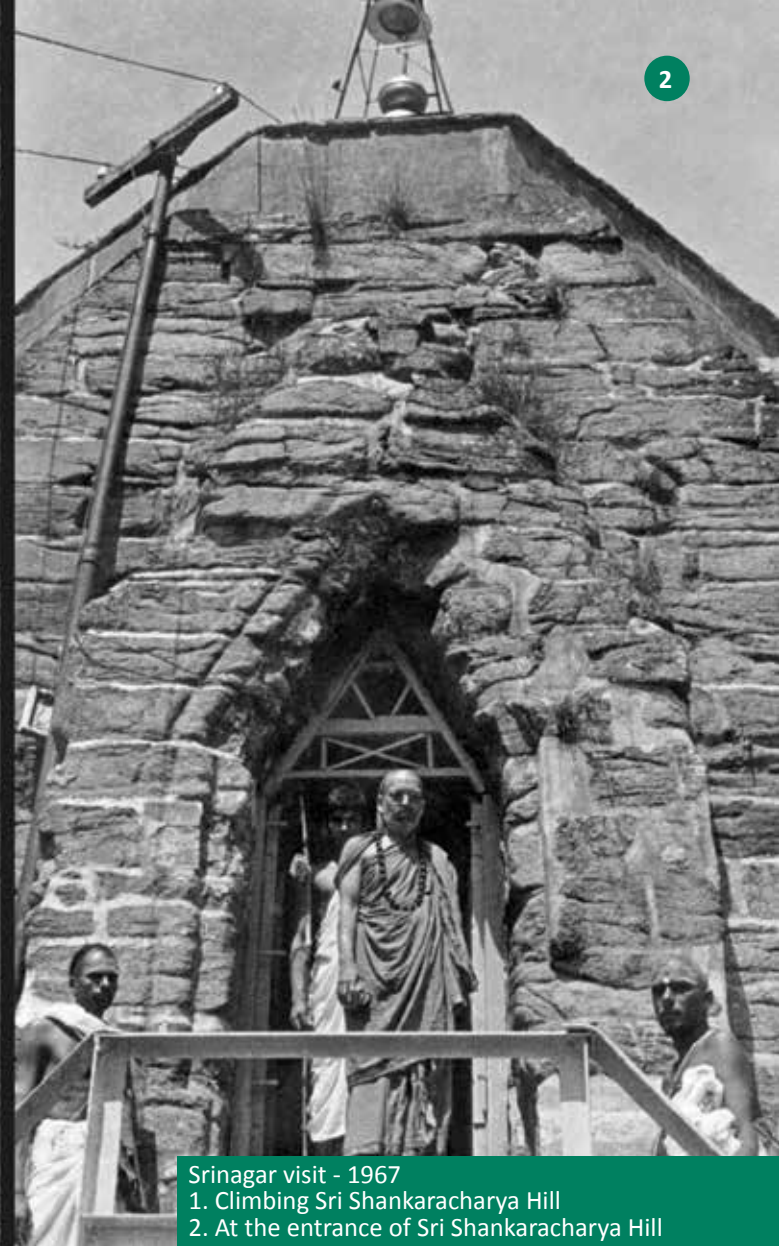


1. At Gauri Kund - 1967  
2. At the Kedarnath Shrine - 1967

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



Badrinath visit - 1967  
1. Badrinath Shrine  
2. At a cave above Badrnath  
3. With devotees



Srinagar visit - 1967  
1. Climbing Sri Shankaracharya Hill  
2. At the entrance of Sri Shankaracharya Hill

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



Srinagar visit - 1967  
1. At the shrine of Jyeṣṭheśvara  
2. At an old Temple on the Kashmir road



Mumbai visit - 1967  
Performing *pūjā* to Goddess Mahālakṣmī

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



1

2



Mumbai visit - 1967  
1. Giving *tīrtha-prasāda*  
2. *Vidvat-sadas*



The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68



1. At Ramkund in Nashik - 1967
2. At Chittorgarh - 1967
3. At Pune - 1967
4. Discourse at Pune - 1967

The 4th Tour (All India) - North India - 1966 - 68

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		Pradesh, Sri R.M. Patil, Sri B.D. Jatti, the Ministers of Mysore State and the Chief Justice of Mysore State were some of the dignitaries who called on the <i>Jagadguru</i> and received His blessings.
10.03.1968 to 15.03.1968	Madduru Mysuru	Leaving Bengaluru and visiting Madduru His Holiness arrived at Mysuru where He stayed for four days.
15.03.1968 to 18.03.1968	Krishnaraja- nagara	Halting at Krishnarajanagara for a day, the <i>Jagadguru</i> proceeded to Hassan for the <i>pratiṣṭhā</i> of Śrī Śāradāmbā and Śrī Śaṅkarabhagavatpāda on the 18th.
18.03.1968 to 22.03.1968	Hassan, Chickmaga- luru, Jayapura, Kigga	Staying at Hassan for a day, His Holiness reached Chickmagaluru, where He stayed for two days. Subsequently, He visited Jayapura. Later worshipping at the Rishyasrungeshwara Temple at Kigga, His Holiness reached Sringeri on the 22nd of March 1968. The public of Sringeri and devotees from many other places assembled at Sringeri and accorded a grand reception to the <i>Jagadguru</i> .
(1968)	(Sringeri)	(His Holiness worshipped at the shrines of Śāradāmbā and Ādi Śaṅkara and other <i>pūrvācāryas</i> . The year's <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> , <i>Navarātri</i> and the 52nd <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness were celebrated at Sringeri. His Holiness observed the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> also at Sringeri.)
		The 5th Tour - Short tour of South India - 1969 (2 months & 16 days)
15.01.1969 to 17.01.1969	Hosanagar, Sirsi	His Holiness commenced His tour on the 15th January to Hosanagar enroute Talakadu and Kargal and reached Karkadi (erstwhile Karanagiri) on the 16th. After duly worshipping at Sri Siddhivinayaka Temple, He proceeded to Sirsi. On the 17th, after the <i>darśana</i> of Marikamba Temple in Sirsi, His Holiness reached Gokarna on 17.01.1969.
17.01.1969 to 19.01.1969	Gokarna	After a holy bath at the sea at Gokarna, His Holiness visited the temples of Śrī Mahābaleśvara, Siddhi Vināyaka and Pārvatī Bhadrakālī and presented bountiful offerings to the deities. On the 19th, His Holiness laid the foundation stone for the new <i>Maṭha</i> , identified the spots for the shrines of Śāradāmbā, the location of the well and the <i>bhajana mandiram</i> and accordingly, gave His directions. Thereafter, His Holiness left for Sagara and reached there by midnight on the 19th of January 1969.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
20.01.1969	Sagara	His Holiness laid the foundation stone for Sagara Shankar Math and duly honoured the Pathasala students and left for Shikaripur. En route to Shikaripur, He visited Sri Venkataramana Swamy Temple and blessed the devotees.
21.01.1969 to 23.01.1969	Shikaripur	His Holiness was accorded a grand welcome at Shikaripur and was led by a procession by Kevalānanda Svāmin. The Maharaja of Mysore, accompanied by his mother, visited His Holiness and had <i>darśana</i> here. On the 23rd, <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> was performed for the shrines of Goddess Śāradāmbā, Śaṅkarācārya and Dattātreya. His Holiness then left for Shivamogga.
24.01.1969 to 26.01.1969	Shivamogga, Kadur, Tiptur	His Holiness stayed at Shivamogga till the 25th. Halting at Kadur (25th), and proceeding from there, He visited the Sri Rama Bajanapala Seva Sangam at Arisikere before reaching Tiptur (26th). His Holiness left Tiptur for Bengaluru on the 27th.
27.01.1969 to 05.02.1969	Bengaluru, Srinivasa- puram Tirupattur, Ranipet	Camp at Bengaluru. His Holiness left Bengaluru on the 3rd to Chennai. En route to Chennai, His Holiness camped at Srinivasapuram, Tirupattur and Ranipet. The <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Chennai on the 5th of February, 1969.
05.02.1969	Chennai	Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin was received at the outskirts of Chennai by a huge assemblage of devotees. His Holiness went to the Ganapati Temple at Raja Annamalai Puram and after worshipping at the temple, His Holiness reached 'Pravachana Mandiram' in the evening.
06.02.1969	-do-	His Holiness visited the T. Nagar branch Math and inaugurated the newly constructed spacious hall there. His Holiness expressed immense pleasure on the construction and blessed all the devotees.
07.02.1969 to 08.02.1969	-do-	His Holiness released the book 'Shankara and His Sharada Peetha in Sringeri' written by Sri K.R. Venkatraman and the book 'Sri Sadguru Prasada' written by Śrī Jñānānanda Bhāratī Svāmin.
09.02.1969 to 10.02.1969	-do-	On the 9th, His Holiness performed the <i>mahākumbhābhiṣeka</i> of Śrī Mahā Gaṇapati, Śrī Śāradāmbā and Śrī Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda at the temple adjoining Pravachana Mandiram, R.A. Puram with His lotus hands and thereafter, offered <i>pūjā</i> at the shrines.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
11.02.1969	Chennai	His Holiness visited Sri Vaishnavi Temple at Thirumullaivoyal and after this <i>darśana</i> , visited the Ashrama of Śrī Mouna Svāmin of Ambattur in the evening. His Holiness released the book of "The Saint of Sringeri in sacred India" and also the ' <i>Kumbhābhīsekam</i> souvenir' in the presence of the Raja Sir Muthiah Chettiar.
11.02.1969 to 15.02.1969	-do-	His Holiness blessed the commencement of <i>Śatacaṇḍī-mahāyajña</i> and <i>Mahārudrayajña</i> on the 11th. The <i>pūrṇāhutis</i> were on the 14th. His Holiness also performed <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> at T. Nagar, Shankara Math on the 15th. During this period, His Holiness also visited the very old Sringeri Math at George Town, North Chennai. On the 14th, His Holiness visited Besant Nagar and had the <i>darśana</i> of Śrī Anantapadmanābha at Adyar. The <i>Jagadguru</i> also visited Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer Memorial Research Foundation. His Holiness visited Ellaiamman Koil at Triplicane. On the 15th His Holiness released a book titled 'Thiruverkadu Sri Karumariammanin Divya Puranam' at Rajeshwari Kalyanamandapam. The function was attended by Raja Sir Muthiah Chettiar, Sri C. Subramaniam, Sri M. Bhakthavathsalam and various other dignitaries.
16.02.1969 to 18.02.1969	Chennai	Camping at the T. Nagar Math, His Holiness released the books 'Sri Chakra Vimarsamu' in Telugu and 'Sringeri Revisited' in English. On the 18th, His Holiness left for Tindivanam.
18.02.1969 to 20.02.1969	Tindivanam, Vriddha- chalam, Trichy	Halting at Tindivanam on the 18th, His Holiness left for Vriddhachalam on the 19th. His Holiness visited Vriddhagireeswarar Temple there. On the evening of the 20th, His Holiness left for Srirangam and, on the way, visited Srimushnam.
20.02.1969 to 22.02.1969	Srirangam, Trichy	His Holiness, on arrival at Srirangam, was received by the Municipal Chairman, Commissioner, other officials and devotees with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> . On the 21st morning, His Holiness visited Thiruverumbur and blessed the staff of the BHEL factory and the residents there. On the 21st evening, His Holiness visited Ponmalai. After visiting Sri Vani Vilas Press, the <i>Jagadguru</i> went to Bikshandar Kovil and Thiruvanaikoil and had <i>darśana</i> at the temples.
22.02.1969 to 24.02.1969	Dindigul, Thenkarai	His Holiness left for Dindigul on the 22nd and, on the way, visited Vaigai Nallur Agraharam, and Manathattai and blessed the devotees. On the evening of the 23rd, His Holiness left for Thenkarai. There, His Holiness visited the newly constructed Shankara Math.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
24.02.1969 to 26.02.1969	Madurai	His Holiness arrived at Madurai on the 24th, halting at Sholavandan and Thuvariman on the way. His Holiness was given a huge reception at the Kalyana Mandapam at Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple. His Holiness performed <i>gāṅgābhiṣeka</i> to Sri Pañcamukha Vināyaka and Vel in Kumarakom Temple, Madurai. During His stay at Madurai, He visited TVS Nagar, Harvey Nagar and Thirunagar. Having camped at Madurai till the 26th evening, His Holiness left for Tirunelveli. En route, He visited the Madras Cements Factory at Thulukkapatti and Gangaikondan village before reaching Tirunelveli on the 26th night.
26.02.1969 to 28.02.1969	Tirunelveli	His Holiness was received with full temple honours outside the Nellaiappar Temple and was led to the Vasanta Mandapam within the temple. On the 27th, His Holiness visited Palamadai village and worshipped at the <i>adhiṣṭhānam</i> of Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣitar. He returned to Tirunelveli and, on the 28th, His Holiness left for Nagerkoil.
28.02.1969	Various places	His Holiness arrived at Vadiveeswaram, Nagerkoil, after halting at Dalapathisamudram and Thiruppathisaram.
01.03.1969 to 04.03.1969	Thiruvananthapuram	His Holiness arrived at Thiruvananthapuram after giving <i>darśana</i> to the devotees at Neyyattinkara. At Thiruvananthapuram, a <i>Mahārudra</i> was performed.
05.03.1969	Ernakulam	His Holiness visited Ernakulam en route to Kalady.
05.03.1969 to 07.03.1969	Kalady	His Holiness reached Kalady on the 5th. From Kalady, His Holiness visited Kochi and Ernakulam. There, His Holiness blessed the Maharaja of Kochi and the devotees and then returned to Kalady.
08.03.1969	Palakkad	His Holiness reached Angamaly and then visited a factory at Thrissur. Later, His Holiness reached Palakkad. En route, the <i>Jagadguru</i> visited Noorani Agraharam. On the 9th, Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Saccidānanda Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin's <i>ārāadhanā</i> was performed. Then, His Holiness reached Shankara Math, Coimbatore via Thathamangalam.
10.03.1969 to 12.03.1969	Coimbatore	At Coimbatore, the <i>Jagadguru</i> visited Technocrat Mr. G.D. Naidu's Polytechnic on his request and gave a benedictory address to the devotees. His Holiness visited Kangeyam en route to Karur.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
13.03.1969	Krishnaraya- puram to Salem	After blessing the devotees at Krishnarayapura, His Holiness visited Mahadhanapuram Vinayakar Temple. From there, His Holiness visited Karur Sringeri Math branch, Nerur Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra's <i>adhiṣṭhānam</i> , Thottiyam, Namakkal Arulmigu Narasimha Swamy Temple, Subramania Swamy Temple and Mudalaipatti Dhandayudhapani Temple. On the same evening, His Holiness reached Salem.
14.03.1969 to 17.03.1969	Salem	His Holiness received a rousing reception at Sri Lakshmi Naryana Perumal Temple at Salem. He visited Sri Sharada Girls Higher Secondary School and Sri Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama. From Salem, His Holiness left for Pugalur on the 17th and on the same evening, His Holiness visited Tiruppur.
18.03.1969 to 21.03.1969	Gobichetti- palayam	The next halt was at Gobichettipalayam. On the 19th of March, His Holiness went to Coimbatore and returned to Gobichettipalayam. On the 20th, His Holiness performed the <i>ārāadhanā</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhārati Mahāsvāmin. From here, the <i>Jagadguru</i> shifted His camp to Nanjanagudu. En route at Sathyamangalam, Muslim Sunni Jamath leader Janab Haji Mohammad Khan paid his respects to Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin. His Holiness invited him to Sringeri.
22.03.1969	Nanjanagudu	The <i>Jagadguru</i> after completing His <i>āhnikā</i> at river Kapilā had <i>darśana</i> of Lord Śrīkaṅṭheśvara and performed <i>arcana</i> with 350 silver coins. After <i>annadāna</i> , His Holiness visited the Dattatreya Temple and Kanakadas Vidya Nilayam. Subsequently He reached Mysuru.
23.03.1969 to 25.03.1969	Mysuru	At Mysuru, His Holiness was received by the Maharaja of Mysore, Govt officials and devotees. The <i>Jagadguru</i> visited the Mysore palace and blessed the Maharaja and his family. On the 24th, His Holiness visited Abhinava Shankaralaya. Later, His Holiness reached Hassan via Krishnarajanagar.
25.03.1969 to 28.03.1969	Hassan	His Holiness performed <i>pūjā</i> at the Shankara Math. The next halt was at Tiptur on the 26th. <i>Rāmanavamī-pūjā</i> was performed there.
29.03.1969 to 31.03.1969	Devanur, Chickmagaluru	En route to Chickmagaluru, the <i>Jagadguru</i> had <i>darśana</i> at Devanur Sri Lakshmikanta Swamy Temple. The <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Sringeri and paid obeisance to Śrī Śāradāmbā and the <i>pūrvācāryas</i> .

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Gokarna  
Sri Mahabaleshwar Temple*



*Mylapore  
Sri Kapaleswarar Temple*



*Thirumullaivayal  
Sri Vaishnavi Temple*



*Nanjanagodu  
Sri Srikanteshwara Swamy Temple*



*Nerur  
Samādhī of Śrī Sadāśīva Brah̄mendra*



*Vriddhachalam  
Sri Vriddagireeswarar Temple*

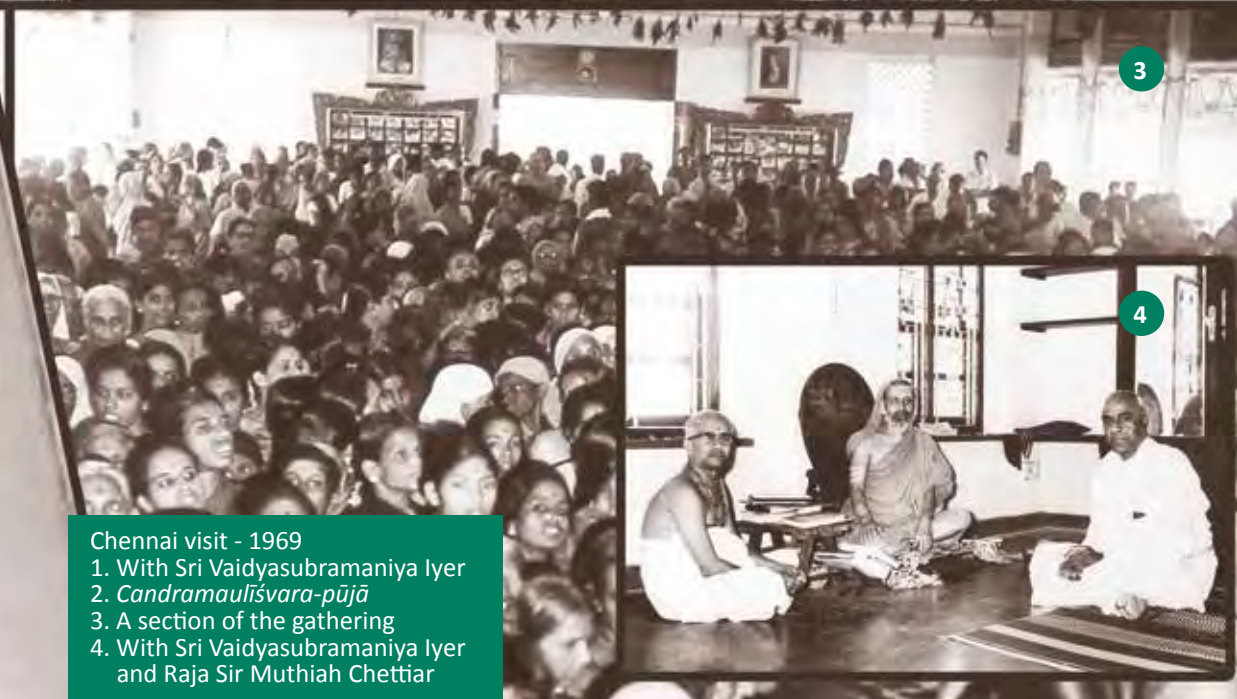


*Srirangam  
Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

The 5th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1969





Chennai visit - 1969  
1. With Sri Vaidyasubramaniya Iyer  
2. *Candramaulīśvara-pūjā*  
3. A section of the gathering  
4. With Sri Vaidyasubramaniya Iyer  
and Raja Sir Muthiah Chettiar

## The 5th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1969



Pravachana Mandiram, Chennai - 1969  
1,2. Kumbhābhiseka in progress  
3. With the Head of Govardhana Peetham

The 5th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1969

Pravachana Mandiram, Chennai - 1969  
*Niraja* for Śrī Gaṇapati



The 5th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1969



Pravachana Mandiram, Chennai - 1969  
1. Worshipping Śrī Ganapati  
2. Consecration of Śrī Bhagavatpāda's image

The 5th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1969



At Sri G.D. Naidu's Polytechnic - Coimbatore 1969

The 5th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1969



At Sri G.D. Naidu's Polytechnic - Coimbatore 1969

## The 5th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1969

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
(1969 & 1970)	(Sringeri)	(The <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> and <i>Navarātri</i> for the year 1969 and the 53rd <i>Vardhantī</i> celebrations of His Holiness were all held at Sringeri. His Holiness observed <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> of that year also at Sringeri. Similarly, the <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> and all the other events for the year 1970 (including the 54th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness) took place at Sringeri itself in the divine presence of His Holiness. An important event of the year 1970 was the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the temple of Śrī Sureśvarācārya at Sringeri on the 10th of May.)
		The 6th Tour - Short tour of South India - 1971 (3 months & 16 days)
15.02.1971 to 22.02.1971	Sringeri to Bengaluru	The <i>Jagadguru</i> started on the 15th of February 1971 from Sringeri and reached Bengaluru on the 22nd of February. On the way, He stayed at several places. At Bengaluru, He was received with great warmth and devotion by thousands of devotees.
22.02.1971 to 01.03.1971	Bengaluru	He inaugurated the <i>utsava</i> of the new silver chariot at Sri Subrahmanya Swamy Temple. At that time, the head of the Shivaganga Math was there along with his disciples. That night His Holiness performed the traditional <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> . Devotees from many places gathered and witnessed the <i>pūjā</i> throughout the night.
01.03.1971	Shivaganga	His Holiness left Bengaluru on the 1st of March for Shivaganga. The Shivaganga <i>Mathādhipati</i> Śrī Sacchidānanda Abhinava Subrahmaṇya Bhāratī and his <i>śiṣya</i> Śrī Viśveśvara Bhāratī offered <i>pādapūjā</i> to His Holiness. The Heads of Hebbur Math and Machilipatnam Gayathri Peetam were also present on the occasion. His Holiness performed <i>Kumbhābhiṣeka</i> and <i>pratiṣṭhā</i> of the new shrines of Dakṣiṇāmūrti, Mahāgaṇapati and Daṇḍapāṇi. After visiting the shrines of Gaṅgādhareśvara and Svarṇāmbikā, He blessed the assembled devotees and left for Bengaluru.
02.03.1971 to 17.03.1971	Bengaluru	The 60th anniversary of the <i>Śrī Bhāratīya-gīrvāṇa-prouḍha-vidhyābhivardhinī-mahāpāṭhaśālā</i> established by the 33rd pontiff of Sringeri, Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin, at Bengaluru Shankara Math was grandly celebrated under the exalted presence of His Holiness between the 6th and 9th of March, 1971. On the evening of the 6th, the Vice-President of India, Dr. S. Gopal Swarup Pathak inaugurated the celebrations with a speech. On the 7th, a <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was held in the morning and in the evening in which scholars from all over the nation participated.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
18.3.1971	Kolar	On the 18th, His Holiness performed the <i>ārāadhanā</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Saccidānanda Bhāratī in Kolar. Visiting Ranipet en route, He reached Chennai on the 19th evening.
19.03.1971 to 22.03.1971	Chennai	His Holiness reached Chennai and was given a grand reception on His arrival. Then, He reached Pravachana Mandiram at Raja Annamalaipuram and stayed there till the 22nd of March.
23.03.1971 to 28.03.1971	Chennai	On the 23rd, He left for the Sringeri Math at T. Nagar and celebrated the <i>jayantī</i> and <i>ārāadhanā</i> of Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin. A <i>Śatacaṇḍī</i> and a <i>Mahārudra-yajña</i> were conducted between the 23rd and the 27th.
29.03.1971 to 03.04.1971	Tirumala	Starting on the 29th, His Holiness reached Tirumala via Arakkonam. The then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Sri Brahmananda Reddy, opened the Kalyana Mandapa of the Sringeri Math at Tirumala, in the august presence of His Holiness.
03.04.1971 to 10.04.1971	Chennai	The <i>Jagadguru</i> returned to Chennai and stayed there for some more time.
10.04.1971	Puducherry	His Holiness left Chennai on the 10th of April for Puducherry. Lt. Governor B.D. Jatti and devotees welcomed Him with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> .
11.04.1971 to 12.04.1971	Chidambaram	The next day, the 11th of April, the <i>Jagadguru</i> left for Chidambaram after visiting the Manakkula Vinayagar Temple. At Chidambaram, He was welcomed by the <i>dīkṣitas</i> of the Nataraja Temple who took Him around all the Shrines of the temple for <i>darśana</i> . He went to the Chidambaram Sabha Sanskrit Dharmavidyalaya.
12.04.1971	Puducherry	His Holiness left for Puducherry on the 12th.
13.04.1971	Srirangam	He reached Srirangam on the 13th, proceeding via Neyveli, visiting many other places on the way. His Holiness was welcomed with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> and other respects by Sri Ramanatha Iyer, <i>dharmādhikārin</i> and others.



## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
13.04.1971 to 15.04.1971	Srirangam & Tiruchirappalli	His Holiness blessed the Koviloor Math Swamin who had come to have His <i>darśana</i> . Then, <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> was performed there. On the 14th, His Holiness went to Gunaseelam at the request of the Renovation Committee members of Sri Prasanna Venkatachalapathi Temple. He went inside the temple and had <i>darśana</i> of the Lord and laid the foundation stone for a new <i>Rājagopura</i> . At the request of many devotees, He visited Thiruverambur Boiler Factory and Kailasapuram and accepted <i>pādapūjā</i> . Thousands of factory workers gathered to behold Him. This took place at Sri Bala Vinayakar Temple where He had performed <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> the previous year.
15.04.1971	Tiruchirappalli to Karur	His Holiness toured via Kambarasampettai, Palur, Allur, Vaigai Nallur Agraharam, Manathattai villages and reached Mahadanapuram where He performed the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the Ishwara Temple. His Holiness blessed Śrī Bhāṣya Svāmin at Mahadanapuram. Then His Holiness left for Karur late in the day. He was welcomed at the Kalyana Pasupatheeswarar Temple. The next day He performed the <i>pratiṣṭhā</i> of Śrī Rājarājeśvarī at the Shankaralaya.
16.04.1971	Salem	On the 16th, His Holiness left Karur for Salem. He was welcomed with customary respects at Sri Lakshmi Narayana Perumal Temple and was taken in procession to the Shankara Math. On the 17th, His Holiness went to Sri Sugavaneswarar Temple. He also visited the nearby 'Skandasramam' and had <i>darśana</i> of Sri Skanda and that of the Aṣṭādaśabhujā Lakṣmī. Śrī Śāntānanda Svāmin called on His Holiness and paid his respects to Him. Then the <i>Jagadguru</i> returned to Salem.
18.04.1971	Erode	His Holiness arrived at Erode on the 18th. Sri K.R. Krishnaswamy Iyer, Sri K. V. Subbaratnam Iyer and many other devotees welcomed His Holiness.
19.04.1971 to 20.04.1971	Gobichetti- palayam	On the 19th of April, the <i>Jagadguru</i> halted at Gobichettipalayam.
20.04.1971 to 24.04.1971	Coimbatore, Ayyalur	His Holiness stayed for two days at Coimbatore and blessed the devotees. At Coimbatore, His Holiness inaugurated the "EVR Periyar Hall" constructed by Sri G.D. Naidu. From Coimbatore, the <i>Jagadguru</i> proceeded to Ayyalur where again He stayed for two days.
24.04.1971	Kalady	On the 24th, His Holiness reached Kalady and celebrated <i>Śāṅkara-jayantī</i> there.

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Tirumala Tirupati  
Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple*



*Chidambaram  
Sri Thillai Natarajar Temple*



*Srirangam  
Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple*

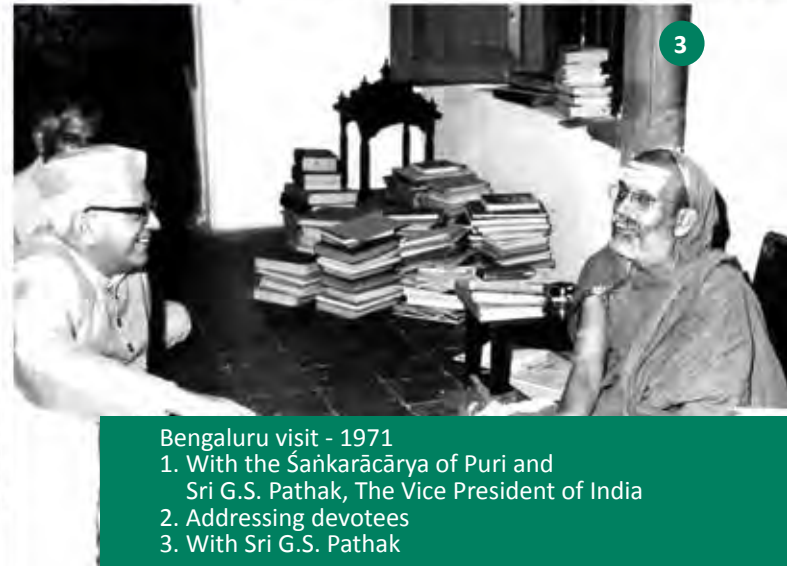


*Gunaseelam  
Sri Prasanna Venkatachalapathi Temple*



Major Temples visited by His Holiness

The 6th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1971



Bengaluru visit - 1971  
1. With the Śaṅkarācārya of Puri and  
Sri G.S. Pathak, The Vice President of India  
2. Addressing devotees  
3. With Sri G.S. Pathak

## The 6th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1971



Sri Hanumanthaiah opening Sankara Research Centre at Kalady - 1971

The 6th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1971

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
14.05.1971 to 22.05.1971	Shikaripur	Between the 14th and the 22nd of May 1971, <i>Atirudra-yajña</i> and <i>Sahasra-modaka-homa</i> were held at Shikaripur in Shivamogga District, Mysore State. <i>Vedic</i> chanting and <i>saptaśatī-pārāyaṇa</i> followed the <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> . His Holiness visited the <i>yāgaśālā</i> and blessed the devotees.
01.06.1971	Arsikere	<i>Pratiṣṭhā</i> of Śrī Rāmacandramūrti at Seetharama Kalyana Mandapam was done by His Holiness. The <i>Jagadguru</i> then reached Sringeri.
(1971)	(Sringeri)	(His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin observed the year's <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> from the 8th of July, 1971. <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations of the year were held at Sringeri in the divine presence of His Holiness. The 55th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was also celebrated in Sringeri.)
(1972)	(Sringeri)	(At the request of the Maharaja of Mysore, an <i>Atirudra</i> and <i>Sahasracandī-yajña</i> as also a <i>koṭi-arcana</i> for Śrī Śāradāmbā were performed at Sringeri on the 18th of February (1972). In accordance with the prayer of the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh Sri Brahmananda Reddy, golden <i>kalaśa</i> was installed on the <i>gopura</i> of Sri Sharadamba Temple. The <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> and <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations took place in Sringeri. His Holiness observed the year's <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> also at Sringeri. The <i>Navarātri</i> of the year and the 56th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness were also celebrated in Sringeri.)
		The 7th Tour - Short trip to Kudli - 1972 (3 days)
09.04.1972 to 11.04.1972	Kudli	On the 9th of April, His Holiness visited Kudli at the invitation of the pontiff of the Kudli Math. In the benign presence of His Holiness, the <i>pattābhiśeka</i> of Śrī Vidyābhinava Nṛsīmha Bhāratī Svāmin was performed with all grandeur. Local municipal dignitaries and other government officials also attended the function. On the 10th of April, a <i>Vidvat-sadas</i> was held where several pundits participated. On the 11th, a <i>pādapūjā</i> and <i>bhikṣāvandana</i> to His Holiness was performed on behalf of the Kudli Math.
(1973)	(Sringeri)	(The <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> of the year was performed by His Holiness at Sringeri on the 3rd of March.)

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		<b>The 8th Tour - Short tour of Karnataka - 1973 (1 month, 17 days)</b>
14.03.1973 to 16.03.1973	Ashwathapura	Leaving Sringeri on the 14th of March, His Holiness arrived at Ashwathapura and camped there for two days and blessed the devotees.
16.03.1973 to 19.03.1973	Mangaluru	The <i>Jagadguru</i> reached Kulai at Mangaluru on the 16th and halted there for three days. His Holiness was offered a traditional reception by the devotees. After staying there for three days, His Holiness left Kulai.
19.03.1973 to 24.03.1973	Kulai, Puttur, Madikere, K R Nagar	From Kulai, His Holiness left for Puttur and after camping there for two days, He proceeded to Madikere and K.R. Nagara and reached Mysuru on the 24th.
24.03.1973 to 27.03.1973	Mysuru	His Holiness reached Mysuru and camped there for three days. A grand welcome was given to His Holiness by the Maharaja of Mysore and the devotees. Later, He arrived at Abhinava Shankaralaya. During the stay at Mysuru, His Holiness worshipped at Sri Chamundeshwari Temple on the hill. The <i>Jagadguru</i> then left for Srirangapatna.
27.03.1973 to 28.03.1973	Srirangapatna	Arriving at Srirangapatna on the 27th from Mysuru, the <i>Jagadguru</i> halted there for a day and blessed the devotees.
28.03.1973 to 29.03.1973	Kengal	The <i>Jagadguru</i> arrived at Kengal on the 28th and then left for Bengaluru on the 29th.
March and April 1973	Bengaluru	His Holiness camped at Bengaluru till the 12th of April. His Holiness returned to Sringeri at the end of April 1973.
(1973)	(Sringeri)	( <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> was celebrated at Sringeri.)
		<b>The 9th Tour - Short trip to Mangaluru and Horanadu -1973 (3 days)</b>
21.05.1973 to	Mangaluru and Horanadu	On the 21st, His Holiness left Sringeri for Mangaluru. On the 22nd, He blessed the silver jubilee celebrations of Padmasali Sangam and on the 23rd, His Holiness gave His blessings for the success

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

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*Mysuru  
Sri Nandi Chamundi Hills*



*Kasaragod  
Malla Durgaparameshwari Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

**The 8th Tour - Short Tour of Karnataka - 1973**



At Puttur - 1973

The 8th Tour - Short Tour of Karnataka - 1973



## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
23.05.1973		of the <i>Sāmrājya-paṭṭābhiṣeka</i> of Sri Annapoorneshwari Temple at Horanadu near Kalasa. Then, the <i>Jagadguru</i> returned to Sringeri.
(1973)	(Sringeri)	(His Holiness was there at Sringeri for the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> , <i>Navarātri</i> and also for the celebrations of His 57th <i>Vardhantī</i> .)
(1974)	(Sringeri)	(His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin celebrated that year's <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> , <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> and <i>Navarātri</i> at Sringeri. He observed the year's <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> also at Sringeri. The important events of this year included a <i>koṭi arcana</i> to Śāradāmbā during March-April. The most significant event of the year was the <i>śiṣya-svikāra</i> by His Holiness. <i>Brahmacārin</i> Sri Sitarama Anjaneyulu was given <i>saṁnyāsa</i> by His Holiness and made the Successor Designate to the <i>Jagadguru</i> under the <i>yogapaṭṭa</i> 'Bhāratī Tīrtha'. The 58 <sup>th</sup> <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was also celebrated in Sringeri.)
		The 10th Tour - Short trip to Shivamogga - 1974 (4 days)
07.12.1974 to 10.12.1974	Shivamogga	At the fervent request of disciples, His Holiness, accompanied by Śrī Sannidhānam, visited Shivamogga on the 7th of December. Both the <i>Jagadgurus</i> returned to Sringeri on the 10th of December.
		The 11th Tour - Short trip to Shivamogga - 1974-75 (16 days)
29.12.1974 to 13.01.1975	Shivamogga	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left Sringeri for Shivamogga on the 29th of December and returned to Sringeri on the 13th of January 1975.
		The 12th Tour - Short tour of Rameswaram - 1975 (1 month & 12 days)
27.01.1975 to 28.01.1975	Hassan	His Holiness Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin accompanied by His Successor Designate <i>Jagadguru</i> Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin, left Sringeri and arrived at Hassan on the 27th of January 1975. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left Hassan in the evening and proceeded to Mysuru.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
28.01.1975 to 30.01.1975	Mysuru	Camp at Mysuru for three days. Then the <i>Jagadgurus</i> went to Sathyamangalam.
30.01.1975 to 31.01.1975	Satyamangalam, Gobichettipalayam	At Sathyamangalam, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were given a grand reception in front of Sri Bannari Amman Temple. They halted at Gobichettipalayam and proceeded to Karur on the 31st.
31.01.1975 to 02.02.1975	Erode, Kodumudi, Thenkarai, Mannadimangalam	Visiting Erode and Kodumudi en route and blessing the disciples, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Karur in the evening of the 31st of January. There, His Holiness performed the <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> along with <i>Śrīcakra-pūjā</i> . Śrī Sannidhānam visited Nerur on the 1st of February and worshipped there. In the evening, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Thenkarai. They made a visit to Mannadimangalam and gave <i>darśana</i> to Śrī Jñānānanda Bhārati who was ailing and hence could not himself go to Thenkarai and pay his respects to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . (Subsequently, Śrī Jñānānanda Bhārati attained <i>mahāsamādhi</i> on the 9th of April, 1975.)
02.02.1975 to 03.02.1975	Manamadurai, Paramakudi, Ramanathapuram	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> made brief halts at Manamadurai and Paramakudi and blessed the devotees before reaching Ramanathapuram in the afternoon around 3 p.m. After having the <i>darśana</i> of Goddess Rājarājeśvarī, His Holiness performed the night <i>pūjā</i> at Sri Ramalinga Vilas Hall in the palace of the Raja of Ramnad. The reception and the stay of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were well taken care of by the Diwan of Ramnad under instructions from the Raja. Staying there for a night, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Rameswaram on the 3rd of February at 8 a.m.
03.02.1975 to 05.02.1975	Rameswaram	His Holiness, along with His Successor Designate, arrived at Mandapam and took a steamer to Rameswaram accompanied by prominent devotees and <i>Maṭha</i> staff. The Raja of Ramnad who was overseeing the activities connected with the consecration of the temple at Rameswaram, received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> at Rameswaram. From there, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> drove down to the main temple. The officials of the <i>Maṭha</i> and the devotees who had assembled there, received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> and other temple honours. His Holiness and Śrī Sannidhānam personally visited the <i>yāgaśālās</i> on the 3rd, as well as on the 4th and supervised the rituals. The Deputy Commissioner of HR & CE, Govt. of Tamilnadu, called on His Holiness and sought His blessings for the successful

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		conduct of the <i>kumbhābhīṣeka</i> . The Raja of Ramnad came with his family and performed <i>pādapūjā</i> and <i>bhikṣāvandana</i> to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> .
05.02.1975 to 07.02.1975	Rameswaram	On the 5th, the <i>kumbhābhīṣekas</i> of the temple towers were conducted in the august presence of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . Subsequently, His Holiness personally performed an elaborate <i>pūjā</i> with His lotus hands at the shrine of Śrī Rāmanātha. This was followed by the worship of His Holiness at the sanctum sanctorum of Goddess Parvatavardhinī and Viśālakṣī. Having blessed the grand event of the <i>kumbhābhīṣeka</i> at Sri Ramanathaswamy Temple, His Holiness and His retinue arrived at Ramanathapuram on the 7th.
07.02.1975 to 10.02.1975	Ramanathapuram and Madurai	His Holiness reached Madurai via Ramanathapuram and conducted the <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> at Somasundaram Colony. On the 9th, accepting the invitation of the temple officials, His Holiness and Śrī Sannidhānam visited Sri Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple. His Holiness offered a silver lamp and silk clothes to the Deities. In the evening, His Holiness delivered an <i>anugraha-bhāṣaṇa</i> at West Adi Veethi. On the evening of the 10th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Rajapalayam.
10.02.1975 to 11.02.1975	Rajapalayam	At Rajapalayam His Holiness was received by Sri P.R. Ramasubrahmaneya Rajha; the <i>pūjā</i> was done in the evening at Gandhi Kalai Mandram. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> paid a visit to Vathirayiruppu during this camp. On the 11th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the Kothanda Rama Swamy Temple and also the residence of Sri P.R. Ramasubrahmaneya Rajha and his relatives. The camp shifted to Tirunelveli in the evening.
11.02.1975 to 19.02.1975	Tirunelveli, and other places	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at the <i>pūjā-maṇḍapa</i> erected on Swamy Sannidhi street and <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> was conducted there in the night. During the camp at Tirunelveli, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Ramayanpatti, Sankar Nagar, Tirunelveli Junction, Perumalpuram, Vannarpettai, Karungulam, Palamadai, Thoothukudi, Gopalamudram and Kalakkad. Having stayed at Tirunelveli for six days, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Kallidaikurchi and, on the way, visited Ariyanayagipuram, Cheranmahadevi, Karukurichi and Veeravanallur.
19.02.1975 to 20.02.1975	Kallidaikurichi, Amba- samudram,	At Kallidaikurichi, Sri K.R. Sundaram Iyer and Sri Iswara Iyer had made elaborate arrangements for the stay of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . The devotees gave a grand reception to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . Leaving Kallidaikurchi, His Holiness and His retinue visited Ambasamudram and Ambur and arrived at

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
	Ambur, Alwarkurichi, Pappankulam	Alwarkurichi where Sri A. Sivasailam and his brother Sri A. Krishnamurthy respectfully received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . Staying there for a day, His Holiness left for Kadayam via Pappankulam.
20.02.1975 to 24.02.1975	Kadayam, Tenkasi, Sengottai	Halting at Kadayam for a day, His Holiness visited Sengottai in the evening, after briefly halting at Tenkasi. The next morning, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Courtallam and were received at the Mouna Swamy Math of the Siddheswari Pitham. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer's house and accepted <i>pādapūjās</i> there. Then the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Sengottai and stayed there for a day. On the way, Sundarapandiapuram and Kizha Puliyur were visited. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Elathur, Krishnapuram, Kadayanallur and Ayikudi and returned to Sengottai in the evening. On the 24th, His Holiness accompanied by Śrī Sannidhānam reached Kollam, briefly halting at and blessing devotees in Puliyarai, Punalur and Kottarakkara.
24.02.1975 to 28.02.1975	Kollam, Alapuzha	From Kollam, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Alapuzha and stayed there for a day. Arriving at Kochi on the 27th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> halted at Thekke Madham. The next destination was Kalady.
28.02.1975 to 06.03.1975	Kalady, Ernakulam	At Kalady, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Sri Shankara College on the 2nd of March. They made a brief visit to Sri Ramakrishna Ashram. On the 4th, <i>Śatacaṇḍī</i> and <i>Mahārudra-yāgas</i> were performed. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> then proceeded to Ernakulam on the 5th and to Thrissur on the 6th.
06.03.1975 to 10.03.1975	Thrissur to Mangaluru	Staying at Thrissur and visiting adjoining places, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Mangaluru, on the 9th of March, and were accorded a grand reception. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> , after successfully completing the tour which was principally meant for the <i>kumbhābhīṣeka</i> of the Rameswaram Temple, returned to Sringeri on the evening of the 10th of March 1975. They proceeded to the temples of Śrī Śāradāmbā and Ādi Śaṅkarācārya and prayed for the welfare of the devotees.
(1975)	(Sringeri)	(His Holiness was there in Sringeri for <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> , <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> , <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> , and <i>Navarātri</i> . During the period, His Holiness, at the request of disciples, decided to build a shrine for Lord Subrahmaṇya at Sringeri and laid the foundation stone for the temple on the 9th of May 1975. On the 5th of June 1975, the <i>Jagadguru</i> laid the foundation stone for a choultry proposed to be constructed by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam at Sringeri.)

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Kalady  
Sharada, Shankara Temples*



*Sathyamangalam  
Bannari Amman Temple*



*Nerur  
Samādhi of Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra*



*Rameswaram  
Sri Ramanathaswamy Temple*



*Madurai  
Sri Meenakshi Amman Temple*



*Tirunelveli  
Sri Nellaippar Swamy Temple*



*Courtallam  
Sri Courtallanathar Swamy Temple*



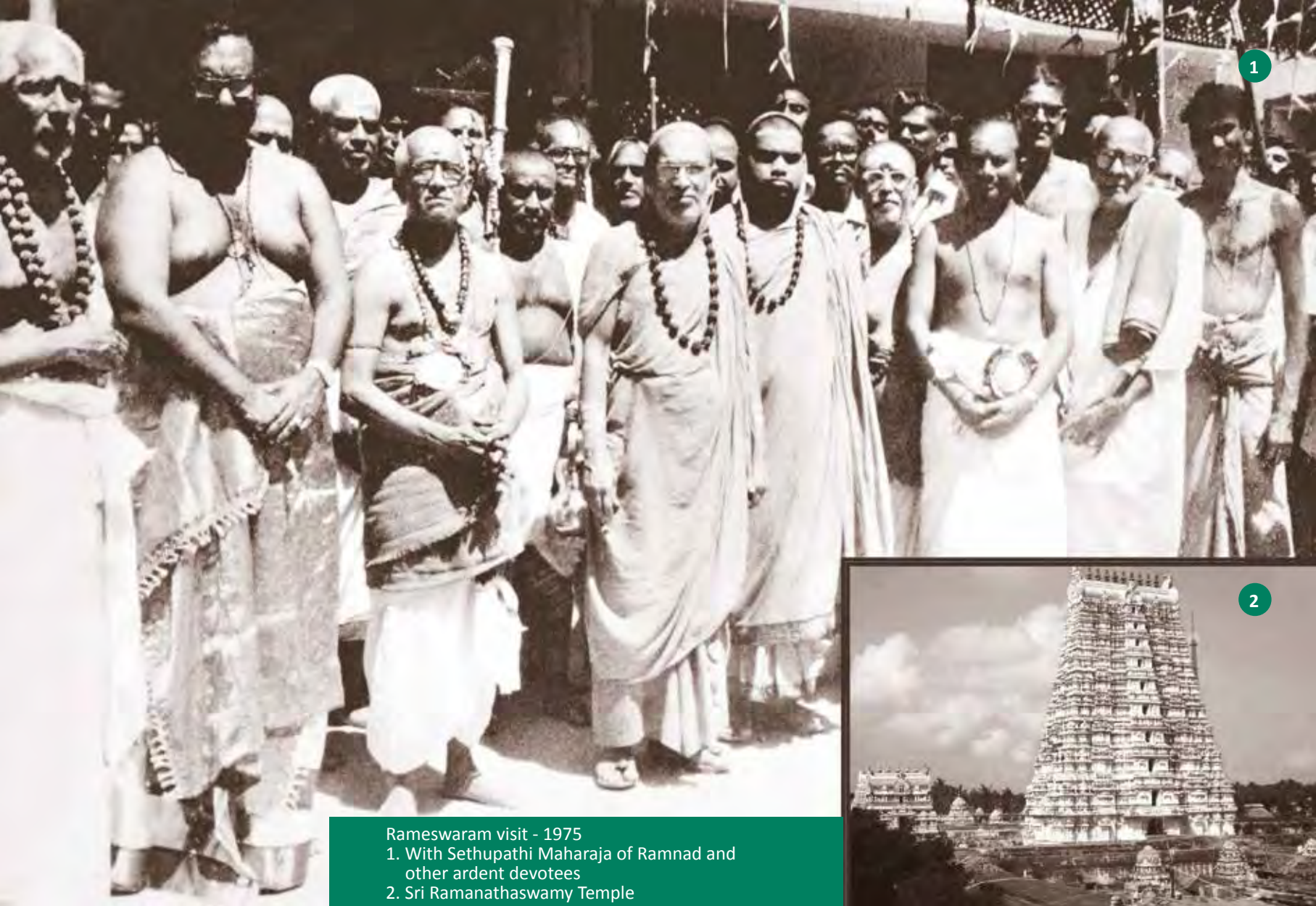
*Tenkasi  
Sri Kasi Viswanathar Temple*



*Thrissur  
Sri Vadakkunnathan Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

The 12th Tour - Short Tour of Rameswaram - 1975



Rameswaram visit - 1975  
1. With Sethupathi Maharaja of Ramnad and other ardent devotees  
2. Sri Ramanathaswamy Temple



## The 12th Tour - Short Tour of Rameswaram - 1975



Rameswaram visit - 1975  
1. With devotees  
2. At the *vimāna* of Sri Ramanathaswamy Temple  
3. *Pūjā* of Sand *Līṅga*

## The 12th Tour - Short Tour of Rameswaram - 1975



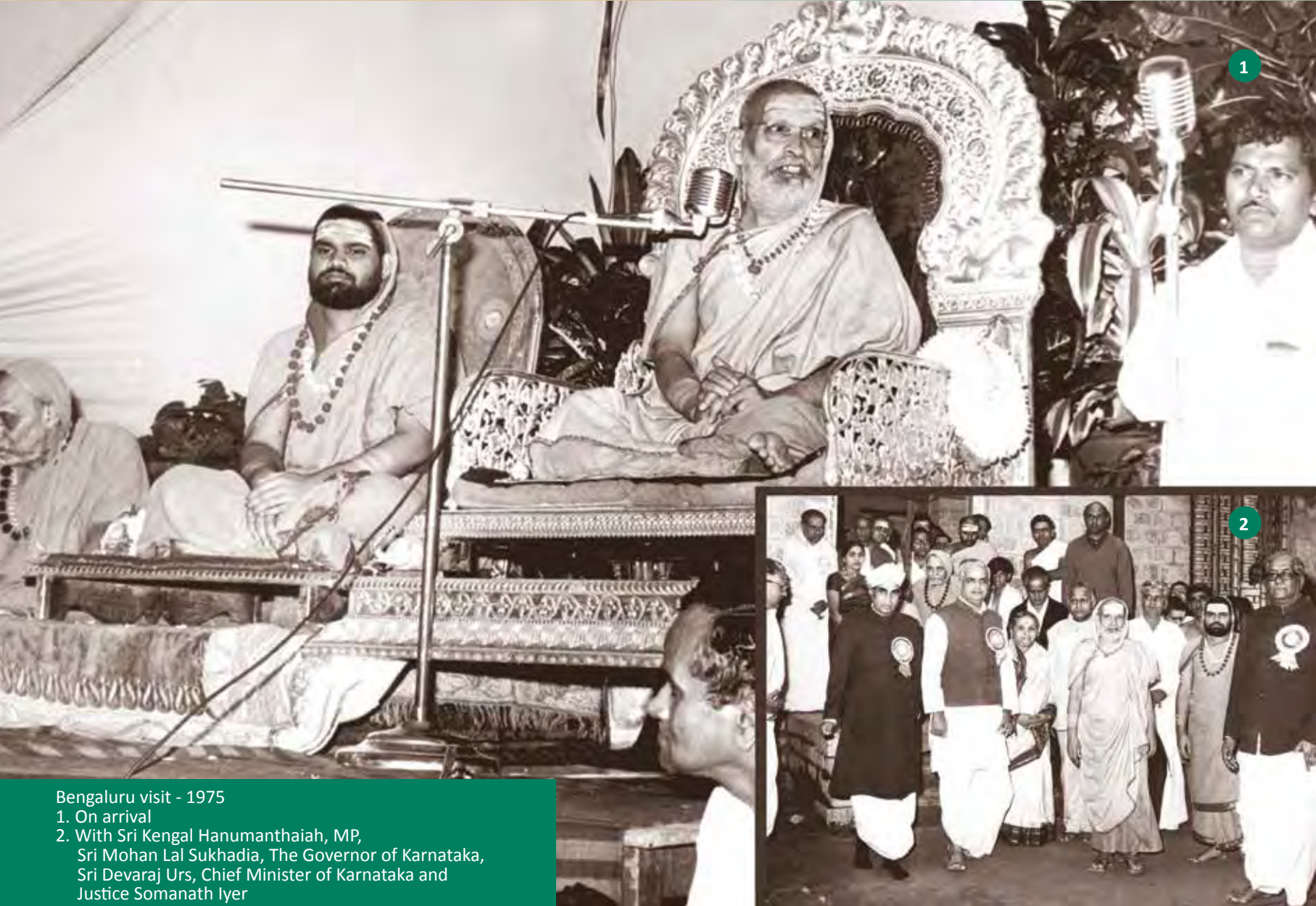
Consecration at Rameswaram Temple

The 12th Tour - Short Tour of Rameswaram - 1975



## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		<b>The 13th Tour - Short tour of Karnataka - 1975 (1 month &amp; 2 days)</b>
22.10.1975 to 26.10.1975	Shivamogga, Tiptur, Bengaluru	His Holiness Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin, accompanied by His Successor Designate, left Sringeri and proceeded to Bengaluru, via Shivamogga and Tiptur, staying for two days in each of these places.
26.10.1975 to 23.11.1975	Bengaluru	His Holiness reached Bengaluru on the 26th of October. On the 31st, a <i>dharma-sammelana</i> was organised, followed by a <i>sāhitya-sammelana</i> on the 1st of November. The 59th <i>Vardhantī</i> celebrations of His Holiness took place at Bengaluru on the 2nd of November 1975. Sri Mohanlal Sukhadia, Governor of Karnataka, Sri D. Devaraj Urs, the Chief Minister of Karnataka, Sri A.R. Somanatha Iyer, Sri M.P.L. Shastry, Sri K. Hanumanthaiah, Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer and Sri K. Suryanarayana Adiga were among those who participated in the function and received the choicest blessings of the <i>Jagadguru</i> . A biography in Tamil of His Holiness 'Srimad Abhinava Vidyatheertha Vijayam' written by Sri K.V. Subbaratnam Iyer was released on the occasion. During the stay at Bengaluru, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the suburbs and blessed the devotees.
23.11.1975	Tumkuru, Hassan, Chickmagaluru, Sringeri	Touring the towns of Tumkuru, Hassan and Chickmagaluru and halting at these places, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Sringeri on the 23rd of November 1975.
		<b>The 14th Tour - Short tour of Karnataka and Goa - 1975-76 (3 months &amp; 6 days)</b>
01.12.1975 to 10.12.1975	Kundapura, Bhatkal and Karwar	Leaving Sringeri, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Goa via Kundapura, Bhatkal, Kumta and Karwar, halting for a day in each of these places.
10.12.1975 to 20.12.1975	Goa	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> toured the Goa state from the 10th till the 20th of December. They stayed at Parthagali Math leaving which they went to Mormugao. Their next halt was at Vasco-da-Gama. Their Holiness reached Panaji from Vasco-da-Gama and stayed there for three days. Their subsequent camps were at Mapusa, Sanquelim, Mardol, and Londa.



Bengaluru visit - 1975

1. On arrival

2. With Sri Kengal Hanumanthaiah, MP,  
Sri Mohan Lal Sukhadia, The Governor of Karnataka,  
Sri Devaraj Urs, Chief Minister of Karnataka and  
Justice Somanath Iyer

The 14th Tour - Short Tour of Karnataka, Goa - 1975-76



Goa visit - 1975

1. Addressing the gathering (Smt. Shashikala Kakodkar, CM, Goa looks on)

2. Reading scripture

3. With the Head of Parthagali Math

The 14th Tour - Short Tour of Karnataka, Goa - 1975-76



A dip in the sea at Gokarna - 1976

The 14th Tour - Short Tour of Karnataka, Goa - 1975-76



The Jagadgurus with Sri S.Y. Krishnaswamy, Sri Subbaramaiya, Sri B.L. Subbaraya Murthy, Sri Bhaskara Rao at Bengaluru - 1976

The 14th Tour - Short Tour of Karnataka, Goa - 1975-76

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
20.12.1975 to 26.12.1975	Londa, Dharwar- Hubballi, Yellapur	After camping at Londa, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Dharwad, Hubballi and Yellapur and reached Ankola. In all the places, the devotees assembled in good numbers and paid their respects to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> .
27.12.1975 to 04.01.1976	Ankola, Gokarna	After reaching Ankola, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Gokarna on the 1st of January 1976 and worshipped at the Mahabaleshwar Temple.
04.01.1976 to 14.01.1976	Various places	Touring the towns of Tumbebeela, Sirsi, Haveri, Ranebennur, Davangere, Chitradurga and Sira, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Bengaluru.
14.01.1976 to 04.03.1976	Bengaluru	On the 12th February, Smt. Indra Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, visited the Shankara Math at Bengaluru along with Sri D. Devaraj Urs, the Chief Minister of Karnataka, and had <i>darśana</i> of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> and received their blessings. On the 29th, a special public meeting was organized under the auspices of the Akhila Bharata Shankara Seva Samiti, presided over by Sri A.R. Somanatha Iyer. Śrī Sannidhānam gave a speech on the occasion. On the 28th, <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> was celebrated by the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . His Holiness did the first <i>yāma-pūjā</i> while the remaining three <i>yāma-pūjās</i> were performed by Śrī Sannidhānam. On the 29th, the reception committee members received <i>mantrākṣatā</i> from the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . They then left for Sondekoppa on the 4th of March.
04.03.1976 to 06.03.1976	Sondekoppa, Arsikere, Sringeri	Halting at Sondekoppa and Ariskere, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Sringeri on the 6th of March, 1976.
		<b>The 15th Tour - Short trip to Mangaluru - 1976 (14 days)</b>
10.03.1976 to 13.03.1976	Manipal, Udupi	Leaving Sringeri on the 10th of March, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Manipal where a palanquin procession took place. At Udupi, they performed the installation of the idol of Goddess Śāradāmbā on the 11th. Received by all the eight <i>Maṭhādhipatis</i> of Udupi, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> had <i>darśana</i> at the Krishna Temple. They then returned to Manipal and proceeded to Dharmasthala.

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

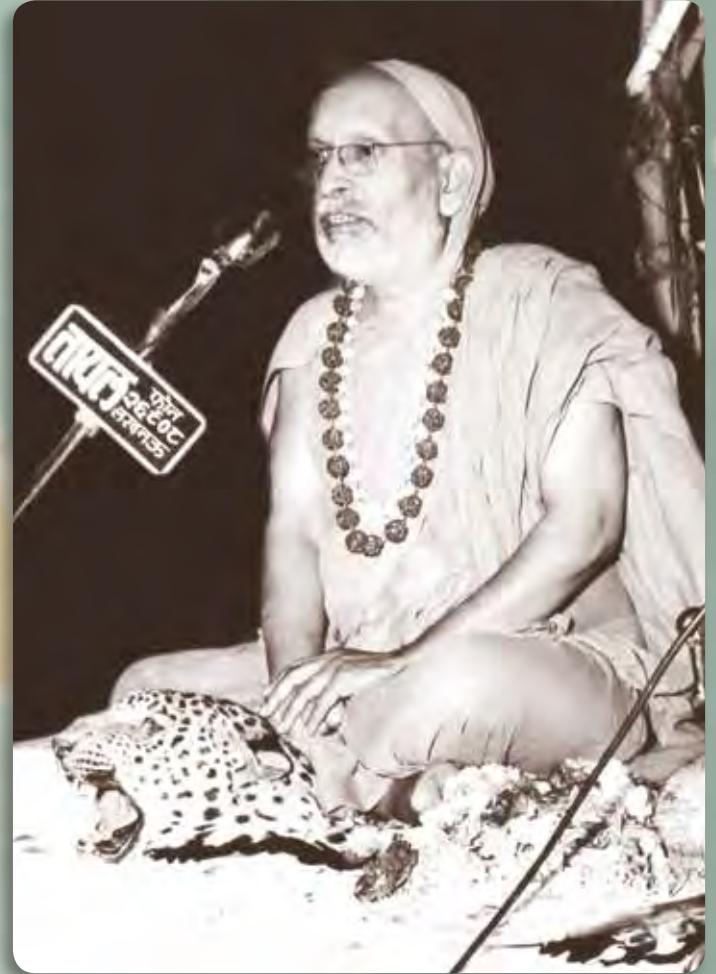
870



*Dharmasthala Sri Manjunatheshwara Temple*



*Kasaragod Malla Durgaparameshwari Temple*



Major Temples visited by His Holiness

**The 15th Tour - Short Trip to Mangaluru - 1976**

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
13.03.1976 to 16.03.1976	Dharmasthala	Reaching Dharmasthala on the 13th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were taken in procession in a palanquin and were given a grand reception. The next day, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> worshipped at the Sri Manjunatheshwara Temple, and were received by Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade, who submitted a 4-foot-tall idol of Śiva, and received the blessings of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> .
16.03.1976 to 19.03.1976	Malla, Surathkal, Kulai	His Holiness Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin along with Śrī Sannidhānam, arrived at Malla from Dharmasthala and worshipped at the Malla Durgaparameshwari Temple, performed special <i>pūjās</i> and installed the idol of Śrī Satyanārāyaṇa. They then proceeded to Surathkal and performed the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of Sri Veerabhadrasamy Temple and left for Kulai where they were given a warm reception by the devotees. Their Holinesses then proceeded to Mangaluru.
19.03.1976 to 23.03.1976	Mangaluru, Sringeri	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Mangaluru on the 19th, and participated in the installation ceremony at Sri Rajalakshmi Temple in Pandeshwar, and also worshipped at the Mangala Devi Temple. The <i>aṣṭabandana</i> and the <i>Mahākumbhābhiṣeka</i> took place in the presence of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . They then left for Sringeri.
24.03.1976	Kigga	The <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the Rishya Shringeshwara Temple at Kigga was performed in the august presence of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> .
(1976)	(Sringeri)	(His Holiness was there in Sringeri for <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> , <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> and <i>Navarātri</i> .)
		<b>The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-1978 (1 year, 2 months &amp; 8 days)</b>
01.11.1976 to 05.11.1976	Chickmagaluru Hassan	Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin started on a pilgrimage to Varanasi along with Śrī Sannidhānam. Leaving Sringeri, His Holiness halted at Chickmagaluru and Hassan and blessed the devotees there. Government officials and public gave a warm reception to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> wherever they halted. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Bengaluru on the evening of the 5th of November.
05.11.1976 to 13.11.1976	Bengaluru	A grand function was organized on the 12th of November at Sri Shankara Math, Bengaluru to celebrate the 60th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness. The Chief Minister of Karnataka, Sri D. Devaraj Urs, participated in the functions and received the blessings of His Holiness. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left Bengaluru on the 13th of November.



## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
13.11.1976 to 22.11.1976	Various Places	After visiting Gauribidanur (the 15th), Hindupur (the 16th), Anantapur (the 18th), Gooty (the 19th), Kurnool (the 21st) and Dornal (the 22nd), the <i>Jagadgurus</i> and the retinue arrived at Srisailam. In all these places, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were given warm receptions by the devotees and grand arrangements were made for their <i>pūjās</i> and stay.
22.11.1976 to 28.11.1976	Srisailam and Umamaheshwaram	At Srisailam, His Holiness along with Śrī Sannidhānam worshipped at the famous Sri Mallikarjuna Temple and camped there for two days. At Umamaheshwaram, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> worshipped Lord Umāmaheśvara. In both these places, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were offered a traditional reception by the temple authorities and devout public. Staying in Umamaheshwaram and Jadcherla for a day each, His Holiness along with Śrī Sannidhānam, reached Hyderabad on the 28th.
28.11.1976 to 10.12.1976	Hyderabad and Secunderabad	Prior to reaching Hyderabad, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were given a rousing reception at Devibaug on the 27th of November. When the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived on the evening of the 28th of November at Hyderabad, a huge crowd of devotees and Government officials accorded a warm welcome. They were conducted in a grand procession in the main streets of Hyderabad with caparisoned elephants leading the procession. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> walked on foot for about 3 kms before they reached the Sringeri Shankar Math, University Road, Nallakunta, where they camped. Thousands of disciples thronged the <i>Maṭha</i> when the <i>Jagadgurus</i> stayed there and received blessings. In Hyderabad, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited and blessed people in many localities such as Rajendra Nagar, Moulali Railway Colony, Andhra Nagar, Sanjeeva Reddy Nagar, Lakshmi Baug and Vijayanagar colony.
-do-	-do-	On the 1st of December, the State Government and Public Sector organizations located at Hyderabad accorded a public reception to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . On the 3rd, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were offered <i>bhikṣāvandana</i> at Swarajya Vihar at Secunderabad. When the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were about to start for Varanasi, a special function was arranged in which Sri Jalagam Vengala Rao, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, participated and received the blessings of His Holiness. The Chief Minister requested His Holiness to consider staying at Hyderabad for a longer duration during His return from Varanasi. The devotees gave an emotional send-off to His Holiness on the 10th of December, the day of His leaving Hyderabad.
10.12.1976 to 06.01.1977	Hyderabad to Nagpur	From Hyderabad, His Holiness along with Śrī Sannidhānam, proceeded towards Maharashtra. Visiting and halting at Yadagirigutta, Warangal, Kaleshwaram, Manthani, Karimnagar, Vemulawada, Dharmapuri, Nirmal, Basar, Kuntala, Abidabad, Yavatmal and Wardha, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		Nagpur. During the various halts, His Holiness worshipped at the shrines of the presiding deities of all the famous temples. A grand reception was accorded to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> at Nagpur, where the stay was from the 28th of December 1976 to the 6th of January 1977.
06.01.1977 to 18.01.1977	Nagpur to Allahabad	Leaving Nagpur, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> travelled through and halted at Hinganghat on the 6th, Ramtek on the 7th, Seoni on the 8th and Lakhnadon on the 9th. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> paid a visit to the famous Ramtek Mandir, while at Ramtek. The Mandir is home to numerous monkeys. His Holiness offered fruits to the simians. The next halt was Paramahamsi Ganga Ashram - Srinagar, Jabalpur District on the 10th, where the <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped for three days. Subsequently, His Holiness along with Śrī Sannidhānam, visited and stayed at Jabalpur on the 14th, Katni on the 15th, Rewa on the 16th, Sohagi on the 17th, before reaching Prayag, Allahabad, on the 18th, where <i>kumbhamelā</i> was being celebrated with close to 15 million people thronging the place.
18.01.1977 to 19.01.1977	Prayag	Though all the vehicles were stopped near the Nami Railway station (12 miles from the site of <i>Kumbhamelā</i> ) according to the order of the local government, special arrangements were made under the instructions of Sri M. Channa Reddy, the Governor of U.P., for the vehicles of His Holiness, to be taken direct to the Sringeri Math at Danranganj, Allahabad. The special features of the <i>Kumbhamelā</i> this time was that the <i>Pīṭhādhipatis</i> of all the four ' <i>Āmnāya Maṭhas</i> ' in India had gathered at <i>Prayāg</i> on the 19th of January 1977. On the sacred <i>mouni-amāvāsyā</i> day, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> had a holy bath at 5 a.m. The Governor of U.P., Sri M. Channa Reddy had a holy bath at the confluence and had <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness.
-do-	-do-	At <i>Prayāg</i> , an interesting incident took place. A pilgrim carrying his aged mother and utensils and groceries required for the food during the journey, had come to <i>Prayāg</i> on foot, at the desire of his mother. He could not afford the cost of travel by any other mode. His Holiness on beholding this devout pilgrim, compassionately enquired about his journey, appreciated his devotion towards his mother and profusely blessed him. In the afternoon, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Vindhychala and stayed the night there. On the morning of the 20th, His Holiness worshipped Goddess Vindhyavāsīnī Devī on the banks of the river Gaṅgā. Subsequently, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Varanasi around 2 p.m. on the 19th.

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Date	Place	Events
20.01.1977 to 24.01.1977	Varanasi	The arrival of His Holiness and Śrī Sannidhānam on the evening of the 20th of January, was a great sight for everybody at Varanasi. They were accorded a warm reception at the Bazaar Street and taken in procession to the place of their halt in the palace of the Maharaja of Kashi. The 24th day of January, <i>Vasanta-pañcamī</i> , was fixed for the installation and <i>kumbhābhīṣeka</i> of Śrī Annapūrṇa Devī. Devotees had come from all over India for the function to be conducted by the <i>Jagadguru</i> of Sringeri.
-do-	-do-	The Mahant in-charge of the temple of Śrī Annapūrṇā Devī, had made all arrangements for the function. The Mahant had been very keen that unless the <i>Jagadguru</i> of Sringeri arrived for the installation, the <i>kumbhābhīṣeka</i> function would not be held. He had waited for more than 4 years for this and had visited Sringeri many times to request the <i>Jagadguru</i> to come to Varanasi. The Mahant was very glad that His Holiness came for the installation. On this occasion, special arrangements for the conduct of <i>Atirudra</i> and <i>Sahasracandī homas</i> had been made under the auspices of the Sringeri Math. <i>Ṛtviks</i> from Karnataka, Andhra and Tamilnadu had also been invited for the holy functions. The arrangements were left in the hands of Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer of Chennai. The function was held over three days.
-do-	-do-	The special <i>yajñas</i> connected with the consecration were going on for three days near the temple of Śrī Annapūrṇā and the <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> was fixed for the 24th morning. The <i>aṣṭabandhana</i> for the deity was completed on the night of the 23rd itself, to avoid delay in the installation on the 24th morning. From the early morning of the 24th, crowds started gathering at Sri Annapurna Temple. As it was the <i>Vasanta-pañcamī</i> day, all felt it very Holy, especially to visit the temple of Śrī Annapūrṇā Devī. The special <i>homa</i> had started early in the morning and <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> was to be done on the arrival of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . The <i>Jagadguru Śaṅkarācārya</i> of Puri, Śrī Nirañjana Deva Tīrtha, had come specially for the function. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received with temple honours. After attending the <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> , the <i>Jagadgurus</i> entered the temple. The installation took place at 9:15 a.m. on the 24th, by Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin, who Himself performed special <i>pūjā</i> to the deity amidst the chanting of the <i>Vedās</i> by <i>Ṛtviks</i> and <i>maṅgala vādya</i> . His Holiness then delivered an <i>anugraha-bhāṣaṇa</i> in Hindi and blessed the devotees.
-do-	-do-	Sri M. Channa Reddy, the Governor of Uttar Pradesh, had also come for the function from Allahabad. Sri Kamalapati Tripathi, the Union Minister of Railways, Sri Hutchmasti Gowda, Minister,

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Date	Place	Events
		Karnataka State, Smt. Shashikala Kakodkar, Chief Minister of Goa, and other prominent disciples from all over India attended the function. Many saints were also present at the temple.
24.01.1977 to 02.02.1977	Varanasi	<i>Koṭi-arcana</i> for Śrī Annapūrṇā Devī commenced on the 25th of January. At the instance of the Mahant, <i>Śatacaṇḍī-homa</i> , <i>Gaṇapati-homa</i> and <i>Mahārudra-homa</i> were performed at the temple premises, from the 24th to the 28th. The <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> of the <i>Sahasraṇḍī-mahāyajña</i> conducted at the camp of the Sringeri <i>Jagadgurus</i> was performed on the 30th, while the <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> of the <i>Atirudra</i> , conducted at the same place, was performed on the 31st.
-do-	-do-	At the invitation of the Maharaja of Kashi, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the Sanga Veda Vidyashala. A <i>vidvat-sadas</i> had been arranged in connection with the visit of His Holiness to Kashi and about 400 scholars from all over India participated in it. On the 31st, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were accorded a special reception at the Benaras Hindu University. On the same day, a <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was conducted in which reputed scholars such as Sri Rajeswara Sastri, Sri Pattabhirama Sastri, Sri Prantiyankarai Subramania Sastri and Sri Kalidasa Mishra participated. <i>Bhikṣā</i> and saffron robe clothes were offered to over 300 <i>saṁnyāsins</i> of Varanasi. Sri Polisetty Sitarama Anjaneyalu had liberally contributed for this as well as the <i>Atirudra</i> and <i>Sahasraṇḍī yajñas</i> .
02.02.1977 to 06.02.1977	-do-	On the 2nd, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> went to Prayag. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> then visited the Uttar Pradesh Tirtha Purohit Mahasabha and were accorded a special reception. More than 1000 <i>Tirtha Purohits</i> and others had assembled at the function. On the 4th, <i>pourṇamī</i> , arrangements had been made to facilitate the <i>Jagadgurus</i> to take a holy bath at the confluence of the three rivers. Later, His Holiness laid the foundation stone of the <i>Pāṭhaśālā</i> , at the premises of Chaturdham Ved Bhavan Nyas. They returned to Varanasi and stayed at the residence of Challa Lakshmana Sastri. On the 5th, His Holiness worshipped Śrī Cintāmaṇi Gaṇeśa at Kedar Ghat and later stayed at the Burdwan Koti. On the evening of the 6th, His Holiness and the retinue left Varanasi for Kolkata.
06.02.1977 to 14.02.1977	Varanasi to Kolkata	Leaving Varanasi, His Holiness and Śrī Sannidhānam, left for Dalmianagar and stayed there for a day. Then, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited and halted at Gaya on the 7th and the 8th, Tilaiya on the 9th, Dhanbad on the 10th, Durgapur on the 11th and reached Tarakeshwar on the 12th. At Tarakeshwar, the camp was for two days. On the 14th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Kolkata.

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Date	Place	Events
14.02.1977 to 05.03.1977	Kolkata, Kharagpur	On arrival at Kolkata, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were given a fitting reception and were conducted in a long procession to the camp venue. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> stayed at Southern Avenue, Kolkata. Daily <i>pūjās</i> were conducted by His Holiness. People thronged in thousands, witnessed the evening <i>pūjā</i> and listened to the lectures of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . On the 16th of February, His Holiness performed the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> . The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited and stayed at Kharagpur for two days.
05.03.1977 to 15.03.1977	Jamshedpur	At Jamshedpur, His Holiness performed the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the Dharmashasta Temple on the 7th. <i>Purohīts</i> from Sringeri conducted the rituals concerned. On the 11th, His Holiness performed the <i>ārādhana</i> of the 31st <i>Pīṭhādhipati</i> , Śrī Abhinava Saccidānanda Bhārati Mahāsvāmin. On the 13th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Gujarat Sanatan Samaj and performed <i>pūjā</i> there. The Śaṅkarācārya of Puri, Śrī Nirañjana Dev Tīrtha, met with His Holiness at Jamshedpur and also participated in the functions. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> returned to Kharagpur on the 14th and Kolkata on the 15th.
15.03.1977 to 30.03.1977	Kolkata	The <i>Vasanta-navarātri</i> and Śrī <i>Rāmanavamī</i> were celebrated at Kolkata. On the 20th, Śrī Mahāsannidhānam inaugurated the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Tamil Mandram at Kolkata. The <i>Vardhanti</i> of Śrī Sannidhānam, Śrī Bhārati Tīrtha Mahāsvāmin, was celebrated on the 26th. His Holiness left for Burdwan on the 30th. Sri P. Subramaniam and other prominent devotees at Kolkata were responsible for organising the camp of His Holiness.
30.03.1977 to 03.04.1977	Burdwan to Patna	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Burdwan on the evening of the 30th. Having camped at Burdwan on the 31st, Sindri on the 1st, Hazaribaug on the 2nd and Nalanda on the 3rd, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Patna.
03.04.1977 to 07.04.1977	Patna to Gorakhpur	Having camped in Patna for two days, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Siwan on the evening of the 5th. After a day's halt at Siwan, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Gorakhpur and camped at Basti on the 7th.
07.04.1977 to 10.04.1977	Gorakhpur to Ayodhya	Leaving Gorakhpur and camping at Basti, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Lucknow. Subsequently, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> stayed at Ayodhya till the evening of the 10th.
10.04.1977 to 12.04.1977	Ayodhya to Lucknow	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Lucknow on the 10th and camped there for two days. From Lucknow they proceeded to Naimisharanya on the 12th.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
12.04.1977 to 16.04.1977	Naimisharanya to Garhmuk- teshwar	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left Naimisharanya on the 13th, having camped there for a day, and reached Garhmukteshwar on the 15th. En route, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped for a day each at Shajahanpur on the 14th and Moradabad on the 15th. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> thereafter proceeded to New Delhi after a day's halt at Garhmukteshwar, on the 16th.
16.04.1977 to 19.04.1977	New Delhi	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached New Delhi on the 16th. At the Paschimi Marg Junction, half a kilometer from the Sringeri Math at Vasanth Vihar, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> and special honours. Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī, the Śaṅkarācārya of Jyotir Math also arrived when the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received.
19.04.1977 to 24.04.1977	New Delhi	During the period from the 19th of April till the 23rd, Śrī Śaṅkara-jayantī was celebrated in a grand manner at the capital and a <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was also inaugurated on the 19th. Sri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the then Union Minister for External Affairs, laid the foundation stone for the library buildings at the Shankara Vidya Kendra in the august presence of His Holiness. Numerous dignitaries, such as Sri Jagjivan Ram, Union Minister of Defence, as also religious leaders like Maharishi Mahesh Yogi called on His Holiness and paid their respects. Sri A.R. Somanatha Iyer, Retd. Chief Justice and former Governor of Karnataka, welcomed the gathering. The Union minister of Education, released the book 'Sri Bhagavadpada Charitram'.
24.04.1977 to 26.04.1977	-do-	His Holiness visited Lord Subrahmanya at the Uttara Swamimalai Temple on the hill near Vasanth Vihar. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Sri Gauri Shankar Mandir opposite to Red Fort in Chandni Chowk on the 26th, along with the <i>Jagadguru</i> of Jyotir Math.
26.04.1977 to 02.05.1977	-do-	After leaving New Delhi, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Haridwar on 27th en route to Meerut. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped at Muzaffarnagar at the request of the devotee, Sri Tandon on the 29th and returned to New Delhi on the 30th. On the 1st of May, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Sri Hanuman Mandir, Ganesh Mandir, Prachin Shiv Mandir, Madrasi School run by D.T.E.A and Swamy Ram Tirath Mission. His Holiness performed <i>Nṛsimha-jayantī-pūjā</i> on the 2nd.
03.05.1977	-do-	When His Holiness was at Bengaluru in 1975, a meeting was held and it was contemplated that the <i>ṣaṣṭyabdapūrti</i> celebrations of His Holiness must commence with the <i>Vardhantī</i> in 1976 and conclude with that in 1977. It was also resolved that the celebration be held at various centres. As

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		part of the wishes of the devotees a grand celebration took place in New Delhi on the 3rd of May 1977, in the divine presence of His Holiness. In a special function at Vigyan Bhavan, Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī Svāmin, the Śaṅkarācārya of Jyotir Math, was also present and spoke highly of His Holiness. Sri Gopala Shastri, Sri Dharma Vira, Former Governor of Karnataka, Sri Justice Khanna of the Supreme court, Pandit Dr. Mandana Mishra and Pandit Dr. Girdhari Lal Goswamy also paid glorious tributes to His Holiness.
05.05.1977	New Delhi	His Holiness performed <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> at the newly built shrines of Sri Adi Sankara, Sri Chandrashekhara and Sri Sharadamba Temples in Vasanth Vihar. His Holiness was to proceed to Delhi from Varanasi but had suddenly changed His route to Kolkata. The delay in His arrival at Delhi had given time for the local committee to complete the temple constructions. Hence, it was possible for His Holiness to conduct the <i>kumbhābhiṣekas</i> of the idols at the newly constructed shrines. Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī, the Pontiff of the Jyotir Math, also took part in the ceremony. He was also present at a function organised at the Gauri Shankar Mandir, which was blessed by His Holiness.
05.05.1977 to 23.05.1977	-do-	During the Delhi camp, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Laxmi Nagar, Sarojini Nagar, Rama Krishna Puram, Roop Nagar, Janakpuri and other places and institutions. They left for Mathura on the 23rd of May.
23.05.1977 to 07.06.1977	Various Places	Touring and halting at Agra, Etawah, Kanpur, Allahabad, Varanasi, Robertsganj, and Dhudinagar the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Jamshedpur on the 7th of June.
07.06.1977 to 29.06.1977	Jamshedpur to Brahmapur	Camping for four days at Jamshedpur, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached and halted at Jamda on the 11th, Rourkela from the 12th to the 14th, Barkote on the 15th, Sambalpur on the 16th and the 17th, Lakit on the 18th, Cuttack on the 19th and the 20th, Bhubaneswar from the 21st to the 23rd, Puri on the 24th, Khurda Road on the 27th and Brahmapur on the 28th. At Puri, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were honoured by the Śaṅkarācārya of the Govardhana Peetham. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the famous temples in all these places. On the 29th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left Brahmapur and reached Srikakulam.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
29.06.1977 to 13.07.1977	Srikakulam to Kothapeta	After the camp at Srikakulam, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited and halted at Vijayanagaram (the 30th of June and the 1st of July), Vishakapatnam (the 3rd), Anakapalle (the 4th), Tuni (the 5th), Somavaram (the 6th), Pithapuram (the 7th and the 8th), Kakinada (the 9th), Ramachandra-puram (the 10th), Koṭipalli (the 11th), Amalapuram (the 12th and the 13th) and blessed the devotees. On the 13th, His Holiness left for Kothapeta.
13.07.1977 to 21.07.1977	Kothapeta to Hyderabad	After visiting Kothapeta, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Aswaraopet, Bhadrachalam, Khammam and Suryapet and reached Hyderabad on the 21st.
21.07.1977 to 28.09.1977	Hyderabad	At Sringeri Shankara Math, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> performed <i>Vyāsa-pūjā</i> on the 30th and observed <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> there.
28.09.1977 to 11.10.1977	Hyderabad To Guntur	After completing <i>Cāturmāsya</i> at Hyderabad, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Kodad on the 28th. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Vijayawada (the 29th) and stayed till the 4th of October. On the 5th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Machilipatnam, Gudivada (the 7th), Tenali (the 8th and the 9th), Repalle (the 10th) and Guntur (the 11th).
11.10.1977 to 20.10.1977	Guntur	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> celebrated the <i>Navarātri-mahotsava</i> at Guntur and blessed the devotees.
20.10.1977 to 29.10.1977	Guntur to Chennai	From Guntur, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Chennai for the <i>ṣaṣṭyabdapūrṭi</i> celebrations of His Holiness. Their Holiness camped at Narasaraopet, Ongole and Nellore before reaching Chennai.
29.10.1977	Chennai	En route to Chennai, on the 29th October 1977, Their Holinesses were received at Sulurpet by senior disciples headed by Sri K.R. Sundaram Iyer, Sri P. R. Sundaram Iyer and others. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received at Red Hills on the outskirts of Chennai and were then taken to the Kapaleeswarar Temple. After having <i>darśana</i> there, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were taken in a grand procession to 'Navasuja' at Raja Annamalaipuram. A special <i>pandal</i> had been erected at 'Navasuja' for the grand celebrations of the <i>ṣaṣṭyabdapūrṭi</i> of His Holiness.



## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
29.10.1977	Chennai	On the evening of the 29th of October, after the <i>dhūli-pādapūjā</i> , welcome addresses were presented, in Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu by Sri Anandathandavapuram Ramdas Iyer, by Sri K.V. Jagannathan and by Sri T. Ramalingeswara Rao respectively.
30.10.1977	-do-	On the 30th, the religious functions connected with the 61st <i>Vardhantī</i> celebrations of His Holiness commenced with <i>Mahā-Gaṇapati-homa</i> . A <i>Navagraha-homa</i> was also performed on that day. The disciples from Madurai and Ramnad Districts performed <i>Sahasranāma-pādapūjā</i> and <i>bhikṣāvandana</i> in the morning and there was a felicitation function in the evening presided over by Sri P.R. Ramasubramaneya Rajha and the functions were inaugurated by Sri Ramanatha Sethupathy of Ramnad.
31.10.1977	-do-	On the 31st of October, <i>Atirudra-mahā-yajña</i> was commenced and it concluded with <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> on the 10th of November. The devotees of Thanjavur District performed <i>Sahasranāma-pādapūjā</i> and offered <i>bhikṣāvandana</i> . There was a felicitation meeting in the evening presided over by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice V. Sethuraman. Anandathandavapuram Sri Ramdas Iyer presented the address and spoke. Sri V. Vaidyasubramania Iyer welcomed the gathering.
01.11.1977	-do-	On the 1st of November, <i>Yajur-samhitha-homa</i> was commenced with <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> performed on the 10th of November. That day belonged to the disciples of Coimbatore. At the felicitation meeting in the evening, Sri K. V. Subbarathnam Iyer of Erode presided. Sri Srinivasan, Member Public Service Commission, Tamil Nadu, delivered the <i>Vardhantī</i> address.
02.11.1977	-do-	On the 2nd of November, the disciples of Tirunelveli paid their respects to the <i>Jagadguru</i> . The evening function was presided over by Hon'ble Mr. Justice B.S. Somasundaram, Retd. Judge of the High Court of Tamil Nadu. Sri K.R. Sundaram Iyer welcomed the gathering and Sri Mi.Pa. Somasundaram of All India Radio delivered the address.
03.11.1977	-do-	The 3rd of November was allotted to the residents of Raja Annamalaipuram and there was a felicitation function in the evening presided over by Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar. Mr. Justice K.S. Venkataraman, Retd. Judge of the High Court of Tamil Nadu and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Mohan delivered speeches. The Deputy Chairman, Tamil Nadu Legislative Council, Tiru Ma, Po. Sivagnanam and Sri Anjan Nambudri from Guruvayur also spoke on the occasion.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
04.11.1977	Chennai	On the 4th of November, it was the turn of the <i>Suvasinis</i> in Chennai to pay their respects to His Holiness. In the evening, there was a felicitation meeting where Smt. Vasumati Ramaswami and Smt. Lakshmi Krishnamurthy spoke. <i>Brahmaśrī</i> T.S. Balakrishna Sastrigal presided over the function.
05.11.1977	-do-	The 5th of November was allotted for the disciples of Bombay. Sri P.R. Subramanyam delivered the address at the function in the evening. The Elaya Rajah of Travancore presided over.
06.11.1977	-do-	On the 6th of November, the disciples of Andhra Pradesh performed <i>Sahasranāma-pādapūjā</i> and <i>bhikṣāvandana</i> . There was a felicitation meeting in the evening presided over by Sri Satchidanandamurthi, Vice Chancellor of Venkateswara University and the address was delivered by Sri T. Ramalingeswara Rao. The Svāmijī of Courtallam Mounaswami Math, Sri B. Rajanna, Chartered Accountant, Sri B.V.S.S. Mani, Sri V. Vaidyasubramania Iyer, Sri J.V. Somayajulu, Sri Kowtha Manohar also spoke. Two Telugu books, 'Thapas Chakravarthy' and 'Sri Sri Chandrasekara Bharathivari Sambashanalu' were also released and submitted to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> by Sri Renganayakalu Chowdhri and Sri V. Vaidyasubramania Iyer.
07.11.1977	-do-	On the 7th of November, the disciples of Tamil Nadu in general offered their respects to His Holiness. Mr. Justice Rama Prasad Rao presided over the evening function, where many dignitaries spoke. Sri K.V. Jagannathan delivered the special address.
08.11.1977	-do-	On the 8th of November, the disciples of Calcutta, Kerala, Delhi and U.P. celebrated the day and the Hon'ble Chief Justice Sri Govindan Nair, Chief Justice of the High Court of Tamil Nadu, presided, Sri P. Subramanyam of Calcutta, Sri Gowrinath Sastry of Calcutta and Pattom Sivaramakrishna Iyer spoke.
09.11.1977	-do-	On the 9th, it was the turn of the disciples of Karnataka and Goa to celebrate the <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness. The felicitation function of the evening was presided over by Smt. Sashikala Kakodkar, Chief Minister of Goa. Shri Venkatarama Sastry of Shivamogga, Sri Vasudevamurthy and others spoke. The <i>Maṭhādhipati</i> of Hariharpur also spoke on the occasion. Sri Anna Subramanya Iyer released the book 'Homa Vidhanam'.
10.11.1977	-do-	On the 10th was the actual day of <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness. At noon, there was the <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> for <i>Sahasracandī</i> , <i>Atirudra-yajñas</i> and the <i>Saṁhita-homa</i> which was attended by more than 25000 devotees. In the evening function, Dr. Chenna Reddy, former Governor of U. P., presided.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		Smt. Sashikala Kakodkar, Chief Minister of Goa, Sri Chokka Rao, Minister from Andhra Pradesh, Sri T.V. Viswanatha Iyer, Kaviyogi Sri Shuddananda Bharathiar, Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, Sri K.R. Sundaram Iyer, Sri S.V. Narasimhan, Sri V. Vaidyasubramania Iyer, Sri S.Y. Krishnaswamy Iyer and Sri M.P.L. Sastri spoke on the occasion.
10.11.1977	Chennai	On the same day, a golden <i>mālā</i> containing the inscription of ' <i>Namaḥ Śivāya</i> ' on each coin, and on the reverse of each coin containing the inscription of the services rendered and blessings conferred by His Holiness to the disciples, was submitted on behalf of the committee by the Chairman Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, and it was adorned on His Holiness by Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer. On the same day, gold coins each containing the inscription of the 61st <i>Vardhantī</i> on one side and a lotus with <i>Pādukā</i> on the other side were submitted at the Lotus Feet of His Holiness by Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer and his wife Smt. Narayani Ammal. The <i>Maṭhādhīpatis</i> of the Sivaganga Math and Hariharpur Math submitted their offerings. Sri Ramappiah of Sringeri read an address in Kannada and submitted offerings on behalf of <i>Vardhantī</i> Celebration Committee of Sringeri.
-do-	-do-	His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore and Her Highness the Maharani and members of their family had <i>darśana</i> of Their Holinesses. Śrī Sannidhānam released the book ' <i>Abhinava-vidyātīrtha-yaśobhūṣaṇam</i> ' and submitted the same to His Holiness.
11.11.1977	-do-	On the 11th of November, Ved Bhagwan Sthapana was done by Sri Govind Narain, the Governor of Karnataka, with the blessings of His Holiness. Sri Prabhudas Patwari, Governor of Tamilnadu, presided. On the same day, the Sarva Shakha Sammelan was inaugurated by Sri V.V. Giri, former President of India.
13.11.1977 to 25.12.1977	-do-	On the 13th of November, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Kanchipuram and had the <i>darśana</i> of Goddess Kāmākṣī. Subsequently, His Holiness, along with Śrī Sannidhānam, visited Tirupati and had <i>darśana</i> of Lord Venkatācalapati at Tirumala hills. A <i>vidvat-sadas</i> had been arranged by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam which His Holiness presided over. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> then returned to Chennai.
-do-	-do-	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> , during Their stay at Chennai, camped for a few days at the T. Nagar Shankara Math. An <i>anugraha-bhāṣaṇa</i> was delivered by the <i>Jagadgurus</i> on the 11th of December. They also visited and camped at many places in the city including, Shankara Gurukulam in Abhirampuram, Krupashankari Street and Ayodhya Mandapam at West Mambalam (from the 14th to the 17th),

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		Rathnagiriswarar Temple in Besant Nagar, Ananta Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Adyar, Kalyan Nagar Association in Mandaveli, Siva-Vishnu Temple in T. Nagar and Asthika Samajam in Alwarpet, and Nanganallur. In most of the places the <i>Jagadgurus</i> gave benedictory discourses and performed <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> .
13.11.1977 to 25.12.1977	Chennai	On the 17th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Ayanpuram, at the invitation of the members of Sri Sringeri Sharada Samithi. Sri A.V. Sugavaneswaran read the welcome address in Sanskrit. Sri H.K. Manjunath performed <i>dhūli-pādapūjā</i> . The <i>Jagadgurus</i> stayed at the residence of Sri V.S. Krishnan. Next morning, <i>dhanur-māsa-pūjā</i> was performed at this camp site. His Holiness visited Jawahar Nagar the next day and blessed all the devotees. The next camp was at Subramania Iyer Kalyana Mandapam in Triplicane. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> also visited the branch Math at George Town on the 20th of December and performed <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> and graced the hundreds of devotees assembled there.
-do-	-do-	Granting the wishes of the residents of Jawahar Nagar, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> graced the place with a visit and delivered an <i>anugraha-bhāṣaṇa</i> . After blessing the devotees the <i>Jagadgurus</i> returned. The disciples of Chennai vied with each other in inviting the <i>Jagadgurus</i> to their houses. Many such visits were made. An important feature to be noted is that the storm and cyclone which had been threatening Chennai before the arrival of His Holiness at Chennai had disappeared fully and the weather was fine on all the days, thanks to the blessings of His Holiness. After visiting the Kasi Vishwanatha Temple constructed by Sri N.S. Sethuraman, near St. Thomas Mount, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> , left Chennai on the 25th of December.
25.12.1977 to 27.12.1977	Chennai to Bengaluru	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> , after leaving Chennai, visited Ranipet (the 25th), Kolar Gold Fields (the 26th) and reached Bengaluru (the 27th) and blessed the devotees who had come to pay their respects.
27.12.1977 to 07.01.1978	Bengaluru to Sringeri	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped for four days at the Shankara Math, Bengaluru. Travelling from Bengaluru, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> halted at Tiptur on the 1st January, Hassan (the 2nd to the 4th), Chickmagaluru (the 4th to the 6th), Shivamogga (the 7th) and reached Sringeri on the same evening.
02.03.1978 to 04.03.1978	Ashwathapura	His Holiness performed <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> at Sri Sitarama Temple. <i>Mahārudra</i> and <i>Śatacaṇḍī-yajña</i> were performed in the presence of His Holiness. There was a <i>vidvat-sadas</i> in the evening presided over by the <i>Jagadguru</i> . His Holiness visited Durvasapura on the 3rd and returned to Ashwathapura.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		At Ashwathapura, the Jagadurus were taken in a grand procession in a palanquin. They then returned to Sringeri on the 4th.
(1978)	(Sringeri)	( <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> was celebrated at Sringeri on the 7th of March.)
11.03.1978 to 18.03.1978	Karwar	Starting from Sringeri, His Holiness visited and halted at Shivamogga, Banavasi, Yellapur and Ankola, before reaching Karwar. At Banavasi, His Holiness performed special <i>pūjā</i> to Śrī Madhukeśvara. His Holiness arrived at Karwar on the 15th. The next day, His Holiness performed the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> for the idols of Śrī Vināyaka, Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Sāradāmbā at the newly constructed Shankara Math.
18.03.1978 to 23.03.1978	Gokarna	On the 18th, His Holiness visited Gokarna, and was received by the Chairman of the Karnataka Bank. The next day, after a holy bath in the sea, His Holiness performed <i>pūjās</i> to Lord Vināyaka and also to the <i>Ātma-liṅga</i> of Mahābaleśvara. Leaving Gokarna on the 20th of March, His Holiness halted at Sagara and then on the next day, left for Shivamogga for a two-day stay there at the Sringeri Math. The <i>Jagadguru</i> left Shivamogga on the 23rd for Sringeri.
(1978)	(Sringeri)	(At Sringeri, on the 13th of April, Śrī Mahāsannidhānam presided over a function to release the first issue of Tattvaloka – a bi-monthly magazine on <i>Vedānta</i> published by Sri Abhinava Vidyatheertha Educational Trust. The Chief Minister of Karnataka, Sri D. Devaraj Urs and Sri K.H. Srinivas, Minister of State for Information, Govt. of Karnataka, and the other ministers participated in the function. From the 8th to the 16th of April, <i>Śrī Rāmanavamī</i> was celebrated by the <i>Jagadguru</i> at Sringeri during the period of <i>Vasanta-navarātri</i> .)
-do-	-do-	(The newly constructed Sri Balasubrahmanya Temple on the northern bank of the Tuṅgā, was consecrated by His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam on the 17th of April. A vast concourse of devotees from all over India, had assembled to witness the memorable event.)
-do-	-do-	(Śrī Mahāsannidhānam conducted that year's <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī Mahotsava</i> at Sringeri for five days from the 8th to the 12th of May, with special <i>abhiṣekas</i> , <i>pūjā</i> and <i>prasthānatraya-bhāṣya-pārāyaṇa</i> at the shrine of Bhagavadpāda. A <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was presided over by His Holiness. The <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> and <i>Vyāsa-pūjā</i> of that year were conducted at Sringeri.)

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Srisailem  
Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple*



*Varanasi  
Sri Viswanath Temple*



*Kolkata  
Tarakeshwar Taraknath Temple*



*Ayodhya  
Sri Ram Mandir*



*Bhadrachalam  
Sri Sita Ramachandra Swamy Temple*



*Mylapore  
Sri Kapaleeswarar Temple*



*New Delhi,  
Malai Mandir Sri Subramania Temple*



*Gokarna  
Sri Mahabaleshwar Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



*Pūjā* for Śrī Śaradā, Chikmagaluru - 1976

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



At Ramtek 1977

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78





*Śrī-Annapūrṇā-pratiṣṭhā*  
at Varanasi - 1977

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



*Śrī-Annāpūrṇā-pratiṣṭhā*  
at Varanasi - 1977

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



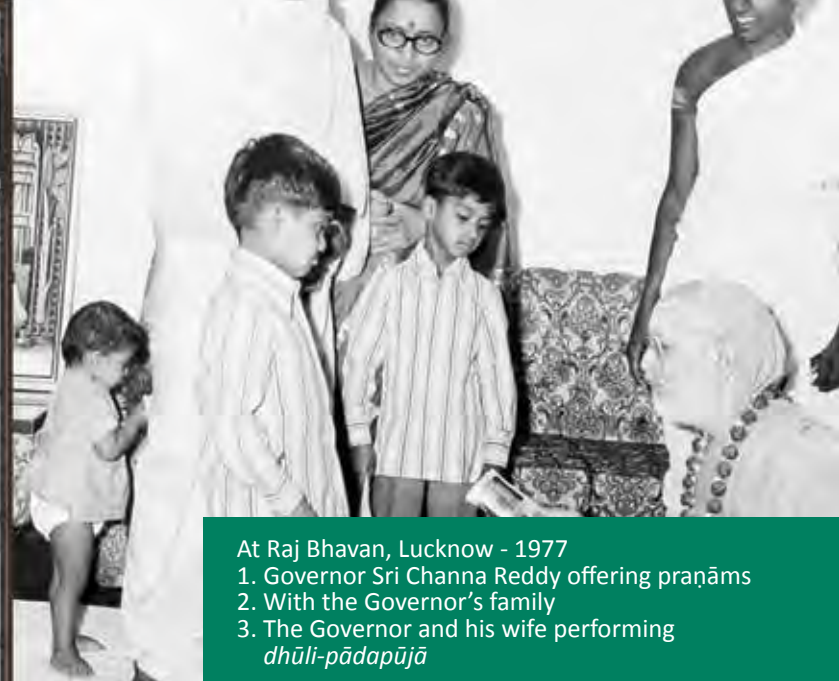
Śrī-Annapūrṇā-pratiṣṭhā  
at Varanasi - 1977

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



*Jagadgurus at Dashashwamedh Ghat  
Varanasi - 1977*

**The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78**



At Raj Bhavan, Lucknow - 1977  
1. Governor Sri Channa Reddy offering praṇāms  
2. With the Governor's family  
3. The Governor and his wife performing *dhūli-pādapūjā*

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



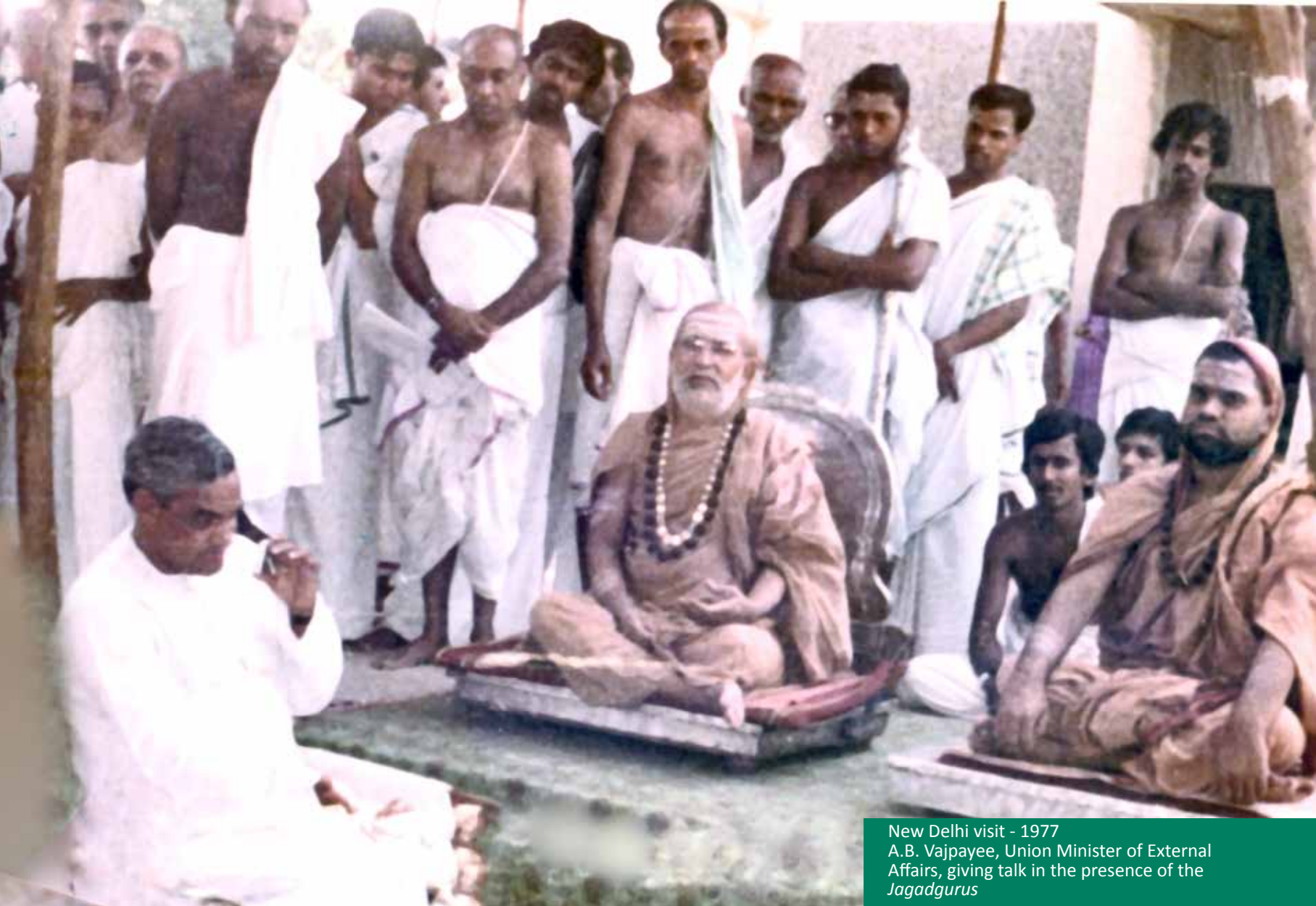
At Raj Bhavan, Lucknow - 1977

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



New Delhi visit - 1977  
His Holiness accompanied by Śrī Sannidhānam.  
Also seen is the Head of Dwaraka Peetham

## The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



New Delhi visit - 1977  
A.B. Vajpayee, Union Minister of External  
Affairs, giving talk in the presence of the  
*Jagadgurus*

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78





New Delhi visit - 1977

1. The *Jagadgurus* with dignitaries
2. Coming out for *daršana* to devotees
3. Sri B.D. Jatti, The Vice President of India offers his *pranāms*

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



Consecration of Shrine  
at Sankara Vidya Kendra,  
New Delhi - 1977

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



Consecration and worship of sacred *Linga* at Sankara Vidya Kendra, New Delhi - 1977





Odisha visit - 1977  
With devotees in Bhubaneswar

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



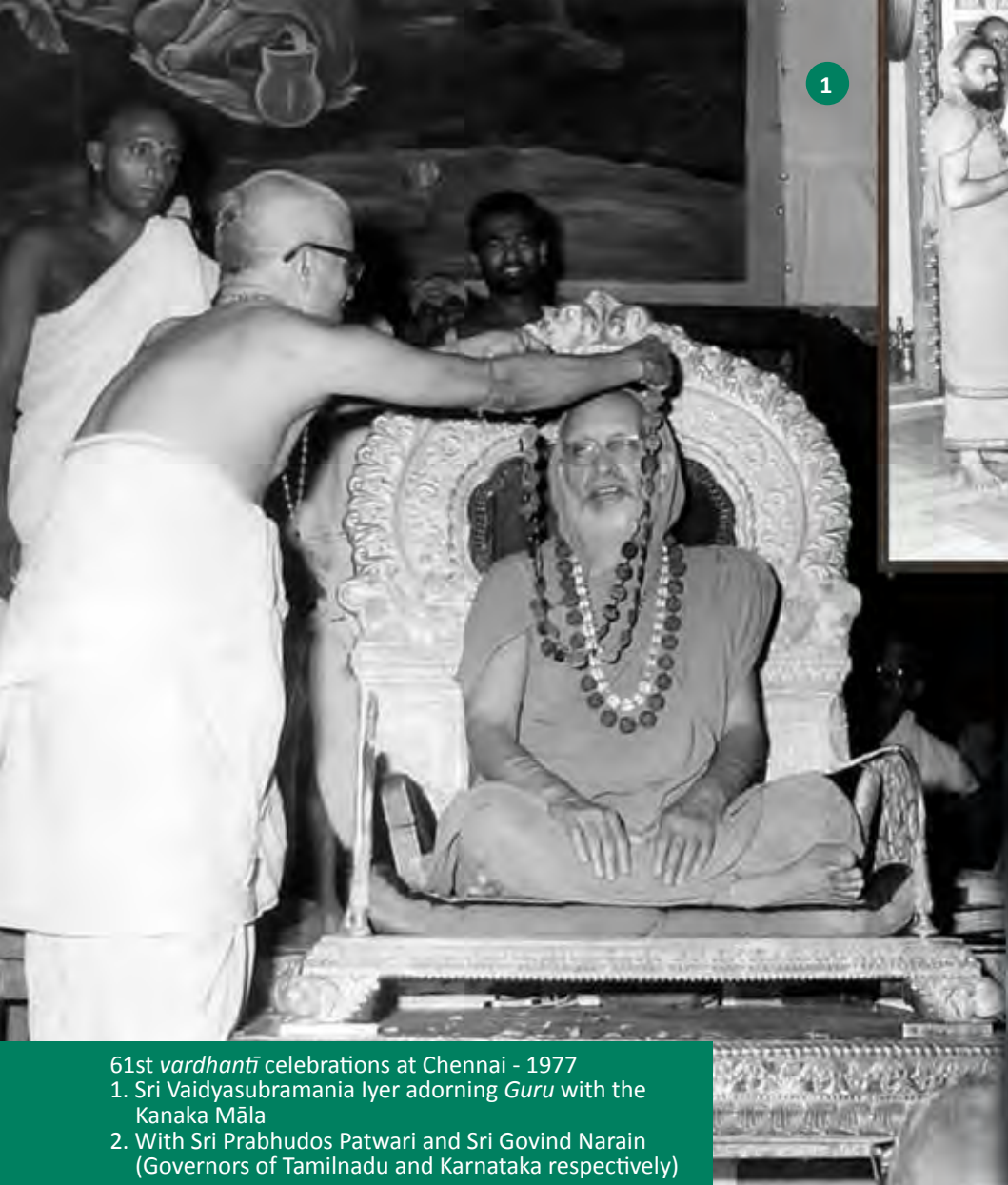
61st *vardhanti* celebrations at Chennai - 1977

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



61st *vardhanti* celebrations at Chennai - 1977  
With Sri P.A.C.R. Ramasubramaneya Rajha and  
Sri Ramanatha Sethupathi, The Maharaja of Ramnad

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



1



2



61st *vardhantī* celebrations at Chennai - 1977  
1. Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer adorning *Guru* with the Kanaka Māla  
2. With Sri Prabhudos Patwari and Sri Govind Narain (Governors of Tamilnadu and Karnataka respectively)

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



1



2



3

61st *vardhantī* celebrations at Chennai - 1977

1. His Holiness giving *darśana*
2. Felicitation by Smt. Shashikala Kakodkar, CM of Goa
3. Sri R. Venkatraman having a word

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78





1



2

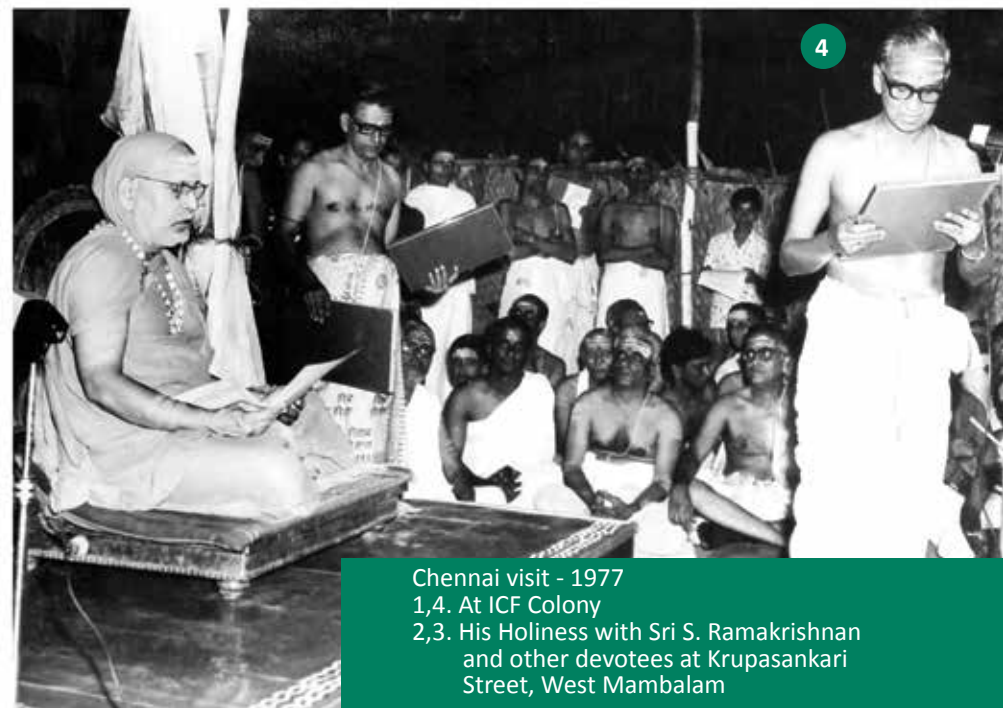


3

61st *vardhantī* celebrations, Chennai - 1977

1. Felicitation by Kundrakudi Adheenam
2. Felicitation by Raja Sir Muthiah Chettiar
3. Felicitation by Sri K.R. Sundaram Iyer

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78



Chennai visit - 1977  
1,4. At ICF Colony  
2,3. His Holiness with Sri S. Ramakrishnan  
and other devotees at Krupasankari  
Street, West Mambalam

The 16th Tour - All India - 1976-78

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		<b>The 17th Tour - Short trip to Bengaluru - 1978</b>
September 1978	Bengaluru	A branch of Sri Sringeri Math at 'Sri Mathru Krupa' on the 6th Main Road, Malleswaram, was inaugurated by Sri D. Devraj Urs, the Chief Minister of Karnataka, in the holy presence of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Mahāsannidhānam on the 17th of September 1978. The Chief Minister delivered the inaugural address and praised the services of the Sringeri Math in reviving and spreading the tenets of Hinduism. He also released the souvenir that was published on the occasion. The <i>Jagadguru</i> then delivered a benedictory address.
(1978)	(Sringeri)	( <i>Navarātri</i> was celebrated in Sringeri from the 3rd to the 12th of October that year. Thousands of devotees from all over India gathered at Sringeri during the nine days. The 62nd <i>Vardhantī</i> of Śrī Mahāsannidhānam was celebrated in Sringeri for three days from the 28th of October. On the first day, a conference on 'Dharma' was held under the supervision of His Holiness. The Head of Pejavar Math Śrī Vishveṣa Tīrtha Svāmin and the Svayamprakāśa Rāmānanda Sarasvatī of the Hariharapura Math and the head of the Thirthamuthur Math were also present for the celebrations.)
-do-	-do-	(On Sunday, the 13th of November, 1978, His Holiness and Śrī Sannidhānam arrived at Kigga and performed <i>abhiṣeka</i> at the Kigga Temple.)
(1979)	-do-	( <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> was celebrated in Sringeri on the 25th of February.)
-do-	-do-	(A historic summit of the four Śaṅkarācāryas - His Holiness Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin of Sringeri, Śrī Abhinava Saccidānanda Tīrtha Svāmin of Dwaraka, Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī Svāmin of Jyotir Math (Badri) and Śrī Nirañjana Deva Tīrtha of Puri Govardhana Peetha - took place at Sringeri, on the 1st of May, on the most auspicious occasion of the <i>Jayantī</i> of Ādi Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda.)
-do-	-do-	(The <i>Jagadgurus</i> observed the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> at Sringeri starting from the 9th of July 1979. His Holiness conducted the <i>ārādhana</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin in the <i>adhiṣṭhāna</i> for three days with special <i>abhiṣekas</i> and <i>Veda-pārāyaṇa</i> . The <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations started on the 21st of September with <i>abhisheka</i> to Goddess Śāradāmbā and concluded on the 1st

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Date	Place	Events
		of October. That being the Silver Jubilee year of <i>paṭṭābhiṣeka</i> of His Holiness, a <i>koṭi-arcana</i> was performed at Sringeri during <i>Navarātri</i> . An <i>Atirudra</i> too was conducted in the august presence of His Holiness.)
(1979)	(Sringeri)	(Sri Sharada Dhanvantari Hospital was opened by His Holiness on the 14th, to commemorate the Silver Jubilee year of Śrī Mahāsannidhānam's ascendancy to the Sharada Peetham. It was formally opened by Sri Devaraj Urs, the Chief Minister of Karnataka.)
		The 18th Tour - Short tour of South India - 1979-80 (7 months & 9 days)
15.10.1979 to 10.11.1979	Bengaluru	His Holiness had earlier said that He would visit to Madurai and Coimbatore when the constructions of the branch Math buildings at these places were completed. As the construction at these two places was almost over, in order to fulfil His commitment, His Holiness started on another tour of South India on the 15th of October 1979. Leaving Sringeri the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Bengaluru. On arrival at Bengaluru on the 17th, a large crowd had gathered to give the <i>Jagadgurus</i> a reverential welcome at the Shankara Math. The 63rd <i>Vardhantī</i> and the Silver Jubilee of the <i>paṭṭābhiṣeka</i> of His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam were celebrated for a week from the 19th. Numerous <i>yāgas</i> were conducted, apart from <i>dharma</i> , <i>sāhitya</i> and <i>Veda-sammelanas</i> . Various dignitaries participated and the mammoth audience was spell bound by the captivating discourses of His Holiness. An All India Seminar on 'The impact of Shankara on the International Mind' was conducted on the 21st of October.
10.11.1979 to 14.11.1979	Dharmapuri, Salem	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Dharmapuri and camped there for a day. During the camp at Salem, His Holiness paid a visit to Skandasramam on the 12th of November and worshipped at the temples of Śrī Gñānaskanda, Śrī Mahālakṣmī, Śrī Durgā Parameśvarī, Śrī Pañcamukha Vināyaka, Śrī Dattātreya Bhagavān and Śrī Pañcamukha Āñjaneya.
14.11.1979 to 17.11.1979	Gobichetti- palayam	Gobichettipalayam gave a traditional welcome when the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived there on the 14th. At Bhavani, His Holiness visited the Shankara Math and later addressed a meeting at the Rotary Club Hall.

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Date	Place	Events
17.11.1979 to 01.12.1979	Coimbatore	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded via Erode and halting there on the 17th, reached Coimbatore on the 19th for the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the newly constructed temple at Sringeri Math branch. A vast plot of land had been donated by Sri Nanjundiah for the temple. Sri Govindaswamy Naidu had financed the construction of the temple housing the idols of Śrī Śāradāmbā, Śrī Śaṅkara, Śrī Gaṇapati and Śrī Subrahmaṇya. Sri Binny Subba Rao and Sri K.V. Narayanaswamy Iyer had also been instrumental in this <i>dhārmic</i> activity. On the sacred day, His Holiness was taken in an impressive procession to the accompaniment of <i>Vedic</i> chanting to Race Course Road where the temple was situated. At the selected hour on the 25th, His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam along with Śrī Sannidhānam performed the <i>pratiṣṭhā</i> of the idols and then ascended the <i>vimānas</i> to perform the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> . A sea of humanity had gathered to witness the event. At a function held after the consecration, His Holiness graciously conferred the titles ' <i>Dharma Vīra</i> ' and ' <i>Gurubhaktaratnam</i> ' on Sri Govindaswamy Naidu and Sri Nanjundiah respectively. On the 28th, His Holiness camped at Ram Nagar, where Sri. S.R. Ramakrishna Iyer and Sri Ramakrishna Naidu received Their Holinesses.
01.12.1979 to 02.12.1979	Tiruppur	On the 1st of December, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Tiruppur and halted there for a day. On the way, there was a visit to Sri Panchamukha Ganapati Temple. On the 2nd, His Holiness was ceremoniously received at Perur Sri Patteeswarar Temple.
02.12.1979 to 06.12.1979	Perur, Perinthal- manna, Pattambi	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped at Perur for a day and subsequently returned to Coimbatore. Halting for a day at Coimbatore (the 3rd of December), the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Perinthalmanna (the 4th), and camped there for a day. They then left for Pattambi on the 5th. Arrangements for the stay of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> had been made by Sri A.K. Rama Iyer. Before leaving, His Holiness performed <i>abhiṣekas</i> and <i>pūjās</i> at the Subrahmanya Swamy Temple and also performed <i>pūjās</i> at Angadipuram Thali Temple. His Holiness also laid the foundation stone for the Mahaganapathi Temple there.
06.12.1979 to 08.12.1979	Guruvayur	On the evening of the 6th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Guruvayur. Fire and other hazards had been troubling the Guruvayur Temple in the recent past years. A <i>praśnam</i> , conducted by leading astrologers, revealed that the cause of the mishaps was inadequacy of reverence shown to His Holiness. The solution was seen to lie in inviting His Holiness to the temple and duly apologising to Him and honoring Him. Representatives had requested His Holiness to kindly come to Guruvayur. Accordingly, His Holiness visited the Guruvayur Temple on the 7th, and offered worship. The

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Date	Place	Events
		representatives of the Namboodiris and the Devaswom Department prostrated before Their Holinesses and offered fruits, flowers, coconuts and two pairs of valuable cloth and said, "We pray that we may be excused for all our past shortcomings. We further pray that your Holiness should bless us all". In reply His Holiness said, "May you be blessed by the Lord Guruvāyūrappan and live happily".
06.12.1979 to 08.12.1979	Guruvayur	The <i>Jagadguru</i> then gave a silver plate with laced silk cloth and a gold necklace studded with rubies and diamonds to adorn Lord Guruvayurappan. The Lord was immediately adorned with the clothes and the ornaments. The unfortunate occurrences ceased to plague the temple thereafter. After worshipping at the temples dedicated to Lord Ayyappa and Bhagavatī, His Holiness left for His camp at Putheri Bungalow. In the evening at 4 p.m., the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Mookkuthala village, 20 miles from Guruvayur. The Melakkavu Bhagavathi Temple is situated there in a dense forest. His Holiness meditated there for a while.
08.12.1979 to 10.12.1979	Ottapalam, Kollengode	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped for a day at Ottapalam. Reaching Kollengode, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Perumal Koil village and other villages at Kollengode and blessed the local people.
10.12.1979 to 16.12.1979	Palakkad District	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> halted at Palakkad. Pallippuram, Thirunellai and Sreekrishnapuram were also some of the villages visited. At Vadakkanthara, a grand reception was accorded and the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were escorted in a procession to Ambika Nivas at Jainmedu, Palakkad. On the 14th, <i>Mahārudra-yajña</i> and <i>lakṣārcana</i> commenced in the presence of His Holiness. On the 15th, at Thathamangalam, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received at the Shiva Temple by prominent citizens. Proceeding to the Krishna Temple, where an idol of Lord Guruvayurappan was installed at the instance of His Holiness after visiting Chittur, His Holiness returned to Palakkad.
16.12.1979 to 18.12.1979	Thrissur, Kodungallur	At Thrissur, a reception was accorded to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> at the Paramekkavu Bhagavati Temple. On the 17th, His Holiness visited Brahmaswam Madham, Thekke Madham and Naduvil Madham and blessed the students and teachers of the <i>Veda-pāṭhaśālā</i> there. Later, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received at the Chinmaya Mission also. After a brief halt at Punkunnam, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Kodungallur on the 17th and halted there for a day.

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Date	Place	Events
18.12.1979 to 19.12.1979	Irinjalakuda	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Irinjalakuda on the 18th, and had <i>darśana</i> of Goddess <i>Mūkāmbikā</i> at Dakshina Mookambika Temple, Paravur.
19.12.1979 to 26.12.1979	Kalady	Proceeding on His tour, His Holiness, along with Śrī Sannidhānam, arrived at Kalady, via Palakkad on the 19th. His Holiness halted at Kalady, the birth place of Śaṅkarabhagavatpāda till the 26th. At Kalady, His Holiness was accorded a grand and magnificent reception by the staff of Sri Shankara College, Sri Shankara Welfare Mission, and the devotees of the Sringeri Math. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> also visited Sri Shankara College.
26.12.1979 to 28.12.1979	Ernakulam	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Ernakulam that evening. Sri Kasi Viswanatha Iyer was amongst those chiefly responsible for organising the camp. His Holiness along with Śrī Sannidhānam then visited Chottanikkara to worship Bhagavati Amman.
28.12.1979 to 30.12.1979	Kochi	It was <i>Vaikunṭha-ekādaśī</i> on the 29th. His Holiness had <i>darśana</i> of Lord Janārdana at the temple near Mattancherry.
30.12.1979 to 01.01.1980	Alappuzha, Kollam	On arrival at Alapuzha, His Holiness was received at Sri Bhuvaneswari Temple and taken in a procession to Sri Ram Mandir. At Kollam, His Holiness was given a rousing reception at Sri Mahaganapathy Temple.
01.01.1980 to 09.01.1980	Thiruvananthapuram	After the visit to Kollam, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Thiruvananthapuram on the 1st of January 1980. The capital of Kerala gave a royal welcome when the Sringeri <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived there on the 1st. At the request of the Maharaja of Travancore, His Holiness accepted the <i>pādapūjā</i> done at his residence on the 8th. The usual <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> was conducted there. In the evening at 4.30, the Maharaja, <i>Elaya</i> Raja and Sethu Parvathi Bayi with the royal family called on His Holiness to offer their respects to Him. A public reception was accorded there at 5 p.m. The Governor of Kerala, Her Excellency Smt. Jothi Venkatachalam, presided over the meeting.
09.01.1980 to 17.01.1980	Sengottai and other places	Sengottai was the first place in Tamil Nadu where the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at, on the 9th evening. After touring Ayikudi, Sundarapandiapuram, Tenkasi and Krishnapuram, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Rajapalayam on the 17th.

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Date	Place	Events
17.01.1980 to 19.01.1980	Rajapalayam	Sri P.R. Ramasubrahmaneya Rajha of Rajapalayam Mills received His Holiness with much enthusiasm and escorted the <i>Jagadgurus</i> to his palace at Ramamandiram. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> also paid a visit to Vathirayiruppu during this camp. After a day's halt at Rajapalayam, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Melmangalam on the 19th.
19.01.1980 to 23.01.1980	Melmangalam	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received at Sri Ranganatha Temple. The next day, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the shrine of Bhagavatī and left for Periyakulam and halted there for two days.
23.01.1980 to 24.01.1980	Thenkarai	At Thenkarai, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> graced the <i>Mahākumbhābhiṣeka</i> performed at Sri Akhildandeswari Temple.
27.01.1980 to 07.02.1980	Madurai	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received with temple honours on arrival at the pilgrim centre. Thousands of people gathered at Adi Veethi in the Meenakshi Amman Temple to receive the <i>Jagadgurus</i> at Madurai. His Holiness was pleased at the extensive renovation and construction at the Shankara Math at Amman Kovil Street. Best utilisation of the available space had been made by Sri Srinivasa Raghavan and others. The <i>Pratiṣṭhā</i> of Śrī Śāradāmbā, Śrī Śaṅkara, Śrī Viśālakṣī and Śrī Viśveśvara idols was performed by His Holiness on the 27th. The next day, His Holiness laid the foundation stone for Ayyappa shrine at Vilacheri Road. The office bearers of the Ayyappa Seva Sangam received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> .
07.02.1980 to 10.02.1980	Thirunagar, Sivaganga	Leaving Madurai, His Holiness reached Thirunagar and camped there till the 9th. They proceeded to Sivaganga via Melur on the 9th. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> worshipped at Sri Ratna Garbha Ganapathy Temple on the Gokhale Hall Road on the 10th and later left for Manamadurai.
10.02.1980 to 11.02.1980	Manamadurai, Paramakudi, Ramanatha- puram	After the reception at the Shankara Math, Manamadurai, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Paramakudi on the same day. En route to Rameswaram, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> halted at Ramanathapuram on the 11th. Rajkumar R. Kashinathadurai, Diwan S. Ramamurthy and others received and led the <i>Jagadgurus</i> to the camp at Ramalinga Vilas. This was the first visit of His Holiness to the palace after the passing away of Sri Ramanatha Sethupathi. His daughter Rajkumari Brahmakrishna Raja Rajeshwari performed <i>pādapūjā</i> . Rani Indira Devi performed <i>bhikṣāvandana</i> to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> on behalf of the Nachiyar community.



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Date	Place	Events
11.02.1980 to 18.02.1980	Rameswaram, Aruppukkottai	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Rameswaram on the 11th of February. On the 14th, the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> , was performed by His Holiness. They had a holy bath in the ocean on the occasion of the solar eclipse on the 16th. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Dhanushkodi at about 1 p.m. At 2:30 p.m., the <i>Jagadgurus</i> had <i>samudra-snāna</i> with disciples. As was His wont, His Holiness delighted Himself by having a swim in the wavy waters of the ocean. His Holiness then sat in meditation there and later returned to the camp by 5 p.m. to leave for Aruppukkottai via Ramanathapuram. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped at Ramanathapuram and Aruppukkottai (from the 16th to the 18th) before leaving for Thoothukudi.
18.02.1980 to 22.02.1980	Thoothukudi & Tiruchendur	En route to Tiruchendur, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> paid a visit to the Vinayaka Temple at Sakupuram and were received at the Shanmukha Vilasam Mandapam at Tiruchendur. The trustees of Senthilandavar Temple accorded a grand reception to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . His Holiness performed special <i>pūjās</i> to Lord Subrahmaṇya with 108 coins made of silver and also offered a gold chain to the Lord.
22.02.1980 to 24.02.1980	Gopalamu- dram & Veeravanallur	After halting at Gopalamudram, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Veeravanallur for a one-day camp.
24.02.1980 to 26.02.1980	Kallidaikurichi	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received by Sri K.R. Sundaram Iyer and taken in a procession to the specially erected <i>pandal</i> at Ramachandrapuram street. On the day of <i>ekādaśī</i> , His Holiness and Śrī Sannidhānam had a bath and performed <i>anuṣṭhānas</i> at Banatheertham, the source of Tāmiraparṇī.
26.02.1980 to 02.03.1980	Various Places	Visiting Papanasam and halting at Ambasamudram, Kadayam and Ariyanayagipuram in Tirunelveli District, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Tirunelveli town on the 2nd of March.
02.03.1980 to 09.03.1980	Tirunelveli	At Shankara Math, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received and escorted to Sri Veeraraghava Perumal Sannidhi amidst chanting of <i>Vedic-mantras</i> . In the Sivapuram street, Meenakshipuram, in Tirunelveli Junction, a grand reception was accorded in a specially erected shamiana facing the newly built Sringeri Sri Sharada Kalyana Mandapam. The <i>ārāadhanā</i> of Śrī Nṛsiṃha Bhārati Mahāsvāmin was conducted here.

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Date	Place	Events
09.03.1980 to 14.03.1980	Various Places	After halting for a day each at Palamadai, Kalakkad, Nagercoil, Thiruvananthapuram and Kottarakkara, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> and retinue arrived at Pampa in Kerala State on the 14th, at 6:30 p.m.
14.03.1980 to 16.03.1980	Pampa & Sabarimala	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were invited to visit Sabarimalai by the Commissioner and President of the Devaswom Board, Trivandrum. Accordingly, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Pampa in the evening of the 14th. They were received by the Devaswom Board and Pattom Sri Sivaramakrishna Iyer at Pampa where His Holiness performed <i>Śrī-Śāradā-Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> that night. Around 3 p.m. on the 15th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Sabarimalai by foot accompanied by over 200 disciples. It took nearly three hours for the <i>Jagadgurus</i> to climb the steep mountain. They were received with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> at the foot of the Sabarimalai Ayyappan Temple.
-do-	-do-	After <i>āhnika</i> , the <i>Jagadgurus</i> witnessed the <i>pūjā</i> of Lord Ayyappa. Again, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> ascended the 18 holy steps and had <i>darśana</i> at the time of the evening <i>dīpārādhana</i> . They performed <i>puṣpāñjali</i> . After the worship, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were given a reception at the temple premises on the Northern side. Address of welcome was given to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> by the President of the Devaswom Board. His Holiness recommended that arrangements be made for the daily performance of <i>pūjā</i> to Lord Ayyappan. On the 15th night, His Holiness performed the <i>Candramaulīśvara-pūjā</i> at the southern wing of the temple before the Gaṇapati Sannidhi. On the 16th early morning, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Pampa.
16.03.1980 to 18.03.1980	Mundakayam Estates, Cumbum, Suruli	On the evening of the 16th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received at the Travancore Rubber and Tea Estate. On the 17th evening, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Cumbum. On the 18th morning, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> went to the Surli Falls and after bath, His Holiness performed the <i>ārādhana</i> of the 33rd Ācārya, Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin at the camp venue.
18.03.1980 to 21.03.1980	Gudalur, Batlagundu, Dindigul	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped at these places.
21.03.1980 to 22.03.1980	Koviloor	The <i>Maṭhādhipati</i> of Koviloor invited His Holiness to visit Koviloor in Ramnad District. His Holiness accepted the invitation and after visiting Batlagundu and Dindigul, went to Koviloor along with Śrī Sannidhānam. En route, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the Nagarathar Temple at Vairavanpatti. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received by a big gathering at Koviloor including many prominent Nagarathars

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Date	Place	Events
		and were taken in a procession to the Koviloor Math where His Holiness performed His <i>pūjās</i> . The <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped at Koviloor for two days.
23.03.1980	Koviloor	The 29th <i>Vardhantī</i> of <i>Jagadguru Śrī Sannidhānam</i> was celebrated at Koviloor. <i>Gaṇapati-homa</i> , <i>āyusya-homa</i> and <i>Rudraikādaśanī</i> were performed to mark the event. A public meeting was arranged in the evening, which was presided over by <i>Padmabhūṣan</i> Raja Sir Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad.
23.03.1980 to 25.03.1980	Pillayarpatti, Karaikudi, Pudukkottai	At Pillayarpatti, His Holiness performed <i>pūjā</i> . The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Pattamangalam, Karungulam, Okkur, Pungudi and Natarajapuram and blessed the <i>śiṣyas</i> there. Visiting Karaikudi (the 24th), and Pudukkottai (the 25th), the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Srirangam on the evening of the 25th.
25.03.1980 to 29.03.1980	Srirangam Tiruchirappalli	At Srirangam, Sri K.R.Srinivasa Iyer, Sri P.S.Ramadurai Iyer, Prof R.Ganapathy Subramanian and Sri V.S.Sundaram Iyer received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . A reception was accorded at the Municipal office. They were then escorted in a procession to Shankara Gurukulam in Ammamandapam Road. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> also visited the Vani Vilas press and also the Shankara Gurukulam Library on the 26th. At Trichy, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> worshipped at the famous Rock fort temple of Vināyaka on the 28th. In the evening, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Ganeshpur near Thiruverumbur and His Holiness laid the foundation stone for the proposed temple of Lord Vināyaka there and returned to Kailasapuram. They also visited the BHEL Township. When His Holiness was camping at The National High School in Trichy, the Jeeyar of the Ahobila Math met Him. Both of them addressed a large gathering.
29.03.1980 to 02.04.1980	Krishnaraya- puram, Karur, Chinna Dharapuram	His Holiness performed the night <i>pūjā</i> at Krishnarayapuram. On the 30th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Mahadanapuram and from there visited the Puliur Chettinad Cement Corporation factory en route to Karur. On the 31st, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Nerur to worship at the <i>samādhi</i> of Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra and returned to Karur via Vangal and Nanjai Pugalur. On the 1st of April, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the Thirumanilayur village near Karur to accept the offerings of the devotees there. In the evening, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Kodumudi before reaching Chinna Dharapuram.
02.04.1980 to 03.04.1980	Palani	On the 3rd, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> climbed the hill of Palani. At Sri Dhandayuthapani Swamy Temple, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received with <i>bhajans</i> , Vedic chants, music and <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> by the <i>Devasthānam</i> officials and were led to the sanctum sanctorum. There, His Holiness conducted special <i>abhiṣekas</i> to Lord Subrahmaṇya.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
03.04.1980 to 06.04.1980	Udumalpet, Pollachi, Ayyalur, Thrissur	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Udumalpet on the 3rd and camped for the night there. Halting at Pollachi on the 5th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> entered Govindapuram on the Tamilnadu-Kerala border. There, a rousing reception was accorded to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> by the representative of the Raja of Kollengode, and <i>Vedic</i> pandits. A ceremonial 21-gun salute was offered to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . A cavalcade of motor cars followed the procession which terminated at the Kollengode Pulikkot Ayyappan Temple. After the worship of Lord Ayyappa, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were taken to the famous Perumal Kovil village. The Raja of Kollengode submitted his offerings there. Later, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Ayalur at 7 p.m. At about 3:30 p.m. on the evening of the 6th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Thrissur. Subsequently, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Kalady at 6:30 p.m.
06.04.1980 to 22.04.1980	Kalady	Extensive arrangements had been made for the performance of the <i>Atirudra-mahāyajña</i> , conducted for the first time in Kalady and also of <i>Śatacaṇḍī-yajña</i> in and around the Math quarters at Kalady as part of the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations of the year. The following were the events: <i>R̥g-veda-lakṣārcana</i> - 7th to 14th; <i>Śatacaṇḍī-mahāyajña</i> - 14th to 18th; <i>Śrī-lalitā-sahasranāma-arcana</i> - 15th to 19th; <i>Atirudra-mahāyajña</i> - 7th to 19th; <i>Gāyatrī-homa</i> - 18th. A <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was presided over by His Holiness as part of the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations. On the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> day, the 19th, His Holiness performed <i>abhiṣeka</i> and special <i>pūjā</i> at Śrī Śaṅkara's shrine. The celebrations came to a grand finale that night with the procession at which the <i>utsava-mūrti</i> of Ādi Śaṅkara was carried in a decorated <i>mandapam</i> and taken around all the streets of Kalady.
22.04.1980 to 25.04.1980	Vadakkan- cherry, Nenmara, Parali	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left Kalady for Vadakkencherry on the 22nd and, en route, halted for a while at Puthukkad and proceeded to Thrissur. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were given a rousing reception at the 'Malayalam Daily Express' office at the newly constructed premises in Palace Road. His Holiness was shown the different sections of the press. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Nenmara on the 23rd, and were received by the Raja of Kollengode Sri E. Venugopala Varma and others. At Nellikulangara Bhagavathy Temple, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> offered worship. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Parali on the 24th. The <i>pratiṣṭhā-kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the <i>Rāma-koṭi-stūpi</i> in front of the Parali Temple was performed by His Holiness. It may be mentioned here that the <i>bhūmi-pūjā</i> was done here by His Holiness on the 8th, on His return journey from Guruvayur.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
25.04.1980 to 28.04.1980	Kozhikode	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> , en route to Kozhikode, stopped for a while at Pattambi. At Kozhikode, devotees and Government officials received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> for a procession to Ranga Vilas. From there, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Thali Brahmana Samooha Madam for a day's halt there. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were given a rousing reception at the 'Mathrubhumi' and 'Malayala Manorama' offices. It was <i>Nṛsimha-jayantī</i> on the 28th and a special <i>pūjā</i> was performed by His Holiness in the evening to Lord Nṛsimha.
28.04.1980 to 01.05.1980	Kalpetta, Chamraja- nagar, Nanjanagudu	The tour of Kerala of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> concluded in Wayanad on the 28th evening. This was the first visit of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> to Wayanad. There, His Holiness laid the foundation stone for the construction of an Ayyappa Temple. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Batheri in the Mysuru border and worshipped the 18-foot tall idol of Mahāgaṇapati. His Holiness entered the sanctum sanctorum and offered <i>puṣpāñjali</i> to the idols. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> subsequently left for Chamarajanagar where a royal reception was given on the 29th. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Hebbur and left for Nanjanagudu on the 30th. On the 1st of May, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the famous temple of Śrīkaṇṭheśvara. His Holiness performed special <i>pūjā</i> to the Lord. Incidentally, it is worth mentioning here that besides the temple preists, only the Sringeri <i>Jagadgurus</i> are allowed to enter the sanctum sanctorum and perform <i>pūjā</i> to Lord Śrīkaṇṭheśvara.
01.05.1980 to 07.05.1980	Mysuru	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Mysuru on the 1st of May. The long-cherished desire of the citizens of Mysuru was fulfilled when His Holiness performed <i>pratiṣṭhā</i> and <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of Śrī Śāradāmbā, Śrī Śaṅkarabhagavatpāda and Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhārati Mahāsvāmin on Monday, the 5th, in the specially constructed shrines, in the presence of a large gathering. The Maharaja of Mysore Sri Srikanta Datta Narasimha Raja Wadiyar, was present and had <i>darśana</i> of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . His Holiness worshipped at Sri Chamundeshwari Temple on the hill and performed special <i>pūjās</i> on the 6th.
07.05.1980 to 10.05.1980	Bengaluru	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Bengaluru and were welcomed at the Shankara Math in Shankarapuram. On the 9th, His Holiness visited Tumkuru to perform <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> to the temple dedicated to Śāradā-Candramaulīśvara, Ādi Śaṅkara, Pārvatī, Navagrahas at Kyathsandra in Tumkuru District. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> then returned to Bengaluru.

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Nanjanagodu  
Sri Srikanteshwara Swamy Temple*



*Guruvayur  
Sri Guruvayurappan Temple*



*Paramekkavu  
Sri Bagavathi Temple*



*Thiruvananthapuram  
Sri Padmanabha Swamy Temple*



*Madurai  
Sri Meenakshi Amman Temple*



*Sabarimala  
Sri Ayyappa Temple*



*Rameswaram  
Sri Ramanathaswamy Temple*



*Tiruchendur  
Sri Subramanya Swamy Temple*



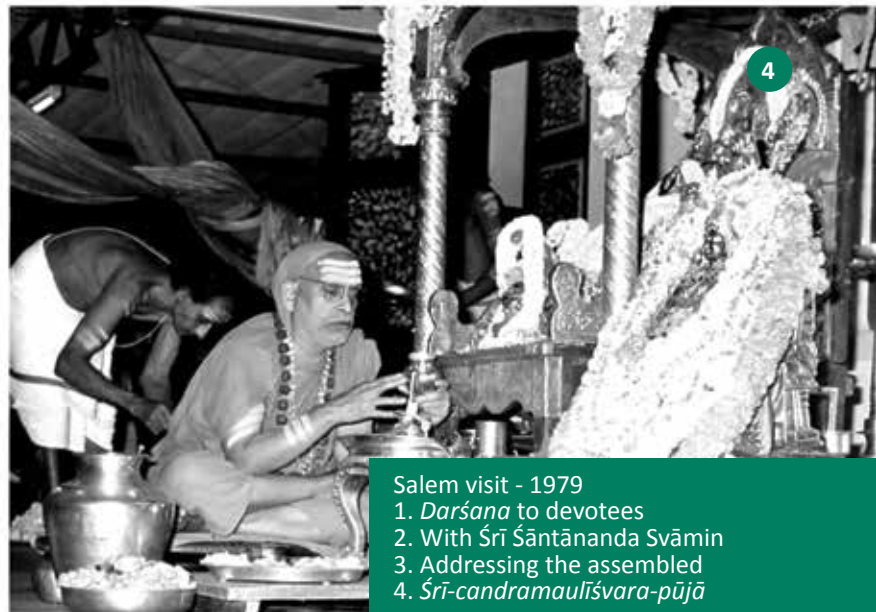
*Pillayarpatti  
Sri Karpaga Vinayagar Temple*



*Palani  
Sri Dandayudhapani Swamy Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80



Salem visit - 1979  
1. Darśana to devotees  
2. With Śrī Śāntānanda Svāmin  
3. Addressing the assembled  
4. Śrī-candramaulīśvara-pūjā

## The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80



Salem visit - 1979

1. Darśana

2. Śrī Sannidhānam performing pūjā

3. Śrī-Candramaulīśvara-pūjā

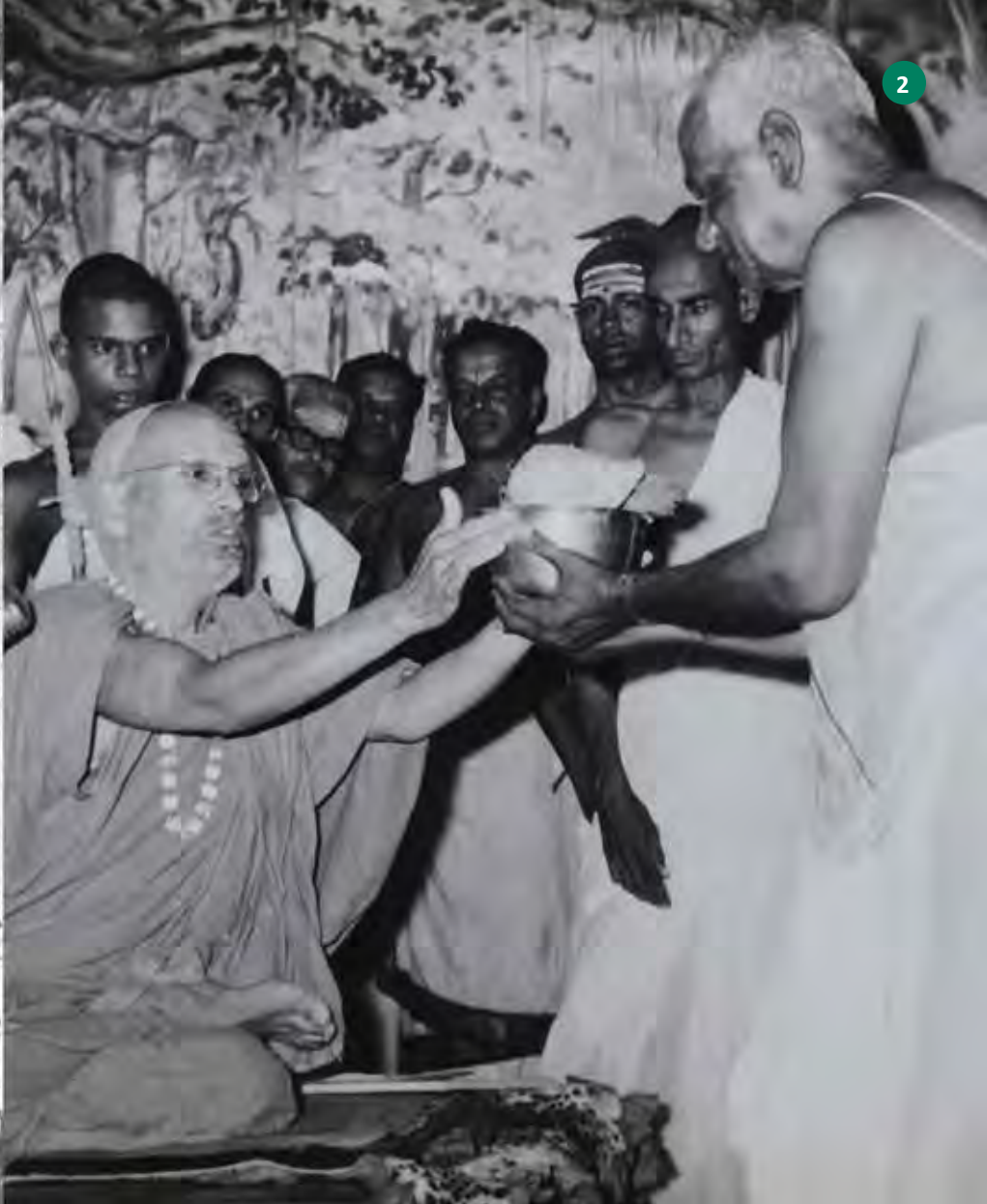
4. At Vidya Mandir Higher Secondary School

The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80





Coimbatore visit - 1979  
1. *Pūjā* to Lord Subrahmanya  
2. Blessing Sri Subba Rao



The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80

Madurai visit - 1980

1. Reception

2. Worshipping Śrī Śaṅkara

3. The *Guru* and the *śiṣya* having a word

4. With Sri Gopalakrishnan

5. With Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer, Thenkarai - 1980



The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80



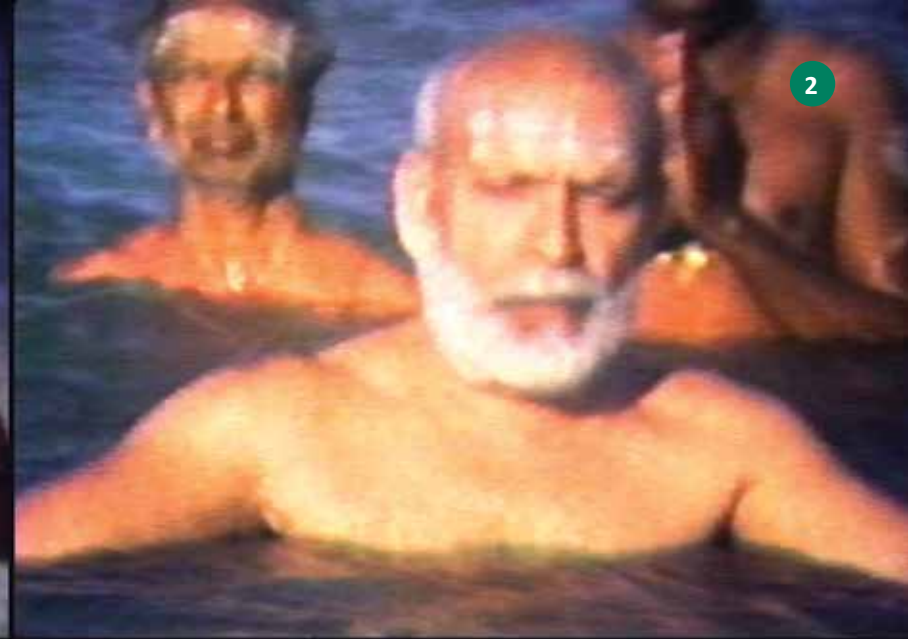
Madurai visit - 1980  
The *Jagadgurus* with Sri Srinivasa Raghavan



The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80



1



2



3



4

Dhanuskodi - 1980  
1. His Holiness blessing a couple with *mantropadeṣa*  
2,3,4. A delightful swim in the wavy waters

The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80



With devotees at Gopalsamudram - 1980

The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80



Gopalamudram - 1980

The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80



Sabarimala visit - 1980

1. At Śrī Añjaneya's Shrine
2. At the foot of the Temple
3. On the hill
4. Śrī Sannidhānam at the Sabari hills
5. Climbing up the steps

The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80



Sabarimala visit - 1980  
1. The Sacred 18 steps  
2,3. Witnessing *pūjā*

The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80





*Pūjā* at Sabarimala - 1980

The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80



1

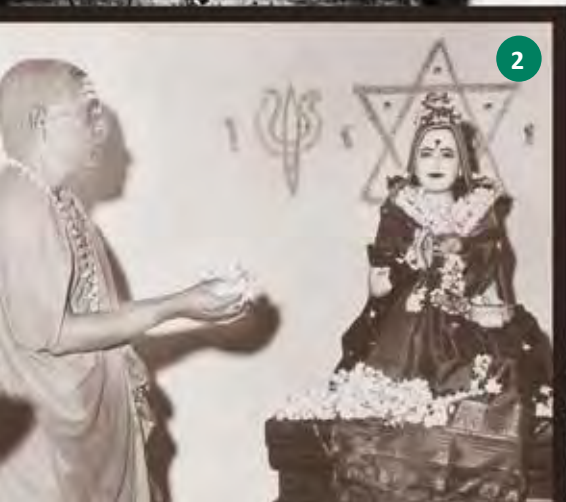
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3

4

1. At Banatheertham falls - 1980  
2. A respectful welcome by the Head of Koviloor Math - 1980  
3. Public *darśana* at Koviloor - 1980  
4. Discourse at Koviloor - 1980

The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80



Tumkuru visit - 1980  
1. Śrī-Śāradāmbā-pratiṣṭhā  
2. Śrī-Śaṅkara-pratiṣṭhā

The 18th Tour - Short Tour of South India - 1979- 80

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
10.05.1980 to 11.05.1980	Krishnagiri	Arriving at Krishnagiri from Bengaluru, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped at Vasavi Mahal. On the 11th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Sri Kannika Parameshwari Temple of <i>Ārya Vaiśyas</i> . The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Salem in the evening.
11.05.1980 to 20.05.1980	Salem to Bengaluru	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Salem once again in this tour for the consecration of the shrines at the Sringeri Math Branch and stayed there for three days from the 11th. On the 12th, at 9:30 a.m., the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at the <i>yāgaśālā</i> . His Holiness consecrated the idols of Śrī Śāradāmbā and Śrī Śāṅkara at the temples. From Salem the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Bengaluru on the 16th, after halting at Kaveripattinam for a day.
20.05.1980 to 23.05.1980	Bengaluru to Shivamogga	On the 20th, the devotees of Bengaluru had assembled in thousands in the premises of the Shankara Math, to pay their respectful felicitations to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> who had arrived at Bengaluru after completion of a successful <i>vijaya-yātrā</i> of South India for over six months. The function had been arranged by, 'Sri Jagadguru Reception Committee', Bengaluru. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka State, Sri R. Gundu Rao, presided over the function. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Shivamogga en route to Sringeri. At Shivamogga, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received at the Sringeri Shankara Math branch. Leaving Shivamogga on the evening of the 23rd, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Sringeri, had <i>darśana</i> of Goddess Śāradāmbā, and prayed for the welfare of humanity and world peace at large.
(1980)	(Sringeri)	(The <i>Jagadgurus</i> observed the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> of the year 1980 at Sringeri. The <i>Navarātri</i> and the 64th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness were also celebrated at Sringeri.)
(1981)	-do-	(The <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> and the subsequent <i>Śāṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations for the year 1981 took place at Sringeri. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> observed the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> and conducted the <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations also at Sringeri.)
		<b>The 19th Tour - All India - 1981-83 (1 year, 3 months &amp; 4 days)</b>
22.10.1981 to 24.10.1981	Mysuru	His Holiness, along with Śrī Sannidhānam, set out on His third long all-India tour. Proceeding via Chickmagaluru and Hassan, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Mysuru where the 65th <i>Vardhantī</i> as also the <i>Nakṣatrotsava</i> of <i>saṁnyāsa-svīkāra</i> of His Holiness were scheduled to be celebrated.
24.10.1981	-do-	<i>Gaṇapati-homa</i> and <i>Navagraha-homa</i> were performed. From the 24th, <i>Mahārudra-homa</i> was performed.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
25.10.1981	Mysuru	Inaugurated by Sri M. Veerappa Moily, Minister for Finance and Planning, Karnataka Govt., a <i>Dharma-sammelana</i> was held in the morning.
26.10.1981	-do-	The 65th <i>Vardhantī</i> celebrations were held on that day. <i>Pūrṇāhuti</i> of the <i>homās</i> were done in the presence of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . Sri R. Gundu Rao, the Chief Minister of Karnataka, was the Chief Guest at the function, while Sri A.R. Natarajan, Commissioner of Income Tax, Karnataka, presided over. In a function held in the evening, Sri G.B. Shankar Rao, Minister for Education, Karnataka, was the Chief Guest.
27.10.1981 to 31.10.1981	-do-	<i>Sāhitya-sammelana</i> was held in the august presence of His Holiness under the presidentship of Prof. K. Venkataramappa. A <i>Veda-vidvat-sammelana</i> was held in which eminent scholars in the <i>Vedās</i> from all over the country participated on the 28th.
31.10.1981 to 01.11.1981	Bengaluru	From Mysuru, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Bengaluru. At Bengaluru, a public meeting was arranged at the Shankara Math. Sri B.D. Jatti, the former Vice President of India, presided over the function. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> halted at Sringeri Math, Bengaluru, till the 1st of November.
01.11.1981 to 03.11.1981	Salem	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Salem at 8:30 p.m. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received at the Lakshmi Narayana Perumal Temple in the 2nd Agraharam and taken in a procession to Sringeri Shankara Math. Leaving Salem on the 3rd, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Coimbatore. They were given a warm reception at Sankari West on the way. The devotees of Erode requested the <i>Jagadgurus</i> to halt a while before leaving for Coimbatore. His Holiness accepted their request and blessed them with a benediction at the Perumal Iyer Temple in Agraharam Street. He also invoked the blessings of Ārudra Kapālīśvara, the presiding deity of Erode, for the welfare of everyone and left for Coimbatore.
03.11.1981 to 06.11.1981	Coimbatore	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> halted in the Bungalow of Sri Nanjundiah, at Sulur. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> then left for Ram Nagar and worshipped at the Rama Temple there. After offering worship at the Devi Temple in the town and the Kottai Easwaran Temple in Fort, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the Dhanvantri Temple and hospital there and left for Palakkad.
06.11.1981 to 07.11.1981	Palakkad	A rousing reception with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> and <i>Vedic</i> chants was accorded to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> at Noorani village in Palakkad.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
07.11.1981 to 12.11.1981	Kalady, Thrissur	His Holiness and Śrī Sannidhānam arrived from Palakkad on the 7th, and were received at the outskirts of Pattambi and were conducted to the camp venue, the Sringeri Math branch, Kalady. On the 8th, His Holiness laid the foundation stone for a Kalyana Mandapam in the famous Sri Guruvayurappan Temple premises in Pattambi, on the banks of the river Nīlā. His Holiness also visited a site for the construction of a <i>Veda-pāṭhaśālā</i> here. Later, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Karukaputhoor and visited the ancient temple of Lord Nṛsimha. His Holiness laid the foundation stone for the renovation of this ancient temple. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> then proceeded to Nelluwaya and visited the most famous temple dedicated to Lord Dhanvantari. At Thrissur, a reverential reception was accorded to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> on the evening of the 8th. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> went to the Vadakkunnathan Temple and subsequently, stayed in Kalady for three days. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> also made a short visit to Perumbavoor on the bank of the sacred river Pūrṇā and worshipped at the Shashta Temple and the Durga Temple there.
12.11.1981 to 16.11.1981	Kochi, Kottayam, Thiruvananthapuram	The citizens of Kochi and Ernakulam accorded a reverential welcome to the visiting <i>Jagadgurus</i> when They arrived from Kalady at 7 p.m. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Kottayam on the 13th. After a day's halt at Kottayam, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Thiruvananthapuram and stayed there up to the 16th, at the Sringeri Shankara Math.
16.11.1981 to 18.11.1981	Sengottai	At Sengottai, His Holiness and Śrī Sannidhānam were received at the Perumal Koil Temple. After camping at Sengottai, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Tirunelveli.
18.11.1981 to 23.11.1981	Tirunelveli	His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam inaugurated the Kalyana Mandapa constructed with the efforts of Sri Natarajan and other devotees of Tirunelveli in a short time. Finding the structure beautiful and magnificent, His Holiness expressed His immense pleasure. He then commended the devotion of the disciples of Tirunelveli.
23.11.1981 to 06.12.1981	Kallidaikurichi	An <i>Atirudra-mahāyajña</i> at Kallidaikurichi was conducted on the banks of the river Tāmiraparṇī for world peace in the benign presence of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> from the 23rd of November to the 4th of December. During these two weeks of stay in the Tirunelveli District, His Holiness visited many villages such as Rangasamudram, Kadayam, Pappankulam, Ariyanayagipuram, Gopalsamudram, Veeravanallur, Ambasamudram, Kalakkad, Ambur, Alwarkurichi, Sivasailam, Kodaganallur and Krishnapuram. At Karukurichi, on the 1st of December, His Holiness blessed the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> at

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		the Shastha Temple and had <i>darśana</i> at the Shiva Temple nearby. After the Kallidaikurichi camp on the 6th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Krishnapuram.
06.12.1981 to 14.12.1981	Rajapalayam, Sivakasi, Aruppukkottai	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped at Ramamandiram, Rajapalayam, from the 7th to the 12th of December. His Holiness blessed the <i>Śatacaṇḍī-homa</i> organised at Rajapalayam by Sri P.R. Ramasubrahmaneya Rajha. Sivakasi was visited on the 12th and Aruppukkottai on the 13th. On the 14th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Madurai for a week's stay there.
14.12.1981 to 21.12.1981	Madurai	An elaborate function was arranged to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the <i>āśrama-svīkāra</i> of His Holiness at Madurai wherein many dignitaries of Madurai including the Mayor of Madurai, participated. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited several places and institutions in Madurai. Foundation stone was laid by His Holiness at the famous Pazhamudhircholai Kshetra for a grand temple for Śrī Subrahmaṇya, the place being one of the 'Arupadaiveedu' (six abodes) of Sri Muruga.
21.12.1981 to 27.12.1981	Various Places	Leaving Madurai on the 21st, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Thenkarai, Periyakulam, Melmangalam, Dindigul, Karur and Namakkal, making a day's halt at each of these places.
27.12.1981 to 29.12.1981	Srirangam	At Srirangam, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Sri Vani Vilas Press, the publishers of <i>śāstra</i> books. They subsequently left for Bikshandar Kovil to accept <i>pādapūjā</i> . In the afternoon, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the library of Shankara Gurukulam.
29.12.1981 to 02.01.1982	Trichy, Dalmiapuram, Neyveli, Puducherry	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> halted at Thiruvanaikoil on the way to Trichy and were escorted to Sri Jambukeshwarar-Akhilandeswari Temple. There, His Holiness offered a silk saree and <i>kāṇikā</i> as the offerings of the <i>Maṭha</i> to the deities. A grand public reception was accorded to His Holiness at a public meeting at Tiruchy National College. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the Ordinance factory and BHEL. At Dalmiapuram, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received at the Shiva Temple. They arrived at Neyveli on the same day, the 31st December, and were received at the Main Road by the Neyveli Lignite Corporation officials. His Holiness went around the project site and was explained the details of the coal mines. On the New year day (01.01.1982), the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Puducherry. At the Vinayaka Temple, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received by the Chief Minister of Puducherry, Ministers and devotees. At about 3 p.m. on the 2nd, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Chennai.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
02.01.1982 to 03.01.1982	Chennai	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Chennai on the 2nd of January and a grand reception function had been organised at the Narayani Ammal Kalyana Mandapam in Raja Annamalaipuram. On the 3rd, there was an impressive function to mark the 50 years of <i>āśrama-svīkāra</i> of His Holiness. The hall at the Narayani Ammal Kalyana Mandapam was packed to its full capacity. Sri R. Venkataraman, the Union Minister for Finance, presided over the function. <i>Dharmātma</i> Vaidyasubramania Iyer gave the welcome address.
03.01.1982 to 03.02.1982	Chennai	As part of the Golden Jubilee celebration, a <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was held at the Sringeri Pravachana Mandiram from the 7th to the 9th of January. On the 10th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the Sharadamba Temple at Kodambakkam in the ILET Campus, in Arcot Road. They camped at the Sringeri Math, T. Nagar for three days from the 11th. A branch of the Sringeri Math at Krupasankari Street in West Mambalam was inaugurated by His Holiness on the 22nd. Sri R.M. Veerappan, Minister for Religious Endowments and Information, Government of Tamilnadu was present and delivered an address. Later, on the 31st, Śrī Sannidhānam performed <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the Ganapathi, Sharada and Krishna Temples at the <i>Maṭha</i> . On the 27th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped at the Old Sringeri Math in Krishnappa Naicken Agraharam at George Town. His Holiness along with Śrī Sannidhānam performed the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the New Ayyappa Swamy Temple on the Santhome High Road, Chennai, on the 29th.
-do-	-do-	The consecration of the Kashi Vishwanathaswamy Temple at St. Thomas Mount was performed on the 31st in the august presence of His Holiness. In Chennai, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped at various places such as Ayodhya Mandapam, Besant Nagar, Abhiramapuram, etc. At T. Nagar, His Holiness laid the foundation stone for the proposed <i>Rāja-gopura</i> for the Shiva-Vishnu Temple. Leaving <i>Navasuja</i> on the 3rd, at 6:30 a.m., His Holiness reached Tirupati by 12 Noon, after spending some time at the Sringeri Math branch in T. Nagar.
03.02.1982 to 07.02.1982	Tirupati, Tirumala	The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam authorities received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> with all temple honours. They were then led to the sanctum sanctorum of Lord Śrī Venkateśvara. After the <i>darśana</i> , the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for the Sringeri Shankara Math in Sri Venkateswara Museum Road. On the 4th, the temple authorities took the <i>Jagadgurus</i> for the <i>darśana</i> of Lord Śrī Venkateśvara. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> spent nearly an hour at the temple. On the 5th, at 1 p.m., the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached the temple for <i>darśana</i> and were conducted inside the <i>Garba Gṛha</i> - a special privilege extended to the <i>Jagadgurus</i>



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Date	Place	Events
		of Sringeri. There, His Holiness was lost in meditation for a while. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> then left for Nellore on the evening of the 5th. The next camp was Ongole on the 6th.
07.02.1982 to 14.02.1982	Narasaraopet to Hyderabad	Arriving at Narasaraopet on the 7th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> stayed there for two days. The next halt was at Guntur and the camp was at the Sringeri Math at Parvathi Puram. After halting at Tenali, Vijayawada and Jaggayyapet, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Hyderabad on the 14th, at 9 p.m.
14.02.1982 to 17.02.1982	Hyderabad	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received at Hyderabad by the Chief Minister Sri T. Anjaiah, other dignitaries and devotees of Hyderabad. <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> was celebrated at the Shankara Math premises the next day. On Sunday the 21st, a <i>koṭi-arcana</i> to Goddess Śāradāmbā reached its conclusion with the performance of <i>Lalitā-homa</i> and <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> in the august presence of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . Sri Anjaiah participated in the functions. Among the other dignitaries who took part were Sri Lakshminarayanayya, Endowment Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Sri Chokka Rao and others. In the evening, the Golden Jubilee of the <i>āśrama svikāra</i> of His Holiness was celebrated by the Andhra Pradesh Government at the Shankara Math. Sri P. Venkatasubbaiah, Union Minister for State & Parliamentary Affairs, presided over the function.
17.02.1982 to 19.02.1982	Srisailam	At the invitation of the Andhra Government, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Srisailam. On the 18th, His Holiness performed special <i>abhiṣekas</i> to the Lord and the Goddess duly assisted by Śrī Sannidhānam who later climbed the 100-foot high <i>gopuram</i> , performed the <i>kalaśa pratiṣṭhāpana</i> ceremonies and did the <i>Kumbhābhiṣeka</i> .
19.02.1982 to 24.02.1982	Hyderabad	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were accorded a grand reception in Mahabubnagar on the return trip to Hyderabad. Thereafter, visiting Kazipet, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Warrangal and from there left for Kaleshwaram.
24.02.1982 to 10.03.1982	Kaleshwaram and other places	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the Kaleshwaram Temple which is situated on the banks of the river Godāvarī. There, His Holiness along with Śrī Sannidhānam performed the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the newly renovated temple of Lord Kāleśvara. Leaving Kaleshwaram on the 2nd of March, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Manthani. After Manthani, Karim Nagar was the next halting place. From there, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Vemulawada, the abode of Lord Rāja Rājeśvara and Goddess Śrī Rāja Rājeśvarī.

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Date	Place	Events
24.02.1982 to 10.03.1982	Kaleshwaram and other places	On the 5th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were invited to the Raja Rajeshwari Temple by Kaleshwara Sri J. Chokka Rao and the temple authorities. There, His Holiness consecrated the <i>yantras</i> for Subrahmaṇya, Āñjaneya, Sūrya and Kālabhairava in the <i>Mūlasthāna</i> . <i>Ekādaśa-rudrābhiṣeka</i> and <i>pañcāmṛta-abhiṣeka</i> were also performed in the august presence of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . After <i>ārati</i> , the <i>Rājagopura-kalaśa-abhiṣeka</i> was performed. Leaving Vemulawada, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Dharmapuri and Jagtial. On the 7th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Nirmal and halted there. Leaving Nirmal, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Basar on the 8th and were given a rousing reception. There, Śrī Sannidhānam performed special <i>pūjā</i> to Goddess Jñāna Sarasvatī while His Holiness worshipped the Divine Mother the next day.
10.03.1982 to 20.03.1982	Nanded, Pathri, Beed and Jamhked	After completing the tour of Andhra Pradesh, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> entered Maharashtra on the 10th at Nanded. There, Maharashtra State Government officials and many devotees from Mumbai and representatives of the Central Organising Committee of the Sarada Seva Samiti reverentially received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . On the 11th, the citizens of Nanded gave a public reception to the Ācāryas. After touring Pathri, Beed, Jamkhed and Sangamner, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Ahmednagar in Maharashtra. Thereafter, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Rajur and Ghatghar and halted in each of those places for a day before reaching Ambernath.
20.03.1982 to 22.03.1982	Ambernath, Kalyan	Citizens of Ambernath accorded a grand reception and His Holiness addressed a mammoth public meeting.
22.03.1982	Mumbai	On entering Mumbai, a grand reception was accorded to the <i>Jagadguru</i> at the R.K. Studios by the veteran film star Sri Raj Kapoor. After accepting his floral offerings, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at the Laxminarasimha Temple of the Ahobila Math, Chembur. The <i>vijaya-yātrā</i> of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> was from the 22nd of March till the 2nd of May - a memorable stay of 42 days in Mumbai.
24.03.1982 and 25.03.1982	-do-	In the evening, a large scale public reception in which many institutions participated, was held at the Gandhi Maidan at Chembur, with the Chief Justice of the High Court of Mumbai, Sri V.S. Deshpande welcoming the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . On the 25th of March, His Holiness visited the Shankara Math at Matunga in the evening. He was received with temple honours and was shown around the new building.

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Date	Place	Events
27.03.1982 to 02.04.1982	Mumbai	His Holiness performed the 70th <i>ārādhanā</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin on the 27th at Tulasi Lata Hall with special <i>pūjās</i> . It was the day of <i>Guḍi Paḍva</i> , the new year for Maharashtrians. A three-day <i>Mahārudra-yajña</i> for peace and prosperity of the country began on the 27th at Juna Hanuman Mandir, Chembur, near Acharya Gardens. It was inaugurated by His Holiness.
-do-	-do-	During His Holiness's Ghatkopar camp on the evening of the 28th, a reception was arranged by the Ghatkopar Satkarya Samiti. On the 29th, a reception was accorded to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> at Patidar Samaj at Patidar Wadi, Ghatkopar. At the Juna Hanuman Mandir, the 32nd <i>Vardhantī</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Sannidhānam was celebrated in a grand manner. The three day <i>Mahārudra-homa</i> also concluded the same day. A public reception was accorded at Matunga by many religious and social organizations on the 31st. On the day of Śrī <i>Rāmanavamī</i> , the 2nd of April, His Holiness performed special <i>pūjās</i> at Asthika Samaj to Lord Rāmacandra and his consort. The Mumbai Tamil Sangam also accorded a reception to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> .
04.04.1982 to 06.04.1982	-do-	His Holiness made a visit to the Prince of Wales Museum in the morning. His Holiness visited the Varasiddhi Vinayaka Temple at Sion, Koliwada, on the 6th. A rousing reception was accorded to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> by the Mumbai Kannadigas at New Kannada Education Society High School at Wadala in the evening.
07.04.1982 and 08.04.1982	-do-	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> stayed at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan for two days. A <i>vidvat-sadas</i> was conducted there. Over 80 participating scholars and pandits from all over India were honoured at a special programme in the evening of the 8th, at the Bhavan auditorium. Office bearers of the Bhavan and dignitaries such as Sri Dharamsev M. Khatav, Sri C. Subramaniam, former Union Finance minister, Dr.V. Subramaniam, Finance Minister, Maharashtra State, Sri Charandas Meghdi, Dr. Dasturji, Nawaraj Minocher Homji, Sri Mohideen Harris, Sri A.M. Thomas, J.H. Dave and S. Ramakrishnan participated in the function. His Holiness graciously released the second edition of the English version of the book ' <i>Vivekacūdāmaṇi</i> ' with the commentary of Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin. The book 'Our Duty' written by Sri R. Krishnaswamy Iyer was also released in the function. After the function, on the night of the 8th, His Holiness left for the Khar Road camp and was received with traditional welcome by Anandhashram Trustees and the local organising committee.

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Date	Place	Events
09.04.1982 to 14.04.1982	Mumbai	On the evening of the 9th, Śrī Sannidhānam visited the Nanavati Hospital at Vile Parle. Śrī Mahāsannidhānam visited the Jaslok Hospital on the 10th and was received by Dr. Vaidya and his colleagues. After going through the functions of the hospital in all the departments, His Holiness expressed deep appreciation of the latest medical facilities available there. The public of Vile Parle gave a rousing reception to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> on the 11th. A group of <i>āyurvedic</i> medical practitioners of Mumbai called upon His Holiness and had discussions on <i>Āyurveda</i> on the 12th. At Goregaon, the camp was at Vivek Vidyalaya School (13th). His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam left for Nalla Sopara on the evening of the 14th, for performing the <i>bhūmi-pūjā</i> of Panchayat Devalaya, and on return, the <i>Jagadguru</i> visited the Ambabhai Mandir at Goregaon, while Śrī Sannidhānam attended the reception at Asthika Samaj at Vayu Devata Mandir, Borivali, and visited Gana Kala Vidya Nilayam, Goregaon, at Sri Nagar Estate.
15.04.1982 to 18.04.1982	-do-	On the 15th of April, His Holiness visited a group of fishermen colonies in Andheri and was received with traditional welcome. The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan had organised a public reception at their Andheri campus in which Prof. J.H. Dave welcomed His Holiness. The camp was shifted to Mulund on the 17th of April. On the way, His Holiness visited Chinmaya Mission near Adi Shankaracharya Marg, Powai, and addressed the ashramites. A reception was also accorded at the Temple Complex in IIT by the devotees of Powai. On the way to Mulund, His Holiness visited the National High School, Bhandup. On the 18th of April, His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam visited Santoshi Mata Mandir, Balrajeshwar Diagnostic Centre and the factory of S.H. Kelkar & Co. Ltd.
19.04.1982	-do-	On the 19th April, a <i>Rudraikādaśanī</i> was performed by the Mulund organisers on the occasion of the <i>Jagadguru's</i> visit. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Shiva Mandir, and attended a public meeting at Vani Vidyalaya (20th). The camp shifted to Dombivli on the 20th.
21.04.1982	-do-	On the 21st of April, His Holiness left for Kalyan, Mahajanwadi, for the citizen's reception there and after giving an <i>anugraha-bhāṣaṇa</i> , He paid a visit to Srirangam Srimad Andavan Ashramam, Dombivli, and also the Brahmana Sabha Hall and later returned to His base camp at Ganesh Mandir, Dombivli.
22.04.1982 and 23.04.1982	-do-	On the 22nd of April, His Holiness paid a visit to the Subramanya Samaj in the morning. Then, His Holiness visited the Rotary Club of Dombivli in the afternoon after laying the foundation stone for a home for the physically handicapped children of the Rotary Sevashram. On the 23rd of April, the

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Date	Place	Events
		<i>Jagadguru</i> took some time off to visit the Air India Computer Installation Centre. His Holiness evinced keen interest in the working of the computer systems. His Holiness highlighted the importance of discipline, devotion and dedication to work in the discharge of one's duties.
24.04.1982 to 28.04.1982	Mumbai	The <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations were held from the 24th to the 28th of April. Amongst the eminent speakers on the day of the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> (28th) was Dr. Raja Ramanna, the noted nuclear scientist. The scholars who participated in the <i>vidvat-sadas</i> during the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> were honoured on the 28th at a special function in the evening. One of the slums in Mumbai, in Shivaji Nagar, Govandi, had an unusual visitor on Shivaji day, the 25th of April, in His Holiness who nearly spent an hour in the area and blessed the residents and delivered a speech in simple Hindi. On the morning of the 25th, Śrī Sannidhānam attended a reception at Chembur Fine Arts. On the <i>Akṣaya-tṛtīyā</i> , the 26th of April, His Holiness installed the <i>Navagraha-devatās</i> in Juna Hanuman Mandir with special <i>pūjās</i> .
28.04.1982 to 29.04.1982	-do-	His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam paid a visit to Vikhroli Murugan Temple Complex and the Community School there in the morning. Later, His Holiness visited the Nehru Planetarium at Worli and was received by the Secretary of the Trust, Mr. P.G. Salvi. Dr. Venkatavaradhan took His Holiness around the various wings of the planetarium and a special presentation in Hindi on the universe impressed the <i>Jagadguru</i> .
30.04.1982 to 02.05.1982	-do-	His Holiness arrived on the Juna Hanuman Mandir Grounds. A large gathering of devotees and citizens was present at the felicitation function of His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam on the completion of 50 years of His <i>saṁnyāsa-āśrama</i> .
02.05.1982 to 06.05.1982	Nashik	On the eve of departure to Nashik on the 2nd of May, His Holiness commended the <i>Guru-bhakti</i> of the devotees in Mumbai and invoked the blessing of Śāradā-Candramaulīśvara for their welfare and prosperity. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received with joy and enthusiasm when they arrived at Nashik by 11 p.m. On the 2nd, at the Sringeri Math in Panchavati, a large gathering had assembled to have the <i>darśana</i> of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . A large number of devotees watched with joy the hour-long <i>pūjā</i> performed to Lord Triambakeśvar by His Holiness on the 3rd.

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Date	Place	Events
06.05.1982 to 20.05.1982	Various Places	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Loni on the 6th, via Sangamner and Manchar and stayed at Ramdara Temple, to participate in the ' <i>Gāyatrī-mahāyajña</i> '. The two week long <i>yajña</i> ended on the 7th, with the offering of <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> in the presence of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> and the Śaṅkarācārya of Jyotir Math, Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Shirur and performed the <i>Śukravāra-pūjā</i> on the 7th. Later, the camp moved to Ahmednagar and then to Aurangabad for three days from the 9th of May. After touring Ajanta, Jalgaon and Dhule, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Sendhwa on the 15th, in Madhya Pradesh. They visited the Durga Temple on the Maharashtra - Madhya Pradesh border. From the Satyanarayan Mandir, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were taken in a procession to the camp at Sitaram Sat Sangh. The next halt was at Khalghat in the banks of the holy river Narmadā. Later the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Ahilyabai Fort and subsequently, visited the border town of Bagh in Madhya Pradesh.
20.05.1982 to 27.05.1982	Various Places	The devotees of Dakor received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> when they arrived there on the 20th of May. The camp was at Baidyanath Mahadev Temple. They also visited the Shiva Temple at Garbara. The Dakor branch of the Dwaraka Sharada Peetham accorded a grand reception to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . They then had <i>darśana</i> of Ranchhodraiji and worshipped Him. Halting at Rajkot on the 23rd, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Jamnagar on the 24th of May and camped there.
27.05.1982 to 01.06.1982	Dwaraka and other places	Śrī Abhinava Saccidānanda Tīrtha Svāmin, the <i>Jagadguru</i> of the Dwaraka Peetham, passed away on the 7th of April, 1982, and as per his wish, Śrī Svarūpānanda Svāmin was to be installed as the Pontiff of that Peetham. Śrī Svarūpānanda requested His Holiness to perform the <i>Pattābhiśeka</i> . Accordingly, His Holiness proceeded to Dwaraka, and installed Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī as the <i>Jagadguru</i> of the Dwaraka Peetham on the 27th of May. Holy waters from all over the country were used in performing the consecration ceremony. The Home & Education Minister of Gujarat Mr. Prabhod Raval called on His Holiness at his camp at Birla Mandir. During his camp here, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> had <i>samudra-snāna</i> , in the Gomatī River <i>saṅgama</i> with a host of disciples. Leaving Dwaraka, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Porbandar and worshipped the <i>Jyotirlinga</i> at Somanth Patan. Morbi, Jamnagar, and Surendranagar received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> with enthusiasm.

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Date	Place	Events
01.06.1982 to 16.06.1982	Ahmedabad to Haridwar	On the 1st of June, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Ahmedabad. Later, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited Himmatnagar and entered the state of Rajasthan on the 6th, touring extensively through Karwar, Udaipur, Mewara, Ajmer, Jaipur, Bharatpur, Aligarh and Garhmukteshwar. They reached Muzzafarpur on the 15th, en route to Haridwar, the holy city.
16.06.1982 to 21.06.1982	Haridwar to Tehri	In response to a pressing invitation from Ānandamayi Mā, a pious and a spiritual leader, His Holiness arrived at Haridwar on the 16th of June. On arrival at Haridwar, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were received in a traditional way by a large gathering of devotees, learned <i>sarṇnyāsins</i> and Mahamandaleshwars and were taken in a procession from Shankaracharya Marg to Kankhal, where the <i>Āśrama</i> of Ānandamayi Mā is situated. His Holiness stayed there for three days. His Holiness had His holy bath on the 17th in Brahmakund, the place where the celestial waters are said to flow. The same evening the <i>Jagadgurus</i> were given a warm reception by the elite of the town. After visiting some of the important places around Haridwar, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> , started their onward journey towards Uttar Kashi on the 18th.
-do-	-do-	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Tehri and paid a visit to the Tehri Dam. Leaving Tehri on the 19th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Barkot en route to Yamunotri and camped there. Then, They reached Hanuman Chatti by car on the 20th and walked the entire distance of 6 kms. They rested for the day at Jankibai Chatty. By now the party had reached already a height of 2576 metres above sea level and the entire area was under the grip of severe cold.
21.06.1982 to 22.06.1982	Yamunotri	On Monday, the 21st, after finishing their usual <i>anuṣṭhāna</i> early morning, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left by foot for Yamunotri Glacier accompanied by a small group of devotees and a few <i>Maṭha</i> staff. Immediately on arriving at the spot, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> had a holy dip in the chilling glacier.
22.06.1982 to 23.06.1982	Hanuman Chatty to Uttar Kashi	On Tuesday, the 22nd, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left Jankibai Chatty by foot to Hanuman Chatty, from where they reached Barkot. On Wednesday, the 23rd, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Uttar Kashi en route to Gangotri.
24.06.1982 to 25.06.1982	Lanka to Gangotri	On Friday, the 25th, before the <i>Maṭha</i> staff could arrive at Lanka, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> had left the place for Gangotri, in the early hours of the day, by a special military jeep which alone could negotiate the difficult terrain. In the afternoon, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> accompanied by a few disciples went around

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Date	Place	Events
		the outskirts of Gangotri and, on the way, His Holiness entered the <i>āśrama</i> of an <i>avadhūt</i> called Rāmānanda Yogī. The <i>Yogin</i> received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> with due reverence.
26.06.1982 to 04.07.1982	Gangotri to New Delhi	On Saturday, the 26th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> , after finishing their morning <i>anuṣṭhānas</i> , left for a holy bath in the Gangotri Glacier, along with their <i>śiṣyas</i> who accompanied them. Bathing in the sacred river, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> performed their afternoon <i>anuṣṭhānas</i> in front of the temple of Gaṅgā and then worshipped at the temple. Subsequently, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left in a special Jeep to Bhairavghatti from where they covered the 6-mile route by foot to reach Lanka. From Lanka, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> returned to Uttar Kashi and halted there for the day. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Dehradun after their pilgrimage to the Himalayas.
04.07.1982	New Delhi	Thousands of devotees, including Ministers and officials of the Government accorded a reverential welcome to Śrī Mahāsannidhānam and Śrī Sannidhānam on their arrival in the capital. Hundreds of devotees had gathered at the Uttara Swamymalai, to receive the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . Among others who received the <i>Jagadgurus</i> at Malai Mandir, R.K. Puram, were Sri R. Venkataraman, Union Defence Minister, Sri Balram Jakhar, Lok Sabha Speaker and Chairman of the Reception Committee and Sri S.L. Khurana, Lt. Governor of Delhi. The Śāṅkarācārya of Jyotir Math, Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī was also present at the reception.
06.07.1982 to 03.09.1982	-do-	On the 6th of July, His Holiness performed <i>Vyāsa-pūjā</i> and observed <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> till the 3rd of September, at the Shankara Vidya Kendra in New Delhi. His Holiness blessed the 'Sanskrit Divas' function, and gave his benedictions. Mr.R. Venkataraman, Union Minister for Defence, presided over the function. Mrs. Sheila Kaul, Minister of State for Culture, Education and Social Welfare, delivered the welcome address. On the day of <i>Gokulāṣṭamī</i> , His Holiness visited the Birla Mandir and exhorted the people to follow the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The President of India, Giani Zail Singh, offered his <i>praṇāms</i> to the <i>Jagadguru</i> . On the 17th of August, the <i>Jagadguru</i> inaugurated the newly constructed building of the Paramarth Mission Hospital at Shakti Nagar. The <i>vākyārtha-sadas</i> which commenced on the 22nd, the day of <i>Vināyaka-caturthī</i> , in the presence of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> , concluded on the 3rd of September. On that day, Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi called on the <i>Jagadgurus</i> , paid her respects to the <i>Ācāryas</i> and prayed for blessings. She distributed shawls and cash presents to the scholars at the instance of the <i>Jagadguru</i> .



## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
05.09.1982 to 19.09.1982	New Delhi to Varanasi	Passing through Meerut, Moradabad, Bareilly, Kannauj and Auraiya, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Kanpur on the 10th of September. From Kanpur, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Allahabad and camped at the Sringeri Math branch for two days. On the 13th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Vindhyachal and arrived at holy Varanasi on the 14th, and stayed there till the 18th. At a public meeting arranged at the Burdwan Koti in the Mahmoorganj locality, His Holiness was accorded a grand reception by <i>Pandits</i> and scholars and a large number of devotees including the Maharaja of Kashi and Sri Raghunath Singh, former M.P., Varanasi. The <i>Jagadguru</i> gave His benedictions. The three-day <i>Atirudra-mahāpuruṣasukta-yajña</i> and the <i>ārāadhanā</i> celebrations of Jagadguru Śrī Candrasekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin were conducted on the 16th, at the Sringeri Math at Kedar Ghat.
19.09.1982 to 26.09.1982	Varanasi to Patna	Leaving Varanasi, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> halted at Sasaram and Gaya before reaching Patna on the 23rd. The halt at Patna was for three days.
26.09.1982 to 14.10.1982	Patna to Kolkata	From Patna, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> passed through the towns of Hajipur and Samastipur before they halted at Darbanga from the 28th to the 30th. Thereafter, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> halted at Sitakund, Bhagalpur, Mandarachal Parvat and Deoghar from the 3rd to 5th, Giridih, Bokaro and Kanko from the 7th to the 9th, Dhanbad, Durgapur, Bardhaman and arrived at Tarakeshwar on the 13th of October. Thier Holiness visited the famous Tarakeshwar Shrine on the 14th, and offered special <i>pūjās</i> here. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> arrived at Kolkata on the evening of the 14th of October.
14.10.1982 to 18.11.1982	Kolkata	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were accorded a warm reception on arrival by Sri P. Subramaniam, and thousands of other devotees. A reception was held in a specially erected <i>pandal</i> . <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations commenced on the 17th of October, during which Cultural programmes, literary conferences and philosophical discourses were arranged by the Shankara Hall and Shankara Institute of Philosophy and culture. The 66th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was celebrated on the 14th of November at Kolkata. In the evening, a special public function was arranged for felicitating His Holiness. A large number of distinguished visitors and devotees called on the <i>Jagadguru</i> and offered pranams. Mr. Sambhu Chandra Ghose, the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, was one among them.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
18.11.1982 to 19.12.1982	Kolkata to Paramahamsi Ganga Ashram	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> , after leaving Kolkata, passed through and halted at Krishnanagar from the 18th to the 20th, Kalna and Kharagpur from the 21st to the 23rd, Jamshedpur from the 23rd to the 28th, Chaibasa from the 28th to the 30th, Jamda, Barsuan, Deogarh, Sambalpur, Saraipali, Arang and Bhilai from the 6th of December to the 9th, Kota-Lorni and Amarkantak from the 12th to the 14th, Dindori, Shahpura and Jabalpur from the 16th to the 19th and reached Paramhamsi Ganga Ashram on the 19th of December.
19.12.1982 to 27.12.1982	Paramahamsi Ganga Ashram	His Holiness's visit to Paramahamsi Ganga Ashram was in response to the request of Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī who had built a magnificent temple for Śrī Rājarājeśvarī at that place and desired that His Holiness should Himself consecrate the idol. A vast concourse of tens of thousands of people had gathered in that forest region without concerning themselves with the need for comforts, though excellent arrangements had been made. A grand consecration ceremony was witnessed by a vast multitude. Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi too visited Paramahamsi Ganga Ashram and had <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness and addressed a meeting at that place before leaving.
27.12.1982 to 31.12.1982	Hoshangabad	After leaving Paramahamsi Ganga Ashram, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded via Narasinghpur and Lohari to Hoshangabad on the banks of the Narmadā. In the holy waters of the Narmadā, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> had a special bath for the lunar eclipse. On the way to Hoshangabad, His Holiness remarked, " <i>Īśvara</i> is bringing Me to the Southern banks of the Narmadā even though I had crossed over to the North. It appears to Me that He does not wish that the <i>yātrā</i> to the North continue much longer."
31.12.1982 to 05.01.1983	Bhopal, Ashta, Dewas, Indore	During the stay of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> at Bhopal on the 1st of January 1983, the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Mr. Arjun Singh visited His Holiness and so did the Governor, B.D. Sharma. At Bhopal, despite His bad health, His Holiness visited the hill temple of Lord Śiva (Gufa Mandir) and worshipped there. From Bhopal, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> proceeded to Ashta on the 1st and camped there for a day. The next camp was at Dewas on the 2nd. On the evening of the 3rd, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> reached Indore and camped there till the 5th of January at the Potdar Guest House. Arrangements for the camp of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> had been made by Sri Venkatraman of Hope Textiles Ltd. On the 5th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> left for Ujjain.

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Thrissur  
Sri Vadakkunnathan Temple*



*Madurai  
Sri Meenakshi Amman Temple*



*Thiruvananthapuram  
Sri Padmanabha Swamy Temple*



*Tirunelveli  
Sri Nellaiappar Swamy Temple*



*Srirangam  
Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple*



*Thiruvanaikovil  
Sri Jambukeswarar Temple*



*Tirumala Tirupati  
Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple*



*Srisailem  
Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

**The 19th Tour - All India - 1981 - 83**

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Dwaraka  
Sri Dwarkadish Temple*



*Gujarat  
Somnath Temple*



*Haridwar  
Har-Ki-Pauri*



*Varanasi  
Swarna Annapurna Temple*



*Gangotri  
Goddess Ganga Temple*



*Yamunotri  
Goddess Yamuna Temple*



*Kolkata  
Tarakeshwar Taraknath Temple*



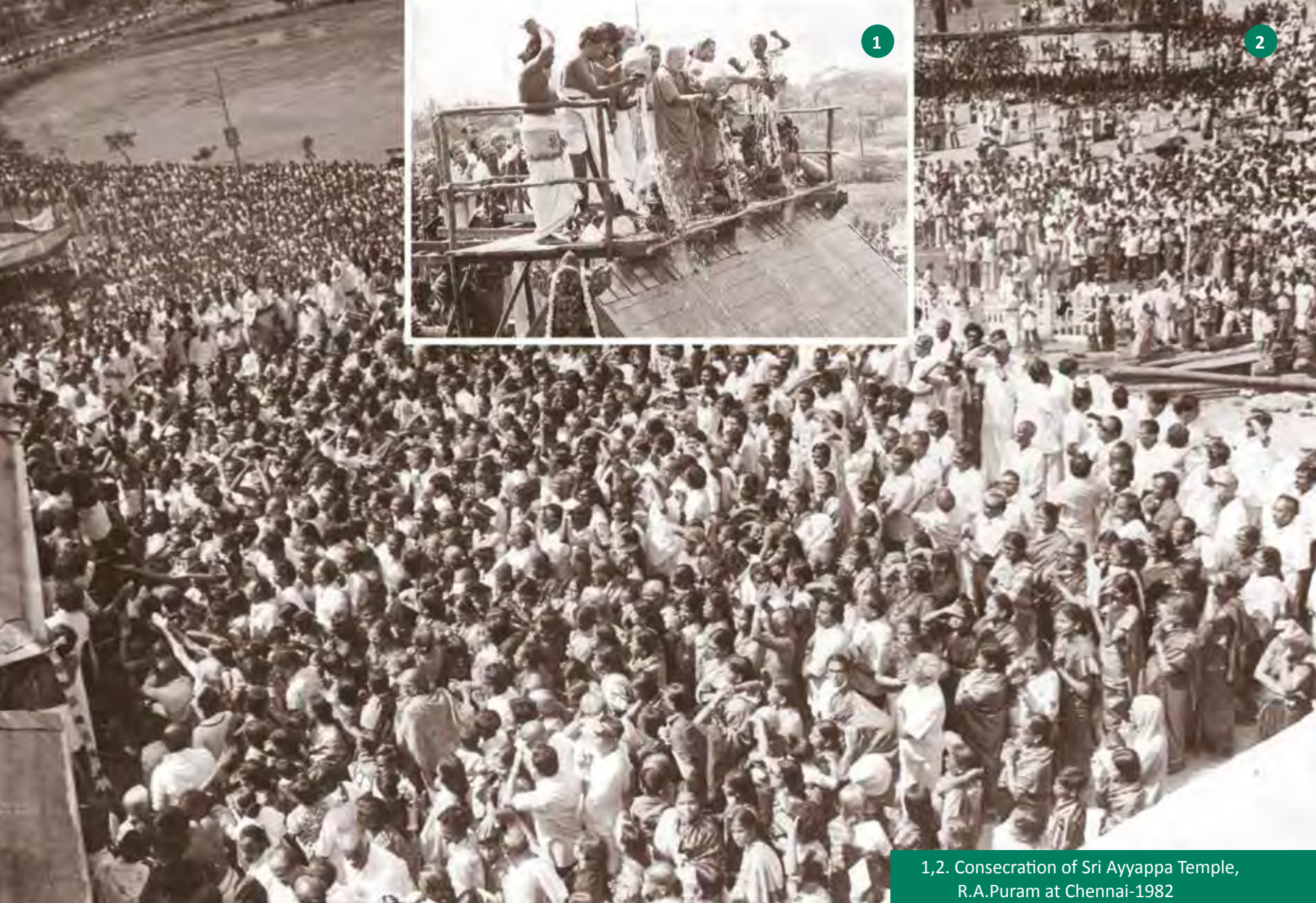
*Ujjain  
Mahakaleshwar Temple*



*Kalady  
Sharada, Shankara Temples*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

**The 19th Tour - All India - 1981 - 83**



1,2. Consecration of Sri Ayyappa Temple,  
R.A.Puram at Chennai-1982

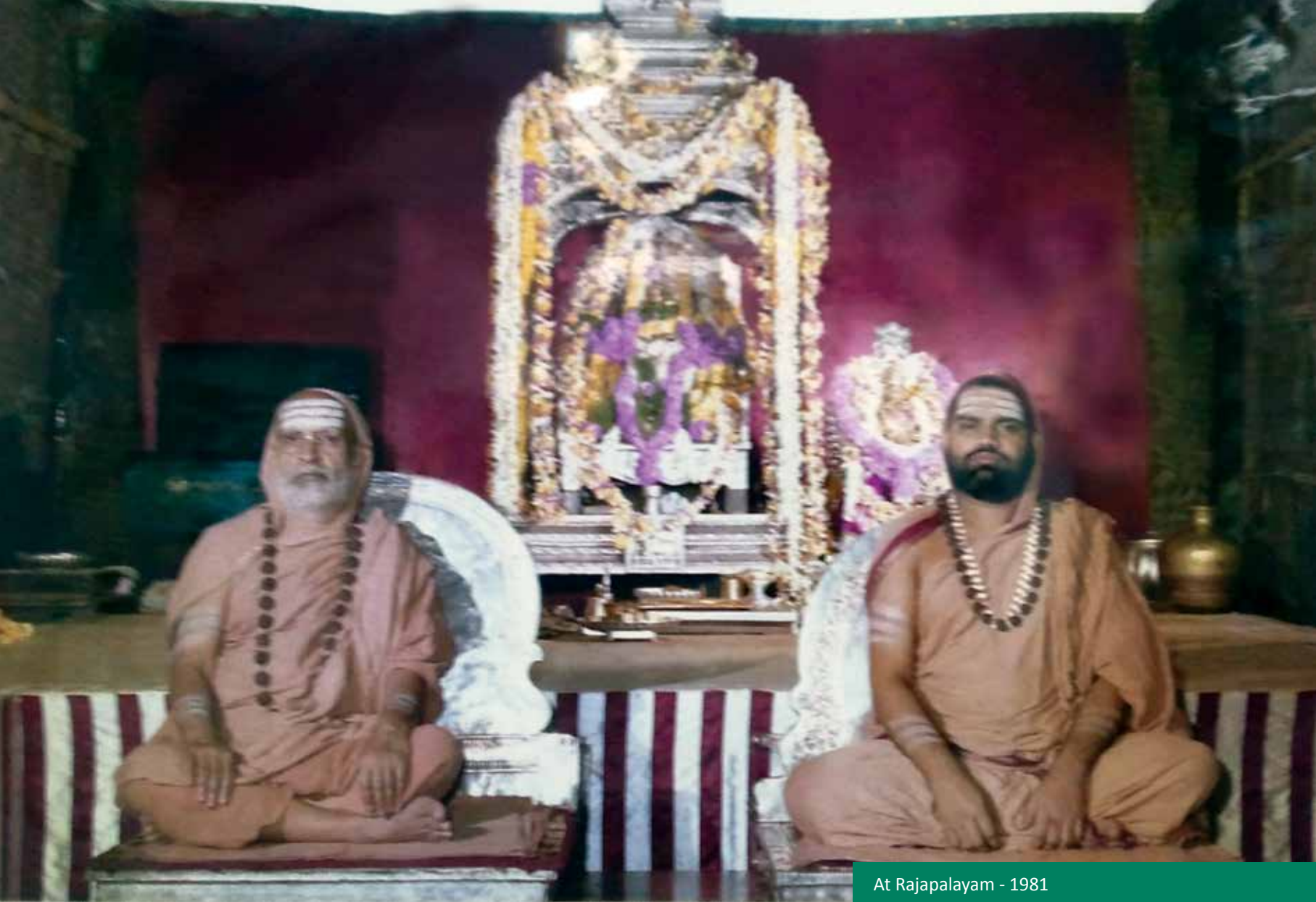
The 19th Tour - All India - 1981 - 83



Golden Jubilee of *āśrama-svikāra* celebration at Chennai - 1982

1. Sri R. Venkatraman blessed with *prasāda*
2. Felicitation to the *Jagadgurus* by Sri R. Venkatraman, Union Minister of Finance
3. Addressing the devotees
4. Huge gathering listening to His Holiness

The 19th Tour - All India - 1981 - 83



At Rajapalayam - 1981

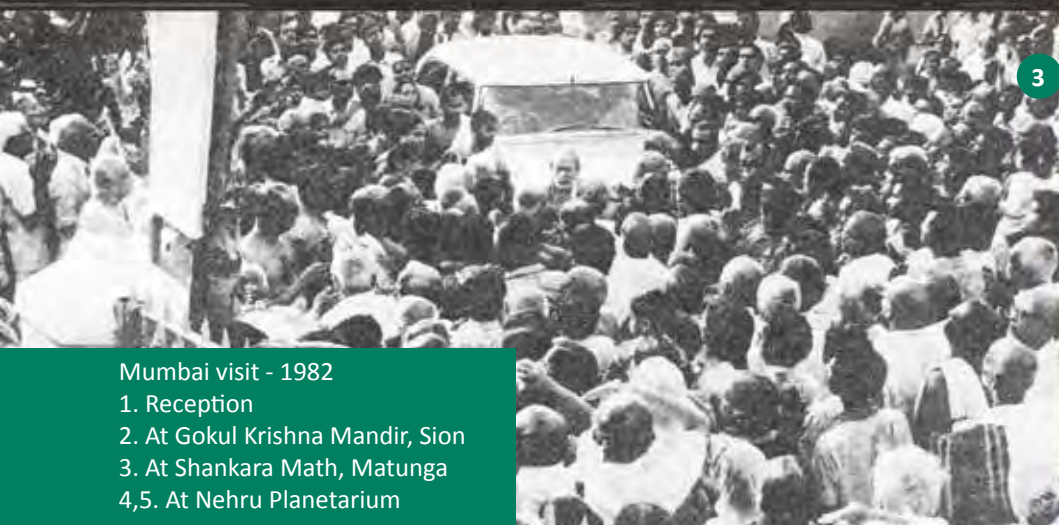
The 19th Tour - All India - 1981 - 83



At Sri Raja Rajeshwara Swamy Temple,  
Vemulavada, AP - 1982

The 19th Tour - All India - 1981 - 83





Mumbai visit - 1982

1. Reception

2. At Gokul Krishna Mandir, Sion

3. At Shankara Math, Matunga

4,5. At Nehru Planetarium

The 19th Tour - All India - 1981 - 83



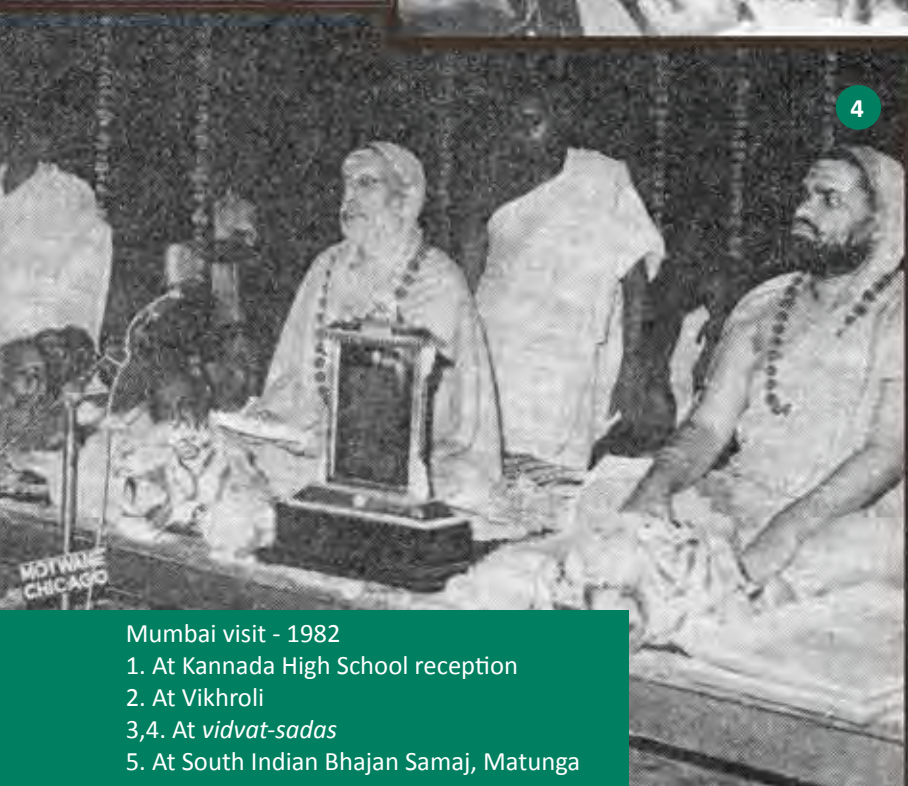
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4



5

Mumbai visit - 1982

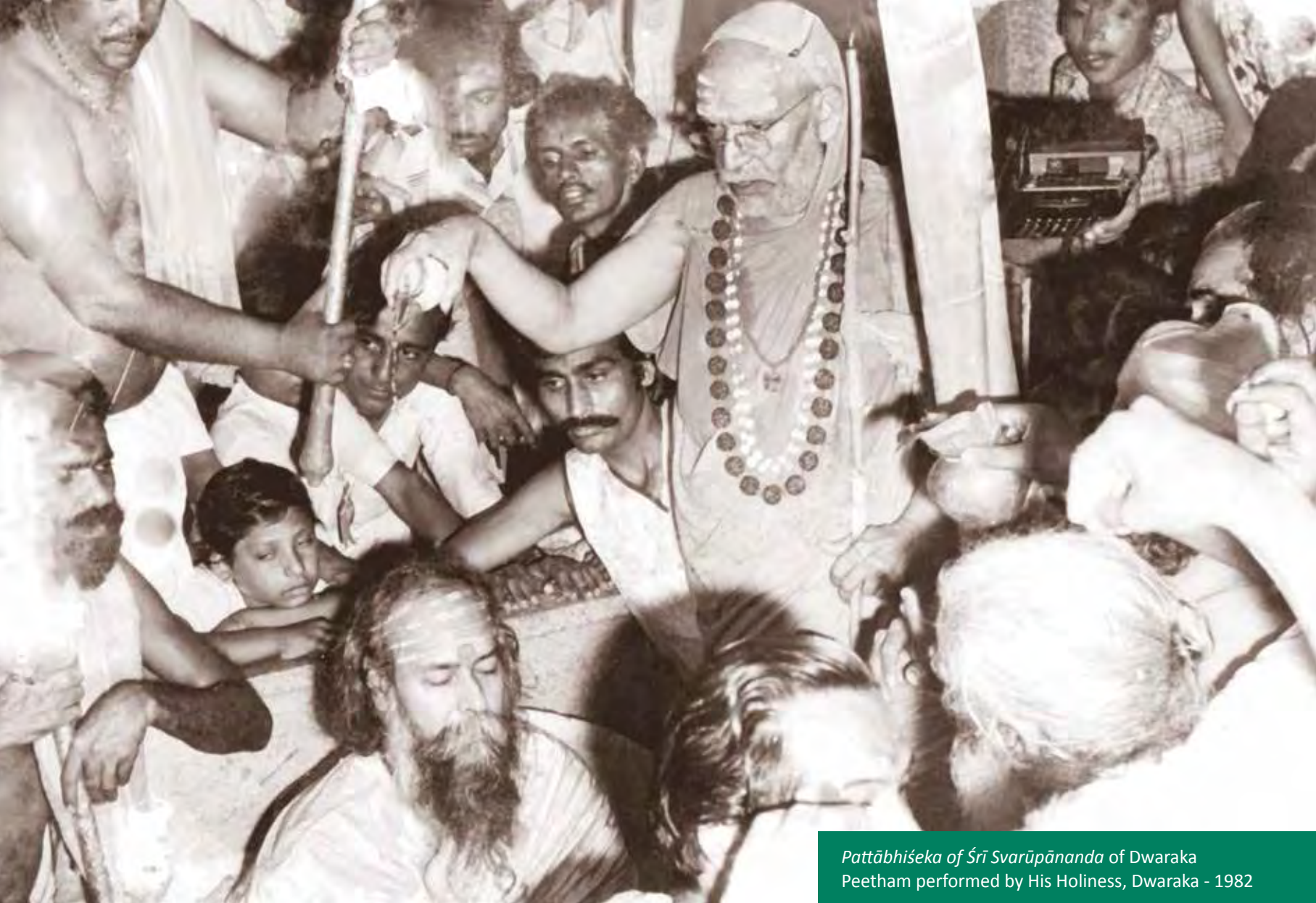
1. At Kannada High School reception

2. At Vikhroli

3,4. At vidvat-sadas

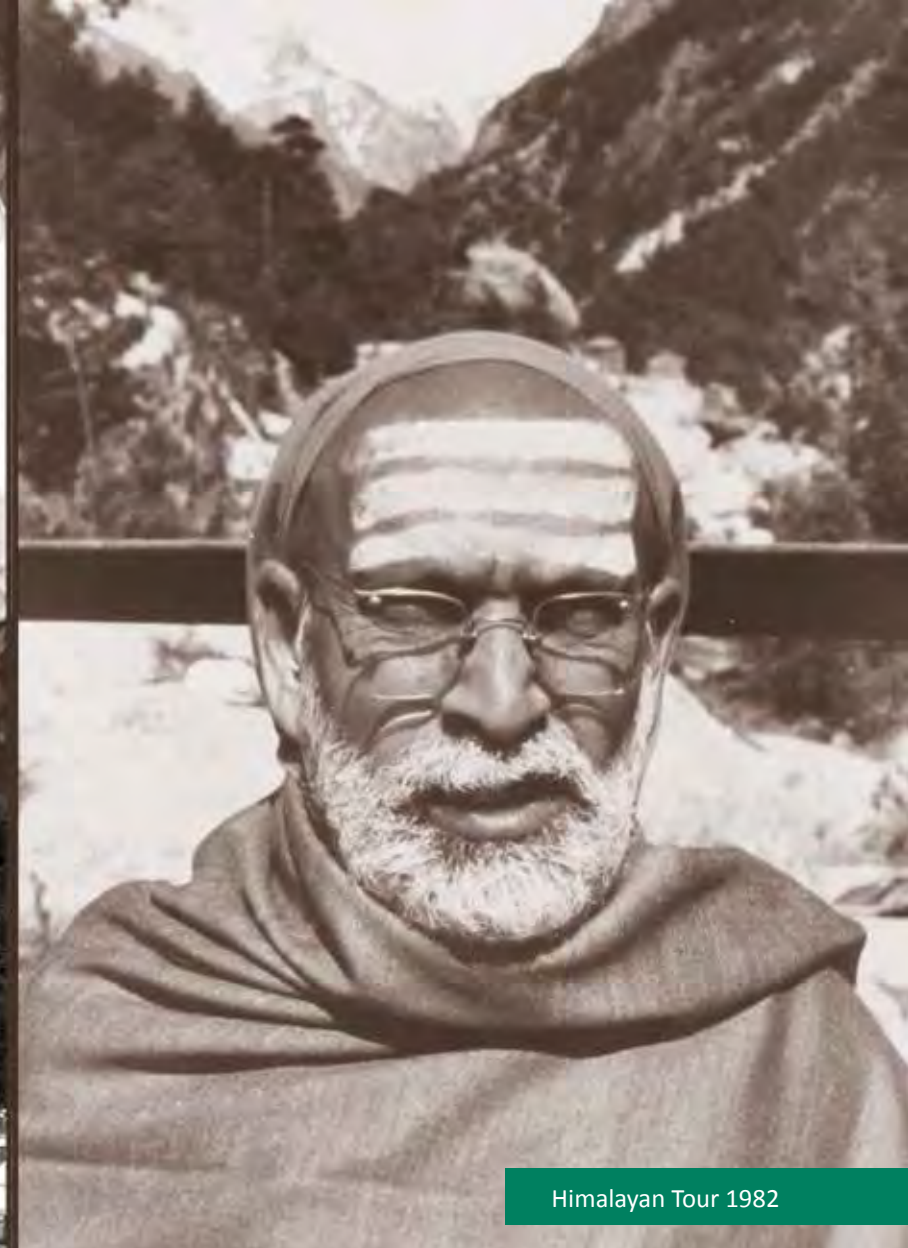
5. At South Indian Bhajan Samaj, Matunga

The 19th Tour - All India - 1981 - 83



*Pattābhīṣeka of Śrī Svarūpānanda of Dwaraka  
Peetham performed by His Holiness, Dwaraka - 1982*

**The 19th Tour - All India - 1981 - 83**



Himalayan Tour 1982



The 19th Tour - All India - 1981 - 83

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

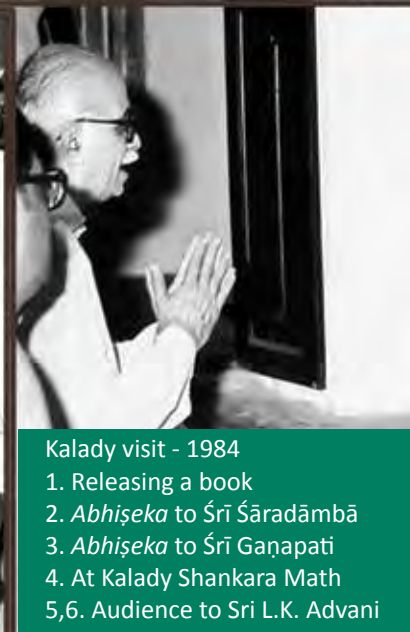
Date	Place	Events
05.01.1983 to 24.01.1983	Ujjain to Sringeri	At Ujjain, Prof. Venkatachalam was the primary organiser of the <i>Jagadgurus'</i> camp. Since it was felt that His Holiness's urgent return to Bengaluru was necessitated by His deteriorating health, the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Mr. Arjun Singh offered a special plane. His Holiness along with Śrī Sannidhānam, returned by the special plane to Bengaluru from Ujjain on the 5th. The words uttered by His Holiness on the way to Hoshangabad were indeed prophetic for, after He had proceeded from Hoshangabad to visit Bhopal, Indore and Ujjain, ill-health forced His Holiness to cut short the tour. After a brief stay at Bengaluru, His Holiness returned to Sringeri and that marked the completion of the third All India tour.
(1983)	(Sringeri)	(His Holiness performed the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> at Sringeri on the 11th of March. Subsequently, the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations took place in a grand manner in His divine presence.)
		The 20th Tour - Short tour of Bengaluru - 1983 (2 months & 7 days)
24.07.1983 to 28.09.1983	Bengaluru	In July 1983, His Holiness left Sringeri and halting at Shivamogga and Kibbanahalli, reached Bengaluru. Śrī Sannidhānam returned from His tour to Bengaluru and joined His Holiness for <i>Cāturmāsya</i> . The <i>Jagadgurus</i> stayed in Bengaluru for <i>Cāturmāsya</i> , which commenced from the 24th of July. On the 4th of September, President Mr. Giani Zail Singh called on His Holiness at His Bengaluru camp and had an exclusive audience with the <i>Jagadguru</i> . The <i>Gaṇapati-vākyārtha-sabhā</i> was inaugurated by His Excellency the Governor of Karnataka, Sri Ashokanath Banerji, on the 10th of September. The <i>vidvat-sadas</i> concluded on the 22nd. Justice Sri M. Rama Jois, Karnataka High Court, was the Chief Guest on the occasion. On the eve of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> leaving Bengaluru, the citizens of Bengaluru city paid their respectful homage to Śrī Mahā sannidhānam and Śrī Sannidhānam at a public meeting. Sri H.D. Deve Gowda, Minister for Public Works, and Sri M. Chandrashekar, Minister for Urban Development, Karnataka Government, and Sri Sundara Raj, Mayor, Bengaluru, participated in the function. His Holiness left Bengaluru for <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations at Sringeri.
(1983)	(Sringeri)	(The auspicious <i>Navarātri</i> festival was celebrated at Sringeri with all devotion and fervour by His Holiness from the 6th to the 17th of October 1983.)

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		The 21st Tour - Short tour of Bengaluru - 1983-84 (3 months & 19 days)
30.10.1983 to 29.01.1984	Bengaluru	Acceding to the request of numerous devotees in Bengaluru, His Holiness returned to the city for the <i>Vardhantī</i> celebrations. The 67th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was celebrated from the 30th of October 1983 to the 3rd of November, at the Shankara Math in Bengaluru. <i>Atirudra-yajña</i> was performed and the <i>pūrṇāhuti</i> was offered on the day of <i>Vardhantī</i> . As part of the <i>Vardhantī</i> celebrations, a <i>Dharma-sammelana</i> , <i>sāhitya-sammelana</i> and <i>Veda-vidvat-goṣṭi</i> were held in which eminent scholars from many parts of the country participated. Śrī Sannidhānam had arrived at Bengaluru from His independent tour of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu and He also adorned the dais along with His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam at the function. His Excellency Sri Ashoknath Banerji, Governor of Karnataka, Sri Arjun Singh, the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, who specially flew to Bengaluru for <i>darśana</i> of His Holiness and Sri M.L. Sundar Raj, Mayor of Bengaluru, participated in the function. Jagadguru Śrī Mahāsannidhānam travelled towards Sringeri on Thursday, the 16th of February, 1984 after a stay of around four months at Bengaluru.
30.01.1984 to 05.02.1984	Sondekoppa	Having visited the Nimishamba Devi Temple and Kalyana Mandiram, His Holiness proceeded to Sondekoppa. His Holiness returned to Bengaluru to perform the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the Rama Mandiram, Vyalikaval.
06.02.1984	Bengaluru	His Holiness consecrated the Panchamukhi Ganapathi Shrine in Rajajinagar.
08.02.1984	Mysuru	His Holiness left for Mysuru. During His stay there, His Holiness paid a visit to Hebbasur.
15.02.1984 to 16.02.1984	Chickmagaluru	His Holiness then blessed Ramnathapura and Agrahara and reached Chickmagaluru. He then reached Sringeri on the 16th.
(1984)	(Sringeri)	( <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> was celebrated by the <i>Jagadgurus</i> on the 29th of February.)
-do-	-do-	(His Holiness proceeded to Anegunda near Sringeri to grace an <i>Atirudra-yajña</i> being performed there by the Pontiff of the Hariharapura Math and returned to Sringeri. The <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations took place at Sringeri.)

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		The 22nd Tour - Short tour of Kalady - 1984 (3 months & 20 days)
02.06.1984 to 06.06.1984	Shivamogga, Kyathsandra	His Holiness had decided to observe the <i>Cāturmāsya</i> of 1984 at Kalady. He left Sringeri on the 2nd of June for Shivamogga. His Holiness reached Kyathsandra on the 4th. He then left for Bengaluru.
06.06.1984 to 02.07.1984	Bengaluru	He arrived at the Shankar Math in Bengaluru on the 6th and stayed there till the 2nd of July.
02.07.1984 to 12.07.1984	Bengaluru to Kalady	His Holiness arrived at Salem and stayed there till the afternoon of the 4th, and passed through Gobichettipalayam (5th), Coimbatore (6th and 7th), Palakkad (8th) and reached Kalady on the 9th. Śrī Sannidhānam, who was touring Karnataka and Maharashtra states from 1984, also arrived at Kalady on the 10th, from Thrissur, to join Śrī Mahāsannidhānam's camp, to perform <i>Vyāsa-pūjā</i> .
12.07.1984	Kalady	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> performed <i>Vyāsa-pūjā</i> and observed the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> at Kalady.
22.08.1984	-do-	The <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the shrines of Śrī Śāradāmbā and Śrī Śaṅkarācārya as also that of the recently constructed <i>Rājagopura</i> for these two shrines was performed by His Holiness Śrī Sannidhānam on Wednesday, the 22nd of August, at 9:15 a.m. His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam graced the occasion and gave His blessings.
10.09.1984	-do-	On the 10th of September, a grand function was organised by Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer to celebrate the 75th year of the original consecration of the temples at Kalady by Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimha Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin and to lay the foundation stone for Sri Shankaracharya University of Sanskrit at Kalady. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> blessed the occasion. The Chief Minister of Kerala, Sri K. Karunakaran, the Governor Sri P. Ramachandran and Sri A.R. Somnatha Iyer participated in the function.
12.09.1984 to 20.09.1984	Kalady to Sringeri	His Holiness left Kalady and halting at Ernakulam (12th), Thrissur (13th), Coimbatore (14th), Sathyamangalam (15th), Kollegal (16th), T. Narasipura (17th), Hassan (18th) and Belavadi (19th), He reached Sringeri on the evening of the 20th of September 1984.
(1984)	(Sringeri)	(The <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations for the year 1984 and the 68th <i>Vardhantī</i> celebrations of His Holiness were conducted in Sringeri in the month of October in a grand scale.)



Kalady visit - 1984  
1. Releasing a book  
2. *Abhiseka* to Śrī Śāradāmbā  
3. *Abhiseka* to Śrī Gaṇapati  
4. At Kalady Shankara Math  
5,6. Audience to Sri L.K. Advani

## The 22nd Tour - Short Tour of Kalady - 1984



## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		<b>The 23rd Tour - Stay at Kotekar - 1984 (2 months)</b>
November to December 1984	Kotekar	His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam journeyed to Kotekar near Mangaluru and stayed at the Advaita Ashram there, in the months of November to December 1984, while Śrī Sannidhānam was at Sringeri.
(1985)	(Sringeri)	(The months of January and February 1985 witnessed hectic activity in Sringeri as the <i>Jagadguru</i> performed the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the renovated shrines of Śrī Malahānikareśvara and Bhavānī Ambā on the 11th of February. The religious functions commenced on the 22nd of January and concluded on the 12th of February 1985. <i>Sahasra-modaka-Gaṇapati-homa</i> , <i>Atirudra</i> , <i>Sahasracandī</i> , <i>Lalitā-homa</i> , <i>Rg Veda</i> , <i>Yajur Veda</i> and <i>Sāma Veda saṁhitā-yajñas</i> and <i>Koṭi-kumkuma-arcana</i> to Śāradāmbā were some of the events conducted in connection with the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> . Śrī Svarūpānanda Sarasvatī, the Śaṅkarācārya of Dwaraka and Badri Peethas, also graced these events.)
-do-	-do-	( <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> and <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> were celebrated by His Holiness at Sringeri. The <i>Jagadguru</i> observed <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> and celebrated <i>Navarātri</i> of 1985 in Sringeri itself. The 69th <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness was also celebrated during His stay at Sringeri. Till the end of 1985, His Holiness remained in Sringeri.)
		<b>The 24th Tour - Short tour of Kotekar and Kollur - 1986 (1 month &amp; 21 days)</b>
04.01.1986 to 20.02.1986	Kotekar	Śrī Mahāsannidhānam camped at Kotekar in Mangaluru during the winter from the 4th of January 1986 till the 20th of February, when He left for Kollur.
20.02.1986 to 24.02.1986	Kollur	En route to Kollur, His Holiness camped at Hejmady and Kundapura. At Kundapura, His Holiness offered 108 silver coins to Lord Kundeshwara and reached Kollur on the 22nd evening. The <i>Jagadguru</i> was then taken to the Mookambika Temple where He was received by the temple authorities with all temple honours. The ceremony of laying the foundation stone for a branch <i>Maṭha</i> building took place at 10 a.m. on the 23rd of February. Leading dignitaries and devotees from all over Southern India participated in the function. On the 24th of February, His Holiness performed <i>pūjā</i> in the sanctum sanctorum of Sri Mookambika Temple. As an offering from the

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		<i>Maṭha</i> , His Holiness adorned Goddess Mūkāmbikā with a precious gold chain studded with rubies and a pure silk saree. His Holiness reached Sringeri in the evening.
(1986)	(Sringeri)	(The <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> of the year was performed at Sringeri on the 8th of March.)
		The 25th Tour - Short trip to Gangoli, Kundapura and Kotekar - 1986 (7 days)
02.04.1986 to 05.04.1986	Gangoli, Kundapura	His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam commenced His short tour of Gangoli, Kundapura and Kotekar on the 2nd of April. He arrived at Gangoli at 6 p.m. from Sringeri. Amidst <i>Vedic</i> chantings, the <i>Jagadguru</i> was taken in a procession to the temple. The next day, the <i>Jagadguru</i> performed the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the shrine of Kālikāmbā, the Mahakali Temple. Later, The <i>Jagadguru</i> laid the foundation stone for the Kalyana Mandapam to be built by Rama Kshatriya Samaj, Gangoli, and the foundation stone for a Rama Temple. His Holiness visited Kundapura and addressed a huge gathering on the 5th.
05.04.1986 to 08.04.1986	Kotekar	A branch Math of the Sringeri Sharada Peetham was inaugurated by His Holiness at Advaita Ashram, Kotekar near Mangaluru. The <i>Jagadguru</i> stayed in the <i>Maṭha</i> till the 8th of April, and left for Sringeri.
		The 26th Tour - Short tour of Karnataka - 1986 (1 month & 19 days)
27.04.1986 to 03.05.1986	Sringeri to Bengaluru	His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin left Sringeri on the 27th of April and camping at Chickmagaluru, Arsikere, Tiptur and Sondekoppa on the way, arrived at Bengaluru on the 3rd of May.
09.05.1986 to 31.05.1986	Bengaluru	<i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations were conducted in a grand manner in the august presence of His Holiness from the 9th to the 14th of May. After a month's stay at Bengaluru, His Holiness left for Mysuru on the 31st.



At Sri Srikanteshwara Swamy Temple,  
Nanjanaḡuḡu - 1986

The 26th Tour - Short Tour of Karnataka - 1986

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
31.05.1986 to 12.06.1986	Mysuru, Nanjanagudu, Hebbasur	His Holiness was given a grand reception on arrival at Mysuru. He visited Sri Srikanteshwara Swamy Temple at Nanjanagudu on the 1st of June. The installation of idols of Goddess Śāradāmbā and Ādi Śaṅkarācārya at Sringeri Shankara Math at Nanjanagudu was performed by His Holiness on the 2nd of June. On the 4th, the installation of <i>Navagraha</i> idols in the newly constructed temple at Abhinava Shankaralaya was performed. Śrī Mahāsannidhānam visited Hebbasur near Chamarajanagar and installed the idol of Śrī Mahāgaṇapati in a separate temple constructed at the entrance of the village and returned to Mysuru in the evening, after a brief halt at Nanjanagudu Shankara Math, to bless the devotees there.
12.06.1986 to 15.06.1986	Hassan, Kotekar	After halting at Hassan (12th) and at Kotekar (13th to 14th), His Holiness returned to Sringeri on the 15th of June. Śrī Sannidhānam who had arrived at Sringeri from His tour prostrated before His Holiness and both the <i>Jagadgurus</i> worshipped at the shrine of Goddess Śāradāmbā.
(1986)	(Sringeri)	(His Holiness observed <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> for the year at Sringeri. The <i>Navarātri</i> for the year too was celebrated in Sringeri in the divine presence of His Holiness.)
		The 27th Tour - Short tour of Chennai - 1986 (2 months & 9 days)
22.10.1986 to 28.10.1986	Sringeri to Chennai	Leaving Sringeri on the 22nd, His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin along with Śrī Sannidhānam, halted in Chickmagaluru (23rd), Shivamogga (24th), Arsikere (25th), Bengaluru (26th) and Ranipet (27th), before arriving at Chennai on the 28th of October.
28.10.1986 to 31.10.1986	Chennai	On the arrival at Chennai, a huge reception was accorded at 'Navasuja', Raja Annamalai Puram, by the devotees of Chennai to the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . They stayed at 'Navasuja'. As part of the <i>Vardhantī</i> celebrations, a <i>Mahārudra-homa</i> and <i>Śatacaṇḍī-homa</i> were performed at Sringeri Jagadguru Pravachana Mandiram for world peace.
01.11.1986	-do-	The 70th <i>Vardhantī</i> celebrations of Śrī Mahāsannidhānam were conducted in a grand manner at 'Navasuja', the residence of Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer at Raja Annamalai Puram. Various <i>yajñas</i> were conducted for world peace and prosperity. <i>Pūrṇāhuti</i> of <i>Mahārudra-homa</i> and <i>Śatacaṇḍī-homa</i> was witnessed by the <i>Jagadgurus</i> . In the function organised in the evening, many dignitaries including Sri R.M. Veerappan, former Minister for HR & CE, Tamil Nadu, Sri P.R. Gokulakrishnan, Chief Justice of Gujarat High Court, Sri M.A.M. Ramaswamy, Sri Vaidyasubramania Iyer, Sri S. Viswanathan and important devotees from all over the country spoke at the function. Thousands

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		of devotees had assembled at the venue and became the recipients of the benign grace of His Holiness.
02.11.1986 to 11.11.1986	Chennai	The <i>Jagadgurus</i> camped at 'Navasuja', Raja Annamalai Puram.
11.11.1986 to 15.11.1986	-do-	His Holiness, along with Śrī Sannidhānam, performed the <i>kumbhābhiṣeka</i> of the newly constructed shrines at Śrī Śāradāmbā Temple at the IET Campus Kodambakkam, Chennai. Sri K.R. Sundarajan and his family members, Sri Radhakrishnan and his associates were the organisers. At the function organised in the evening, Sri R.M. Veerappan, former Minister HR & CE, Tamilnadu participated and received the blessings of the <i>Jagadguru</i> .
15.11.1986 to 21.11.1986	-do-	Camp at Sringeri Math Branch, Venkatanarayana Road, T. Nagar. The book ' <i>Śrīmadānandatīrthīyam Sāhāsam, Śrī Śaṅkara-bhagavatpādiyam Ārjavam ca</i> ' was released by His Holiness.
21.11.1986 to 23.11.1986	-do-	Camp at Vidyatheertha Nagar, Abiramapuram.
24.11.1986 to 27.11.1986	-do-	Visit to Tirupati and Tirumala. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> were accorded a traditional welcome by the Temple authorities at Tirumala and taken to the sanctum sanctorum for <i>darśana</i> .
27.11.1986 to 28.11.1986	-do-	Visit to Kanchipuram where the <i>Jagadgurus</i> had <i>darśana</i> of Goddess Śrī Kamākṣī Amman, Śrī Ekāmbaranāthar and Śrī Varadarāja Perumāl. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> returned to Chennai in the evening.
28.11.1986	-do-	Visit to Sri Shankara Gurukulam, Abiramapuram.
29.11.1986 to 02.12.1986	-do-	Camp at Sri Sringeri Math Branch, Krupa Shankari Street, West Mambalam.
03.12.1986 to 07.12.1986	-do-	Visit to Gujarat Samaj opposite Ekambareshwarar Temple at George Town, Sringeri Math of George town, Kumaran Kundram at Chromepet, Pammal and East Tambaram.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
08.12.1986 to 13.12.1986	Chennai	Visit to Kapaleeshwarar Temple at Mylapore, Triplicane Vasanta Mandapam, 'Guruprasad' in Boat Club Road, Nandanam and Ashok Nagar.
14.12.1986 to 21.12.1986	-do-	Camp at Sivasundar Avenue, Thiruvanmiyur. On the 19th, the <i>Jagadgurus</i> visited the Marundeeswarar Temple and delivered a benedictory address there.
22.12.1986 to 24.12.1986	-do-	Visit to Sri Anantapadmanabha Swamy Temple, Adyar, Rathnagiriswarar Temple and the Varasiddhi Vinayakar Temple at Besant Nagar.
25.12.1986 to 29.12.1986	Chennai	Camp at Sringeri Jagadguru Pravachana Mandiram. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> left Chennai on the 29th. Subsequently, His Holiness reached Sringeri via Bengaluru.
(Feberuary 1987)	(Sringeri)	(The foundation stone for the bridge across the river Tuṅgā was laid by the Chief Minister of Karnataka, Mr. Ramakrishna Hegde, on the 12th of February in the august presence of His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam.)
		<b>The 28th Tour - Short stay at Kotekar - 1987</b>
Feberuary 1987	Kotekar	His Holiness camped at Kotekar near Mangaluru for a few days having reached there on the 21st of February.
-do-	(Sringeri)	(Then His Holiness returned to Sringeri, where He performed the <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> and celebrated <i>Śaṅkara-jyantī</i> of the year.)
		<b>The 29th Tour - Short tour of Bengaluru - 1987 (2 months &amp; 1 day)</b>
07.07.1987	Bengaluru	The <i>Jagadguru</i> commenced His tour to Bengaluru for the <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> which started on the 10th of July. Śrī Sannidhānam, who was touring South India, performed <i>Vyāsa-pūjā</i> at Madurai.

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



*Tirumala Tirupati  
Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple*



*Kanchipuram  
Sri Kamakshi Temple*



*Mylapore  
Sri Kapaleswarar Temple*



*Triplicane  
Sri Parthasarathy Swamy Temple*



*Kanchipuram  
Sri Varadaraja Perumal Temple*



*Kanchipuram  
Sri Ekambaranathar Temple*

Major Temples visited by His Holiness

**The 27th Tour - Short Tour of Chennai - 1986**



1. At Enfield Motorcycles Factory, Ranipet  
Chennai visit - 1986
2. Sri V. Vaidyanathan delivering a speech  
Sri S. Viswanathan looks on
3. Public darśana
4. Pūjā

## The 27th Tour - Short Tour of Chennai - 1986





1

1,2. At Pravachana Mandiram  
3. Blessing Sri R. Subramanian



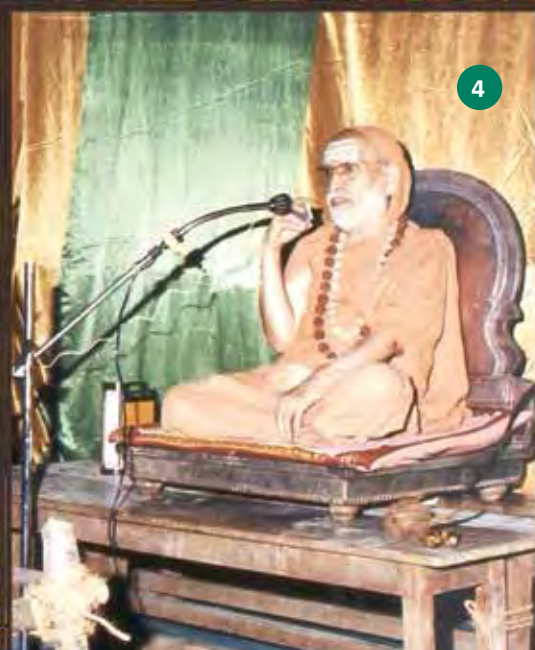
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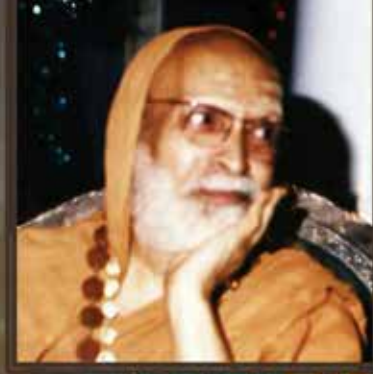


The 27th Tour - Short Tour of Chennai - 1986



Chennai visit - 1986, IET Campus, Kodambakkam  
1-4. At Sri Saradamba Temple  
5. Conversing with Sri R.M. Veerappan,  
Former Minister for HR & CE

## The 27th Tour - Short Tour of Chennai - 1986



Chennai visit - 1986, IET Campus, Kodambakkam  
With the *Jagadgurus* - Sri K.R. Sundararajan, Sri S. Viswanathan,  
Sri S. Meenakshisundaram and others at Sharadamba Temple

The 27th Tour - Short Tour of Chennai - 1986



Chennai visit - 1986  
1. Sringeri Math, Krupasankari Street,  
*prasāda* to devotees  
2. *Pūjā*

## The 27th Tour - Short Tour of Chennai - 1986



Chennai visit - 1986, Thiruvanmiyur camp  
1. *Pūrṇakumbha* by Sri S.E. Krishnan  
2. Arrival of the *Jagadgurus*.  
Sri S. Viswanathan behind His Holiness  
3. Welcome address by Sri S. Ramamurthy,

## The 27th Tour - Short Tour of Chennai - 1986

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
15.07.1987	Bengaluru	Dr. Giani Zail Singh, former President of India, called on His Holiness in Bengaluru on the 15th of July and sought His blessings for the welfare of people.
27.07.1987	-do-	His Holiness performed <i>kumbhābhīṣeka</i> of a newly constructed temple for Śrī Śāradāmba, Śrī Gaṇapati, and Śrī Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda at Lingarajapuram in Contonment area.
09.08.1987	-do-	A <i>bhajan</i> concert by Sri Purushottam Das Jalota and Sri Anup Jalota was organised at Chowdiah Memorial Hall to raise funds for the bridge across Tuṅgā at Sringeri. His Holiness attended the function, spoke about the importance of <i>bhajans</i> and also enjoyed the <i>bhajans</i> .
30.08.1987 to 05.09.1987	-do-	A <i>smaraṇa-saptāha</i> , (seven-day remembrance) of the 34th <i>Jagadguru</i> of Sringeri, Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin, was organized at the Shankara Math, Bengaluru. His Holiness blessed the event and delivered benedictory discourses on all the days except the 4th of September, which, being <i>ekādaśī</i> , was His day of silence. Several persons including Sri S.G. Narasimhaiah, Sri H.S. Krishnaswamy, Sri K.V. Subbaratnam Iyer, Sri M. Sundaresan, Prof. Dr. Pullella Sriramachandrudu, Dr. S. Krishna Bhatt and Sri K.K. Shankaran spoke about the Mahāsvāmin. Former Justice A.R. Somanatha Iyer, Sri T. Venkatarama Sastri, Sri T. Ramalingeswara Rao, Sri N. Ranganatha Sharma, Sri P.R. Hariharan and Sri M.P.L Sastri chaired the proceedings. After the end of <i>Cāturmāsya</i> , His Holiness returned to Sringeri via Tumkuru, Tiptur and Chickmagaluru.
		<b>The 30th Tour - Short trip to Bengaluru - 1987 (7 days)</b>
15.10.1987	Bengaluru	After the grand <i>Navarātri</i> celebrations at Sringeri, His Holiness arrived in Bengaluru.
16.10.1987 to 21.10.1987	-do-	The 71st <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam was celebrated in Bengaluru on the 21st of October at Sri Shankara Math with a large assemblage of devotees. Many <i>homas</i> were conducted. A very large number of devotees from different parts of the country paid their respects to the <i>Jagadguru</i> . <i>Sāhitya sammelana</i> on the 19th and <i>Dharma sammelana</i> on the 20th were conducted. The Chief guest at the felicitation function was Mr. Buta Singh, Union Minister for Home Affairs. Sri M.L. Chandreshekar, Minister, Govt. of Karnataka, Sri V.S. Krishna Iyer, Member of Parliament, and Sri D.B. Chandre Gowda, Rajya Sabha member and Dr. Rajkumar,



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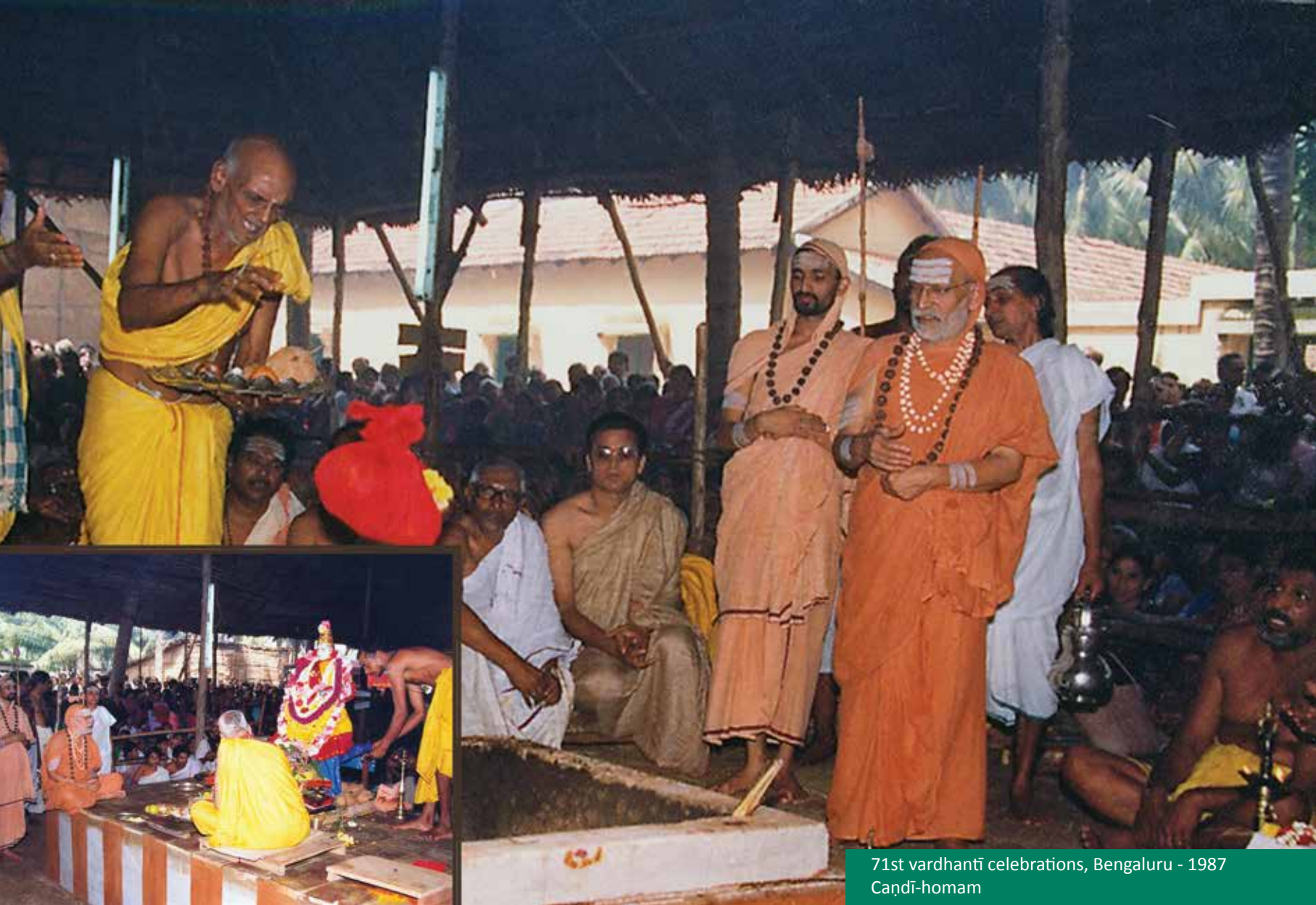
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1,2. Procession in progress at Bengaluru - 1987  
3. At the *bhajan* of Sri Anup Jalota

## The 29th Tour - Short Tour of Bengaluru - 1987



71st vardhanti celebrations, Bengaluru - 1987  
Caṇḍī-homam

The 30th Tour - Short Tour of Bengaluru - 1987





71st vardhantī celebrations, Bengaluru - 1987  
*Pūrṇahuti*

The 30th Tour - Short Tour of Bengaluru - 1987



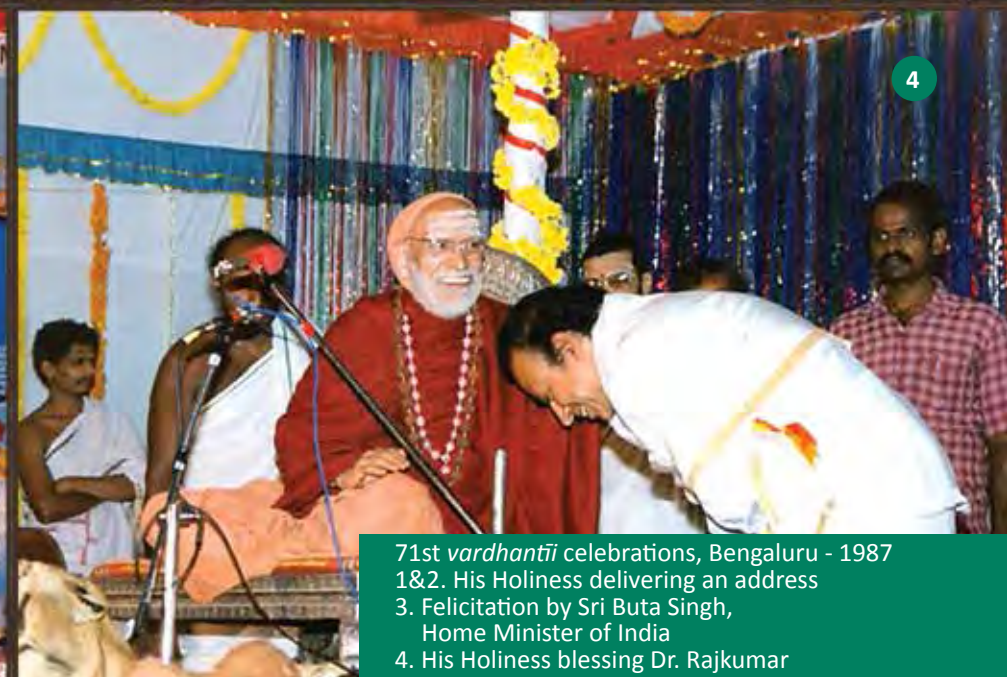
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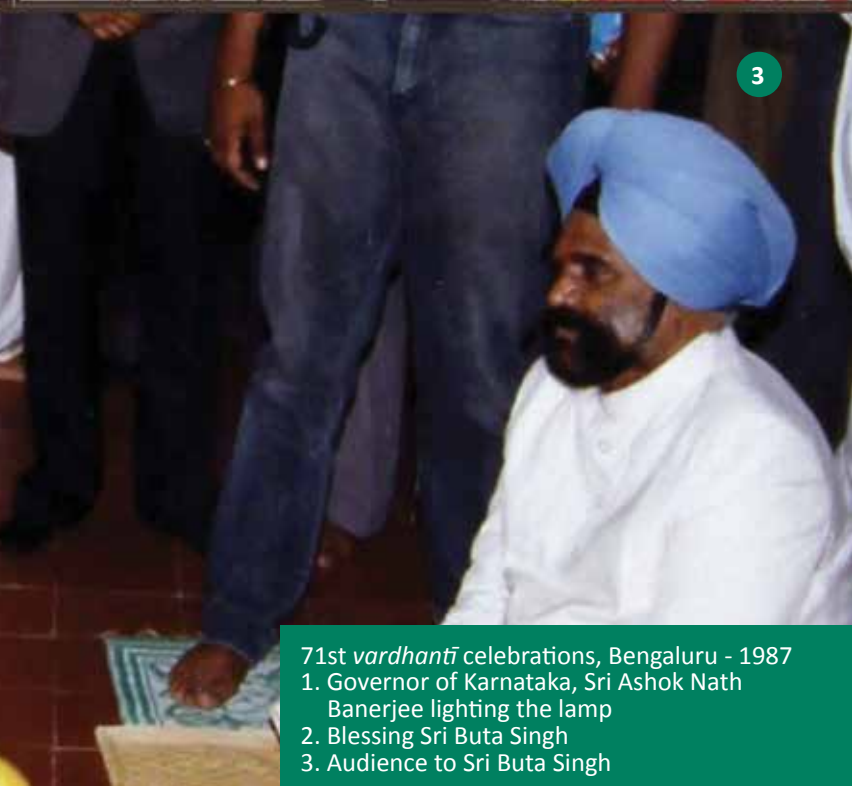
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71st vardhantī celebrations, Bengaluru - 1987  
1&2. His Holiness delivering an address  
3. Felicitation by Sri Buta Singh,  
Home Minister of India  
4. His Holiness blessing Dr. Rajkumar

## The 30th Tour - Short Tour of Bengaluru - 1987



71st *vardhanti* celebrations, Bengaluru - 1987  
1. Governor of Karnataka, Sri Ashok Nath  
Banerjee lighting the lamp  
2. Blessing Sri Buta Singh  
3. Audience to Sri Buta Singh

## The 30th Tour - Short Tour of Bengaluru - 1987



Bengaluru visit - 1987  
1. Cāturmāsya-vrata after Vyāsa-pūjā  
2. Vāmana-jayantī-pūjā

The 30th Tour - Short Tour of Bengaluru - 1987



At Lingarajapuram, Bengaluru - 1987  
1. Consecration of Śrī Gaṇapati  
2. Consecration of Śrī Śāradāmbā  
3. Consecration of Śrī Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda



His Holiness conversing with a Jain scholar.  
Sri V.R. Gowrishankar, Administrator of the Math  
about to honour the scholar, Bengaluru - 1987

The 30th Tour - Short Tour of Bengaluru - 1987

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

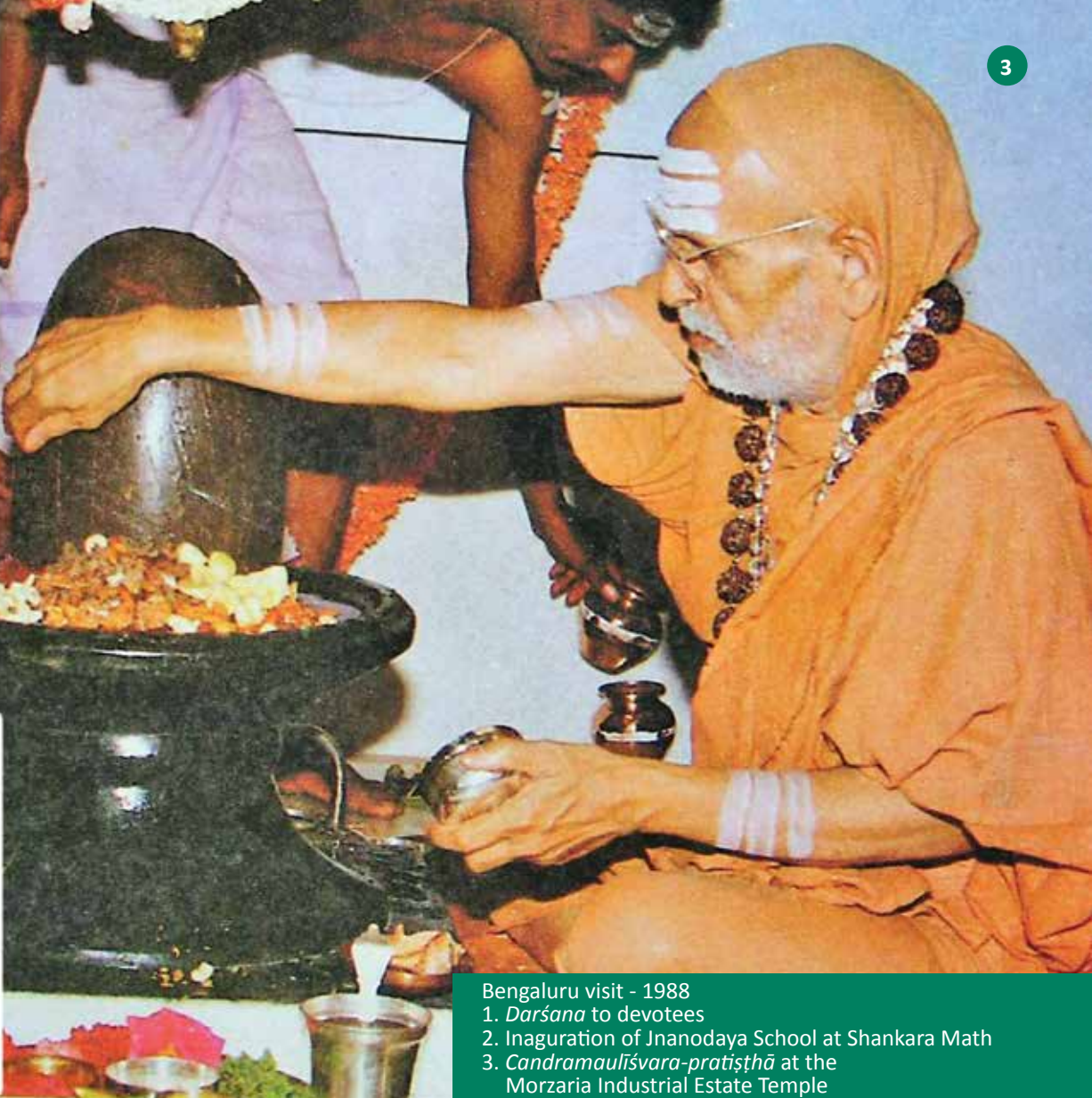
Date	Place	Events
		veteran film actor, also spoke on the occasion. Following the <i>Vardhantī</i> celebrations in Bengaluru, His Holiness returned to Sringeri.
		<b>The 31st Tour - Short trip to Kotekar - 1988 (14 days)</b>
January 1988	Sringeri to Kotekar	His Holiness stayed in Kotekar for two weeks in January, where a temple was being built for Śrī Gaṇeśa, Śrī Śāradāmbā and Śrī Śaṅkara by the <i>Maṭha</i> .
(1988)	(Sringeri)	(The <i>Mahāśivarātri-pūjā</i> of the year was performed on the 16th of February, at Sringeri.)
		<b>The 32nd Tour - Short trip to Bengaluru - 1988 (31 days)</b>
30.03.1988	Sringeri to Bengaluru	His Holiness blessed Bengaluru with a short but eventful visit on His way to Mysuru, for the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations.
02.04.1988	Bengaluru	His Holiness inaugurated the newly fabricated procession car ( <i>ratha</i> ) for Śrī Śāradāmbā by drawing it in the presence of devotees on the day of <i>Varṣābhīṣeka</i> of Śrī Śāradāmbā.
04.04.1988	-do-	A newly built temple for Śrī Candramaulīśvara came to life with the consecration of the <i>Liṅga</i> by His Holiness Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin. The temple is in the Morzaria Industrial Estate on Bannerghatta Road in Bengaluru.
04.04.1988 to 06.04.1988	-do-	At a three-day conference on <i>Veda-darśana</i> which started on the 4th of April, His Holiness released the first of 11 volumes on <i>Kṛṣṇa-yajur-veda</i> translated into Kannada.
10.04.1988	-do-	His Holiness opened the Jnanodaya School close to the Shankara Math compound, in the presence of Sri B. Somashekar, Minister of State for Primary and Secondary Education, Government of Karnataka.
April 1988	Bengaluru, Kolar	During his short stay in Bengaluru, His Holiness performed the <i>aṣṭabandhana-kumbhābhīṣeka</i> for the renovated Shankara Temple in Shankara Math and laid foundations for a new auditorium in the <i>Maṭha</i> complex, a <i>Rājagopura</i> of Shankaranarayana Temple near Bengaluru, and a Kalyana Mandapa of Shankara Math at Kolar. He also visited Malur and blessed the devotees. His Holiness



Bengaluru visit - 1988  
1. Inaugrating the veda-darśana conference  
2&3. Śrī-Śāradāmbā-rathotsava

The 32nd Tour - Short Trip to Bengaluru - 1988





Bengaluru visit - 1988  
1. *Darśana* to devotees  
2. Inaguration of Jnanodaya School at Shankara Math  
3. *Candramaulīśvara-pratiṣṭhā* at the Morzaria Industrial Estate Temple

The 32nd Tour - Short Trip to Bengaluru - 1988

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
		also inaugurated a fortnight-long residential summer camp for young boys at Bengaluru Shankara Math where the boys were taught Sanskrit, essential <i>Vedic-sūktas</i> and exposed to 'Gurukula' way of learning. The boys thoroughly enjoyed the camp and His Holiness wished that such camps be conducted regularly for children at several places.
21.04.1988 to 29.04.1988	Mysuru	His Holiness spent a week in Mysuru inaugurating the <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebrations on the 21st of April, and blessing the devotees who had come from far and near. On the 22nd, His Holiness visited the <i>adhiṣṭhāna</i> of Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekhara Bhāratī Mahāsvāmin II, in T. Narasipura, Kammarwadi Temples. Mandaleshwars from Haridwar visited Mysuru during the last week of April. A <i>Sammelana</i> was held on the 29th of April in which five of them spoke in Hindi exhorting people to follow the teachings of Ādi Śaṅkara. The Governor of Karnataka, Sri P. Venkatasubbaiah was the Chief Guest at the function. His Holiness returned to Sringeri. Śrī Sannidhānam also had returned to Sringeri from His twenty-month long tour.
(1988)	(Sringeri)	(A <i>Koṭi-arcana</i> to Śrī Śāradāmbā was performed from the 17th to the 29th of June 1988 at Sringeri, under the direction of His Holiness. The grand event successfully took place in the divine presence of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> .)
03.07.1988	Sringeri to Tarikere	On the 3rd of July, Śrī Sannidhānam inaugurated the newly constructed Sri Sringeri Sharada Sabha Bhavanam at Tarikere in the august presence of Śrī Mahāsannidhānam. Citizens of Tarikere, including dignitaries of the Taluk, participated in the function and received the blessings of the <i>Jagadgurus</i> .
(1988)	(Sringeri)	(A two-storeyed guest house with 28 rooms, named 'Sri Bharathi Vihara', had just been completed at Sringeri for the visiting devotees during July 1988. The <i>Jagadgurus</i> commenced <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> at Sringeri on the 29th July. The <i>Navarātri</i> festival of Devī Śāradāmbā was celebrated from the 11th to the 19th of October. Sri Shankar Dayal Sharma, Vice President of India, was present with his family at the <i>homa</i> on the last day of <i>Navarātri</i> . The 72nd <i>Vardhantī</i> of His Holiness Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin was also celebrated at Sringeri. The <i>Śaṅkara-jyoti</i> lit at Kalady to celebrate the 12th birth centenary of Ādi Śaṅkara, arrived at Sringeri on the 9th of December, in a decorated vehicle through cities, en route to Kedarnath.)

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
(1989)	(Sringeri)	( <i>Atirudra-mahāyajña</i> and <i>Sahasraṇḍī-mahāyajña</i> were conducted at Sringeri from the 23rd of January to the 4th of February, for universal peace and prosperity under the aegis of Śrī Mahāsannidhānam and Śrī Sannidhānam. Mr. Buta Singh, Union Minister for Home Affairs, visited Sringeri on the 3rd of February with his family and paid his respects to the <i>Jagadguru</i> .)
		<b>The 33rd Tour - Stay at Kotekar - 1989</b>
February 1989	Kotekar	A branch of Sringeri Math officially came into being on the 18th of February, at Kotekar, near Mangaluru with the consecration of the shrines by His Holiness accompanied by Śrī Sannidhānam.
(1989)	(Sringeri)	(His Holiness returned to Sringeri and celebrated <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> on the 6th of March. Śrī Sannidhānam, who was on a tour, celebrated <i>Mahāśivarātri</i> at Srisailam.)
		<b>The 34th Tour - Short trip to Karnataka and Kerala - 1989 (April &amp; May)</b>
April & May 1989	Karnataka & Kerala	His Holiness travelled through Karnataka and Kerala to celebrate <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> at Kalady, while Śrī Sannidhānam camped at Hyderabad. The events at Kalady marked the end of the year-long, nation-wide celebrations of the 12th birth centenary year of the great saint Ādi Śaṅkara. Śrī Mahāsannidhānam stayed at Kalady for 10 days from the 3rd to the 13th of May. His Holiness blessed the Yogakshema Sabha, comprising all the Namboodiris of Kerala, at the <i>Maṭha</i> . Scholars recited from all the <i>Vedās</i> for three days in their traditional manner. A <i>Mahārudra-yajña</i> was performed.
May 1989	Kalady, Guruvayur	During his stay at Kalady, His Holiness visited Guruvayur on the 8th, and inaugurated a three day <i>Śaṅkara-jayantī</i> celebration there. From Guruvayur, His Holiness reached Kundapura via Kottakkal and Kotekar.
		<b>The 35th Tour - Short tour of Bengaluru - 1989 (1 month &amp; 21 days)</b>
17.05.1989	Kundapura, Murudeshwar	At Kundapura, His Holiness installed the idols of Śrī Sītā, Śrī Rāmacandra, Śrī Lakṣmaṇa and Śrī Hanumān at Sri Rama Temple, on 17th. His Holiness then visited Murudeshwar.

## The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin

Date	Place	Events
25.05.1989	Dharwad, Ankola & Karwar	At Dharwad, His Holiness consecrated the idols of Śrī Śāradāmbā and Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara at the Shankara Math Temple on the 26th. Leaving Dharwad, His Holiness visited Ankola for two days and then camped at Karwar at the invitation of M.R.Shetti and B.V.Shetti. He was ceremoniously received at the Shankara Math with <i>pūrṇakumbha</i> .
23.06.1989	Mysuru, Bengaluru	After a brief stay at Mysuru, His Holiness arrived in Bengaluru on the 23rd of June.
01.07.1989	Bengaluru	His Holiness inaugurated the Science and <i>Vedānta</i> seminar in Keshavashilpa. Dr. R.M. Verma of NIMHANS and Paramānanda Bhāratī Svāmin spoke. In the evening, His Holiness released the latest volume of the <i>Mahābhārata</i> book series.
02.07.1989	Bengaluru	His Holiness visited the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and delivered a benedictory address.
03.07.1989	Bengaluru	His Holiness released the second volume of the <i>Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda-saṁhitā</i> with Kannada translation.
05.07.1989 to 07.07.1989	Bengaluru to Sringeri	Halting at Sondekoppa on the 5th, Arsikere on the 6th and Chickmagaluru on the 7th, His Holiness proceeded to Sringeri.
(1989)	(Sringeri)	(His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin returned to Sringeri to observe the vow of <i>Cāturmāsya-vrata</i> , which commenced on the 18th of July.)



# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



1

1. With Sri M.R. Shetti at Shankara Math, Karwar - 1989  
2 & 3. *Darśana* to Sri P. Venkatasubbiah, The Governor of Karnataka, at Mysuru - 1988



2



3

# The Pontifical Tours of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāsvāmin



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<b>Preface</b>		
असितगिरिसमं स्यात्कज्जलं सिन्धुपात्रे सुरतरुवरशाखा लेखनी पत्रमुर्वी । लिखति यदि गृहीत्वा शारदा सर्वकालं तदपि तव गुणानामीश पारं न याति ॥	<i>Śiva-mahimna-stotra 32</i>	9
यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते । अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।	<i>Taittirīya-upaniṣad 2.4.1</i>	9
महिम्नः पारं ते परमविदुषो यद्यसदृशी स्तुतिर्ब्रह्मादीनामपि तदवसन्नास्त्वयि गिरः । अथाऽवाच्यः सर्वः स्वमतिपरिणामावधि गृणन्ममाप्येष स्तोत्रे हर निरपवादः परिकरः ॥	<i>Śiva-mahimna-stotra 1</i>	9
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सहस्रकृत्वस्त्वभ्यस्य बहिरेतत्त्रिकं द्विजः । महतोऽप्येनसो मासात्त्वचेवाहिर्विमुच्यते ॥	<i>Manu-smṛti</i> 2.79	36
दारा इमे मे तनया इमे मे गृहा इमे मे पशवश्च मे मे । इत्थं नरो मेषसमानधर्मा मेमेकरः कालवृकेण नीतः ॥		39
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उपायेन हि यच्छक्यं न तच्छक्यं पराक्रमैः ।	<i>Hitopadeśa</i> 1.172	41
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बाष्कलिना च बाध्वः पृष्ठः सन् अवचनेनैव ब्रह्म प्रोवाचेति श्रूयते - 'स होवाचाधीहि भो इति स तूष्णीं बभूव तं ह द्वितीये तृतीये वा वचन उवाच ब्रूमः खलु त्वं तु न विजानासि । उपशान्तोऽयमात्मा' इति ।	<i>Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya 3.2.17</i>	46
यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन । ज्ञानाग्निस्सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 4.37</i>	47
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यो देहः सुप्तोऽभूत्सुषुष्योपशोभिते तल्पे । संप्रति स रज्जुकाष्ठैर्नियन्त्रितः क्षिप्यते वह्नौ ॥	<i>Prabodha-sudhākara</i> 25	53

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गृहीत इव केशेषु मृत्युना धर्ममाचरेत् ॥	<i>Hitopadeśa, Prāstāvikā 3</i>	53
लब्धा विद्या राजमान्या ततः किं प्राप्ता संपत्प्राभवाढ्या ततः किम् । भुक्ता नारी सुन्दराङ्गी ततः किं येन स्वात्मा नैव साक्षात्कृतोऽभूत् ॥	<i>Anātmaśrīvigrahaṇam 1</i>	54
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<p>ओं भूः संन्यस्तं मया । ओं भुवः संन्यस्तं मया । ओं सुवः संन्यस्तं मया ।  ओं भूर्भुवस्सुवः संन्यस्तं मया ।</p>	<p><i>Nārada-Parivrājakopaniṣad 4</i></p>	63
<p>अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो ...मत्तः स्वाहा ।</p>	<p><i>Nārada-Parivrājakopaniṣad 4</i></p>	63
<p>भो आयुष्मन्, इत एहि ।</p>	<p>The senior <i>Jagadguru</i> calling out to His Holiness</p>	64
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<p>श्रुतिस्मृतीतिहासानामभिप्रायविद्वयः ।</p>	<p><i>Śrī Vidyāraṇya's Anubhūti-</i></p>	66

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यस्य निःश्वसितं वेदाः ... तमहं वन्दे विद्यातीर्थ महेश्वरम् ॥	<i>Jīvanmuktiviveka 1</i>	66
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अहिंसाप्रतिष्ठायां तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः ॥	<i>Yoga-sūtra 2.35</i>	70
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उदरे पश्चिमं तानं नाभेरूर्ध्वं च कारयेत् । उड्डीयानो ह्यसौ बन्धो मृत्युमातङ्गकेसरी ॥	<i>Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā 3.57</i>	74
पूरकान्ते तु कर्तव्यो बन्धो जालन्धराभिधः । कुम्भकान्ते रेचकादौ कर्तव्यस्तूड्डियानकः ॥	<i>Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā 2.45</i>	74
उड्डियानकस्तु कुम्भकान्ते कुम्भकस्यान्ते किञ्चित्कुम्भकशेषे रेचकस्यादौ रेचकादौ रेचकात्पूर्वं कर्तव्यः ।	<i>Jyotsnā</i> , commentary on the <i>Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā 2.45</i>	74- 75

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जननिविपरीतक्रमतो बुद्ध्या प्रविलाप्य पञ्च भूतानि । परिशिष्टमात्मतत्त्वं पश्यन्नास्ते मुनिश्शान्तः ॥	<i>Ātma-vidyā-vilāsa 11</i>	318
प्रामाण्यबुद्धिः स्तोत्रेषु देवताबुद्धिरात्मनि । कीटबुद्धिर्मनुष्येषु नूतनायाः श्रियः फलम् ॥	<i>Kaliviḍambana 60</i>	333
आचिनोति च शास्त्रार्थमाचारे स्थापयत्यपि । स्वयमाचरते यस्मादाचार्यस्तेन चोच्यते ॥	<i>Vāyu-purāṇa 59.30</i>	335
देहोऽहमित्येव जडस्य बुद्धिर्देहे च जीवे विदुषस्त्वहंधीः । विवेकविज्ञानवतो महात्मनो ब्रह्माहमित्येव मतिः सदात्मनि ॥	<i>Vivekacūḍāmaṇi 162</i>	356
ब्रह्मा येन कुलालवन्नियमितो ब्रह्माण्डभाण्डोदरे विष्णुर्येन दशावतारगहने क्षितो महासङ्कटे । रुद्रो येन कपालपाणिपुटके भिक्षाटनं सेवते सूर्यो भ्राम्यति नित्यमेव गगने तस्मै नमः कर्मणे ॥	<i>Nīṭisataka 94</i>	379
तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् ... श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् ॥	<i>Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad 1.2.12</i>	382
यं यं लोकं मनसा संविभाति विशुद्धसत्त्वः कामयते यांश्च कामान् । तं तं लोकं जयते तांश्च कामांस्तस्मादात्मज्ञं ह्यर्चयेद्भूतिकामः ॥	<i>Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad 3.1.10</i>	382
स वेदैतत्परमं ब्रह्म धाम यत्र विश्वं निहितं भाति शुभ्रम् । उपासते पुरुषं ये ह्यकामास्ते शुक्रमेतदतिवर्तन्ति धीराः ॥	<i>Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad 3.2.1</i>	382
न नरेणावरेण प्रोक्त एष सुविज्ञेयो बहुधा चिन्त्यमानः । अनन्यप्रोक्ते गतिरत्र नास्ति... ॥	<i>Kaṭha-upaniṣad 1.2.8</i>	382

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...को गुरुरधिगततत्त्वः शिष्यहितायोद्यतस्सततम् ॥	<i>Praśnottara-ratnamālikā</i> 2	382
सिद्धं सत्संप्रदाये स्थिरधियमनघं श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठं सत्त्वस्थं सत्यवाचं समयनियतया साधुवृत्त्या समेतम् । दम्भासूयादिमुक्तं जितविषयगणं दीर्घबन्धुं दयालुं स्खालित्ये शासितारं स्वपरहितपरं देशिकं भूष्णुरीप्सेत् ॥	<i>Nyāsa-vimśati</i> 1	383
<b>Chapter 17: At Home With the Young</b>		
दया सर्वभूतेषु क्षान्तिरनसूया शौचमनायासो मङ्गलमकार्पण्यमस्पृहेति ॥	<i>Gautama-dharma-sūtra</i> 1.8.24	386
<b>Chapter 19: Nation First</b>		
जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी ॥	<i>Vālmiki-rāmāyaṇa</i> 6.124.17	403
यदृच्छया चोपपन्नं स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम् । सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 2.32	404
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 8.7	405
अहिंसा परमो धर्मः	<i>Mahābhārata</i> 1.11.12	405
आततायिनमायान्तं हन्यादेवाविचारयन् ।	<i>Manu-smṛti</i> 8.350	405
यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः । स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 3.21	426

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धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः ।	<i>Manu-smṛti</i> 8.15	426
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अयमात्मा ब्रह्म ।	<i>Māṇḍūkya-upaniṣad</i> 2	432
यस्य देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ । तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्थाः प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः ॥	<i>Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad</i> 6.23	436
ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ।	<i>Brahmajñānāvalīmālā</i> 20	436
<b>Chapter 21: Chosen Successor</b>		
<p>अखिलानन्दसन्दायि मनोज्ञमुखपङ्कजम् ।  जगद्गुरुं जगत्पूज्यं विद्यातीर्थमहं श्रये ॥ १ ॥  भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिर्दृष्टे यस्मिन्निति श्रुतिः ।  जगौ परावरं शान्तं तं विद्यातीर्थमाश्रये ॥ २ ॥  नटत्याननरङ्गे हि यस्य साक्षात्सरस्वती ।  नतार्तिशमने दक्षं तं विद्यातीर्थमाश्रये ॥ ३ ॥  वटमूलं परित्यज्य शृङ्गाद्रौ निवसन्धि यः ।</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha  Akṣaramālā Stotra”</i>  composed by Jagadguru Śrī  Bhāratī-tīrtha Mahāsvāmin</p>	465



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<p>तत्त्वं बोधयते भक्तान्दक्षिणास्यं तमाश्रये ॥ ४ ॥</p> <p>विषयाशां परित्यज्य वैराग्यं परमं श्रिताः ।</p> <p>मुनयो यत्कृपाभाजस्तं विद्यातीर्थमाश्रये ॥ ५ ॥</p> <p>द्यावाभूमी हि जनयन्देव एक इति श्रुतिः ।</p> <p>यं वर्णयति सर्वेशं तं विद्यातीर्थमाश्रये ॥ ६ ॥</p> <p>तीरे तुङ्गातटिन्या यस्तत्त्वं शिष्यान्प्रबोधयन् ।</p> <p>आस्ते देशिकराजं तं विद्यातीर्थं समाश्रये ॥ ७ ॥</p> <p>र्थमपूर्वं श्रुतेर्यस्तु यथावदवबोधयन् ।</p> <p>शिष्यान्धर्मपथासक्तान्कुरुते तमहं श्रये ॥ ८ ॥</p>		
<p>अज्ञानध्वान्तविध्वंसिसहस्रकरतेजसम् । सच्चित्सुखात्मकब्रह्मनिविष्टहृदयाम्बुजम् ॥</p> <p>पद्मासनोपविष्टञ्च ध्यानस्तिमितलोचनम् । समंकायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्तं महाप्रभम् ॥</p> <p>सहस्रकिरणस्पर्धिदेहकान्तिसमुज्ज्वलम् । निर्विकल्पसमाधिस्थं निश्चलावयवं शिवम् ॥</p> <p>देहादिब्रह्मपर्यन्ते भोग्ये तुच्छत्वधीयुतम् । आर्तानामार्तिहन्तारं जिज्ञासुविशयच्छिदम् ॥</p> <p>स्वावलोकनमात्रेण पुनानं निखिलं जगत् । मदीयहृत्सरोजातनिवेशितपदद्वयम् ।</p> <p>विद्यातीर्थगुरुत्तंसं ध्यायामि भवमुक्तये ॥</p>	<p>Verses composed by Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī-tīrtha Mahāsvāmin describing His Holiness in <i>samādhi</i></p>	466

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<b>Chapter 23: Cogent Elucidations</b>		
1. Eight Great Qualities		
दया सर्वभूतेषु क्षान्तिरनसूया शौचमनायासो मङ्गलमकार्पण्यमस्पृहेति ॥	<i>Gautama-dharma-sūtra 1.8.24</i>	586
अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च...	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 12.13-20</i>	586
मैत्रीकरुणामुदितोपेक्षाणां सुखदुःखपुण्यापुण्यविषयाणां भावनातश्चित्तप्रसादनम् ॥	<i>Yoga-sūtra 1.33</i>	586
कथञ्चिदुपकारेण कृतेनैकेन तुष्यति । न स्मरत्यपकाराणां शतमप्यात्मवत्तया ॥	<i>Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa 2.1.11</i>	587
सन्तोषं जनयेत्प्राज्ञस्तदेवेश्वरपूजनम् ।	<i>Samayocita-padyamālikā</i>	587
इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे । ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 9.1</i>	587
पिशुनैः प्रकाममुदितां परस्य निन्दां शृणोति कर्णाभ्याम् । तेन परः किं म्रियते व्यर्थं मनुजोऽतिपापभागभवति ॥	<i>Prabodha-sudhākara 59</i>	588
अयं निजः परो वेति गणना लघुचेतसाम् । उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥	<i>Śārngadhāra-paddhati 273</i>	588
सत्यं ब्रूयात्प्रियं ब्रूयान्न ब्रूयात्सत्यमप्रियम् । प्रियं च नानृतं ब्रूयादेष धर्मस्सनातनः ॥	<i>Manu-smṛti 4.138</i>	588
अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् । स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 17.15</i>	588

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त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः । कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतच्चयं त्यजेत् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 16.21	589
मृतोऽप्यर्थं न मोक्ष्यामि बद्धा नेष्यामि मूर्धनि । इति चेत्सुदृढा बुद्धिः पात्रे देयमशङ्कितम् ॥	<i>Sabhārañjana-śataka</i> 38	589
सङ्गी हि बाध्यते लोके निस्सङ्गस्सुखमश्रुते । तेन सङ्गः परित्याज्यस्सर्वदा सुखमिच्छता ॥	<i>Pañcadaśī</i> 6.274	590
2. Stages of Devotion		
यस्त आशिष आशास्ते न स भृत्यस्स वै वणिक् ।	<i>Śrīmadbhāgavata</i> 7.10.4	591
मदायासं किं न व्यपनयसि कस्योपकृतये वदेयं प्रीतिश्चेत्तव शिव कृतार्थाः खलु वयम् ॥	<i>Śivānandalaharī</i> 19	591
अहं भक्तपराधीनो ह्यस्वतंत्र इव द्विज ।	<i>Śrīmadbhāgavata</i> 9.4.63	592
उदारस्सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् । आस्थितस्स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 7.18	592
3. Prostrate, Surrender and Become Blessed		
वपुःप्रादुर्भावादनुमितमिदं जन्मनि पुरा पुरारे न कापि कचिदपि भवन्तं प्रणतवान् । नमन्मुक्तस्सम्प्रत्यहमतनुरग्रेप्यनतिमानितीश क्षन्तव्यं तदिदमपराधद्वयमपि ॥	<i>Subhāṣita-ratna-kośa</i> 4.7	592
पशुं वेत्सि चेन्मां तमेवाधिरूढः कलङ्कीति वा मूर्ध्नि धत्से तमेव । द्विजिह्वः पुनस्सोऽपि ते कण्ठभूषा त्वदङ्गीकृताश्शर्व सर्वेऽपि धन्याः ॥	<i>Śivabhujāṅga</i> 12	593

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4. The Nectar of Devotion		
सा त्वस्मिन्परमप्रेमरूपा ॥	<i>Nārada-bhakti-sūtra 1.2</i>	594
सौम्या सौम्यतराऽशेषसौम्येभ्यस्त्वतिसुन्दरी । परा पराणां परमा त्वमेव परमेश्वरी ॥	<i>Devī-māhātmya 1.81</i>	595
भवानि त्वं दासे मयि वितरं दृष्टिं सकरुणाम् ।	<i>Soundaryalaharī 22</i>	595
सकृदेव प्रपन्नाय तवास्मीति च याचते । अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो ददाम्येतद्व्रतं मम ॥	<i>Vālmiki-rāmāyaṇa 6.18.33-34</i>	595
निरपेक्षं मुनिं शान्तं निर्वैरं समदर्शनम् । अनुब्रजाम्यहं नित्यं पूयेत्यङ्घ्रिरेणुभिः ॥	<i>Śrīmadbhāgavata 11.14.16</i>	595
अङ्गुलं निजबीजसन्ततिरयस्कान्तोपलं सूचिका साध्वी नैजविभुं लता क्षितिरुहं सिन्धुस्सरिद्वल्लभम् । प्राप्नोतीह यथा तथा पशुपतेः पादारविन्दद्वयं चेतोवृत्तिरुपेत्य तिष्ठति सदा सा भक्तिरित्युच्यते ॥	<i>Śivānandalaharī 61</i>	597- 598
मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय । निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥ अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव । मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि ॥ अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् । अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छासुं धनञ्जय ॥ अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः । सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 12.8-11</i>	598
मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु । मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 18.65</i>	599

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5. Fundamental tenets of the Gītā		
न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः । अजो नित्यश्शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 2.20	599
अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात्परमात्मायमव्ययः । शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 13.31	600
प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः । अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्ताऽहमिति मन्यते ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 3.27	600
प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः । यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 13.29	600
श्रद्धावान् लभते ज्ञानं तत्परस्संयतेन्द्रियः । ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 4.39	600
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 7.14	600
तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः । नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 10.11	600- 601
यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन । ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 4.37	601
आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते । योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 6.3	601
जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 2.27	601
यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 18.5	601
सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि । ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 6.29	601

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अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 10.20	601
क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 13.2	601
6. True Advaitin-s and Pseudo-Advaitins are Poles Apart		
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 7.19	602
संसारजसुखासक्तं ब्रह्मज्ञोऽस्मीति वादिनम् । कर्मब्रह्मोभयभ्रष्टं तं त्यजेदन्त्यजं यथा ॥	<i>Garuḍa-purāṇa</i> (Venkateswara Steam Press Edition) 2.49.64	603
सदा जपपटो हस्ते मध्ये मध्येऽक्षिमीलनम् । सर्वं ब्रह्मेति वादश्च सद्यः प्रत्ययहेतवः ॥	<i>Kalivīḍambana</i> 90	603
नाविरतोदुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः । नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनमाप्नुयात् ॥	<i>Kaṭha-upaniṣad</i> 1.2.24	603
7. Essential Prerequisites for Knowing the Supreme		
अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा ॥	<i>Brahma-sūtra</i> 1.1.1	603
आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु । बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥ इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान् । आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥	<i>Kaṭha-upaniṣad</i> 1.3.3-4	605
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 2.60	605

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8. The Source of All Evil		
अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः । अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 3.36	607
काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः । महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 3.37	607
ऐश्वर्यस्य समग्रस्य वीर्यस्य यशसश्श्रियः । वैराग्यस्याथ मोक्षस्य षण्णां भग इतीरणा ॥	<i>Viṣṇu-purāṇa</i> 6.5.74	608
उत्पत्तिं प्रलयञ्चैव भूतानामागतिं गतिम् । वेत्ति विद्यामविद्यां च स वाच्यो भगवानिति ॥	<i>Viṣṇu-purāṇa</i> 6.5.78	608
धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथाऽऽदर्शो मलेन च । यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 3.38	608
न जातु कामः कामानामुपभोगेन शाम्यति । हविषा कृष्णवर्त्मैव भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥	<i>Manu-smṛti</i> 2.94	608
इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते । एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 3.40	608
तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ । पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 3.41	608
यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः । इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 2.60	608
एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना । जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 3.43	608
तदेव सक्तः सह कर्मणैति लिङ्गं मनो यत्र निषक्तमस्य । प्राप्यान्तं कर्मणस्तस्य यत्किञ्चेह करोत्ययम् । तस्माल्लोकात्पुनरैत्यस्मै लोकाय कर्मण इति नु कामयमानोऽथाकामयमानो योऽकामो निष्काम आप्तकाम आत्मकामो न तस्य प्राणा उत्क्रामन्ति ब्रह्मैव सन्ब्रह्माप्येति ॥	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad</i> 4.4.6	609

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9. Three Impure Tendencies		
लोकवासनया जन्तोः शास्त्रवासनयापि च । देहवासनया ज्ञानं यथावन्नैव जायते ॥	<i>Muktika-upaniṣad 2.2.2</i>	610
नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो नमेधयान बहुना श्रुतेन । यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनूँस्वाम् ॥	<i>Kaṭha-upaniṣad 1.2.23</i>	612
बहुशास्त्रकथाकन्थारोमन्थेन वृथैव किम् । अन्वेष्टव्यं प्रयत्नेन मारुते ज्योतिरान्तरम् ॥	<i>Muktika-upaniṣad 2.63</i>	612
शौचसंतोषतपःस्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि नियमाः ॥	<i>Yoga-sūtra 2.32</i>	613
भगवन्नस्थिचर्मस्नायुमज्जामांसशुक्रशोणितश्लेष्माश्रुदूषिते विणमूत्रवातपित्तकफसङ्घाते दुर्गन्धे निःसारेऽस्मिञ्शरीरे किं कामोपभोगैः ॥	<i>Maitri-upaniṣad 1.1.2</i>	613
शौचात्स्वाङ्गजुगुप्सा परैरसंसर्गः ॥	<i>Yoga-sūtra 2.40</i>	613
10. God, the Universe's Cause		
निष्कलं निष्क्रियं शान्तं निरवद्यं निरञ्जनम् । अमृतस्य परं सेतुं दग्धेन्दनमिवानलम् ॥	<i>Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad 6.19</i>	614
प्रकृतिश्च प्रतिज्ञादृष्टान्तानुपरोधात् ॥	<i>Brahma-sūtra 1.4.23</i>	614-615



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श्वेतकेतो यन्नु सोम्येदं महामना अनूचानमानी स्तब्धोऽस्युत तमादेशमप्राक्ष्यः येनाश्रुतं श्रुतं भवत्यमतं मतमविज्ञातं विज्ञातमिति ।	<i>Chāndogya-upaniṣad 6.1.2</i>	615
आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः ।	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad 2.4.5</i>	615
शौनको ह वै महाशालोऽङ्गिरसं विधिवदुपसन्नः पप्रच्छ कस्मिन्नु भगवो विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवतीति ॥	<i>Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad 1.1.2</i>	615
यथा सोम्यैकेन मृत्पिण्डेन सर्वं मृन्मयं विज्ञातं स्याद्वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम् ॥ यथा सोम्यैकेन लोहमणिना सर्वं लोहमयं विज्ञातं स्याद्वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं लोहमित्येव सत्यम् ॥ यथा सोम्यैकेन नखनिकृन्तनेन सर्वं कार्णायसं विज्ञातं स्याद्वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं कृष्णायसमित्येव सत्यमेव सोम्य स आदेशो भवतीति ॥	<i>Chāndogya-upaniṣad 6.1.4-6</i>	615
सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयम् ।	<i>Chāndogya-upaniṣad 6.2.1</i>	616
11. God is Neither Partial Nor Cruel		
वैषम्यनैर्घृण्ये न सापेक्षत्वात्तथाहि दर्शयति ॥	<i>Brahma-sūtra 2.1.34</i>	617

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पुण्यो वै पुण्येन कर्मणा भवति पापः पापेन	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad</i> 3.2.13	617
ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 4.11	617
न कर्माविभागादिति चेन्नानादित्वात् ॥	<i>Brahma-sūtra</i> 2.1.35	617
सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयम् ।	<i>Chāndogya-upaniṣad</i> 6.2.1	618
उपपद्यते चाप्युपलभ्यते च ॥	<i>Brahma-sūtra</i> 2.1.36	618
सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ धाता यथापूर्वमकल्पयत्	<i>R̥g Veda Samhita</i> 10.190.3 (also <i>Taittirīya-āraṇyaka</i> 10.1)	619
न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते नान्तो न चादिर्न च सम्प्रतिष्ठा ।	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 15.3	619
12. No Total Change of Brahman into the World		
कृत्स्नप्रसक्तिर्निरवयवत्वशब्दकोपो वा ॥	<i>Brahma-sūtra</i> 2.1.26	619
श्रुतेस्तु शब्दमूलत्वात् ॥	<i>Brahma-sūtra</i> 2.1.27	620
अचिन्त्याः खलु ये भावा न तांस्तर्केण साधयेत् (योजयेत्) । प्रकृतिभ्यः परं यत्तु (यच्च) तदचिन्त्यस्य लक्षणम् ॥	<i>Mahābhārata</i> 6.5.12	620

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तावानस्य महिमा ततो ज्यायांश्च पूरुषः । पादोऽस्य सर्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ॥	<i>Chāndogya-upaniṣad 3.12.6</i>	620
देवादिवदपि लोके ॥	<i>Brahma-sūtra 2.1.25</i>	621
न तत्र रथा न रथयोगा न पन्थानो भवन्त्यथ रथात्रथयोगान्यथः सृजते ।	<i>Bṛhadāranyaka-upaniṣad 4.3.10</i>	621
13. The Greatest Secret		
इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे । ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 9.1</i>	622
राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् । प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 9.2</i>	622
मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना । मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥ न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि ... ।	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 9.4, 9.5a</i>	622
... पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 9.5b</i>	623
दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 7.14</i>	623
सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् । सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 13.13</i>	623

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लौकिकव्यवहारेऽहं गच्छामीत्यादिके बुधः । विविच्यैव चिदाभासं कूटस्थात्तं विवक्षति ॥ असङ्गोऽहं चिदात्माहमिति शास्त्रीयदृष्टितः । अहंशब्दं प्रयुङ्केयं कूटस्थे केवले बुधः ॥	<i>Pañcadaśī 7.12, 13</i>	623
14. Māyā - The Great Enigma		
ज्ञाज्ञौ द्वावजावीशनीशावजा होका भोक्तृभोग्यार्थयुक्ता ॥	<i>Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad 1.9</i>	627
तस्याभिध्यानाद्योजनात्तत्त्वभावाद्भूयश्चान्ते विश्वमायानिवृत्तिः	<i>Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad 1.10</i>	627
15. Ātman is Self-effulgent Consciousness		
याज्ञवल्क्य किञ्ज्योतिरयं पुरुष इति । आदित्यज्योतिः सम्राडिति होवाचादित्येनैवायं ज्योतिषास्ते पल्ययते कर्म कुरुते विपल्येतीत्येवमेवैतद्याज्ञवल्क्य ॥	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad 4.3.2</i>	627
अत्रायं पुरुषस्वयं ज्योतिः	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad 4.3.14</i>	627
किं ज्योतिस्तव भानुमानहनि मे रात्रौ प्रदीपादिकं स्यादेवं रविदीपदर्शनविधौ किं ज्योतिराख्याहि मे । चक्षुस्तस्य निमीलनादिसमये किं धीर्धियो दर्शने किं तत्राहमतो भवान्परमकं ज्योतिस्तदस्मि प्रभो ॥	<i>Ekaśloki</i>	627- 628
....न हि विज्ञातुर्विज्ञातेर्विपरिलोपो विद्यतेऽविनाशित्वान्न तु तद्वितीयमस्ति ततोऽन्यद्विभक्तं यद्विजानीयात् ॥	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad 4.3.30</i>	630

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16. Liberation of Sages with Divine Missions		
यावदधिकारमवस्थितिराधिकारिकाणाम् ॥	<i>Brahma-sūtra</i> 3.3.32	631
भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः । क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥	<i>Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad</i> 2.2.8	631
यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन । ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 4.37	631- 632
तस्य तावदेव चिरं यावन्न विमोक्ष्येऽथ सम्पत्स्य इति ॥	<i>Chāndogya-upaniṣad</i> 6.14.2	632
<b>Chapter 24: From His Pen</b>		
जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च । तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 2.27	636
न तस्य प्राणा उत्क्रामन्ति	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad</i> 4.4.6	636
अत्रैव समवनीयन्ते	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad</i> 3.2.11	636
तमेव विदित्वाऽतिमृत्युमेति	<i>Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad</i> 3.8	637
पुनरपि जननं पुनरपि मरणं पुनरपि जननीजठरे शयनम् ।	<i>Mohamudgara</i> 21	637
आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः ।	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad</i> 2.4.5	637

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सकलभवनिवृत्तं चित्तमेतन्न यस्माच्छ्रवणमननकर्मानुष्ठितिः स्यान्न तस्मात् । विषयकृतविषादो नापि सोढुं प्रशक्यो हरिपदभजनं तन्निवृत्त्यै प्रकुर्मः ॥		637
बालस्तावत्क्रीडासक्तस्तरुणस्तावत्तरोणीसक्तः । वृद्धस्तावच्चिन्तासक्तः परे ब्रह्मणि कोऽपि न सक्तः ॥	<i>Mohamudgara 7</i>	637
सा त्वस्मिन्परमप्रेमरूपा ॥	<i>Nārada-bhaktisūtra 1.2</i>	638
सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म ।	<i>Taittirīya-upaniṣad 2.1.1</i>	638
अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् । प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय संभवाम्यात्ममायया ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 4.6</i>	638
अजायमानो बहुधा विजायते ।	<i>Taittirīya-āraṇyaka 3.13</i>	638
परोपकृतिकैवल्ये तोलयित्वा जनार्दनः । गुर्वीमुपकृतिं मत्वा ह्यवतारान्दशाग्रहीत् ॥	<i>Subhāṣita-ratna-bhāṇḍāgāra, prakaraṇa 2, paropakāra-praśaṁsā verse 5</i>	639
परोपकारशून्यस्य धिक्छानुष्यस्य जीवितम् । जीवन्तु पशवो येषां चर्माप्युपकरिष्यति ॥	<i>Śārṅgadharma-paddhati (nīti 59) 1478</i>	639
हा कृष्ण द्वारकावास कासि यादवनन्दन । इमामवस्थां संप्राप्तमनाथां किमुपेक्षसे ॥	<i>Mahābhārata (dākṣiṇātya-pāṭha) 2.61.47</i>	639

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ऋणमेतत्प्रवृद्धं मे हृदयान्नापसर्पति । यद्भोविन्देति चुक्रोश कृष्णा मां दूरवासिनम् ॥	<i>Mahābhārata 5.58.21</i>	639
आत्मारामाश्च मुनयो निर्ग्रन्था अप्युरुक्रमे । कुर्वन्त्यहैतुकीं भक्तिमित्थंभूतगुणो हरिः ॥	<i>Śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.7.10</i>	639
योगक्षेमधुरन्धरस्य सकलश्रेयःप्रदोद्योगिनो दृष्टादृष्टमतोपदेशकृतिनो बाह्यान्तरव्यापिनः । सर्वज्ञस्य दयाकरस्य भवतः किं वेदितव्यं मया शंभो त्वं परमान्तरङ्ग इति मे चित्ते स्मराम्यन्वहम् ॥	<i>Śivānandalaharī 35</i>	639
श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोस्स्मरणं पादसेवनम् । अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम् ॥ इति पुंसार्पिता विष्णौ भक्तिश्चेन्नवलक्षणा । क्रियते भगवत्यद्धा तन्मन्येऽधीतमुत्तमम् ॥	<i>Śrīmadbhāgavata 7.5.23-24</i>	640
ध्यायन्कृते यजन्यज्ञैस्त्रेतायां द्वापरेऽर्चयन् । यदाप्नोति तदाप्नोति कलौ संकीर्त्य केशवम् ॥	<i>Viṣṇu Purāṇa 6.2.17</i>	641
जप्येनैव तु संसिध्येद्ब्राह्मणो नात्र संशयः । कुर्यादन्यन्न वा कुर्वाण्मैत्रो ब्राह्मण उच्यते ॥	<i>Manu-smṛti 2.87</i>	641
कलेर्दोषनिधे राजन्नस्ति ह्येको महान्गुणः । कीर्तनादेव कृष्णस्य मुक्तसङ्गः परं ब्रजेत् ॥	<i>Śrīmad-bhāgavata 12.3.51</i>	641
सन्निन्दाऽसति नामवैभवकथा श्रीशेशयोर्भेदधीरश्रद्धा श्रुतिशास्त्रदेशिकगिरां नास्म्यर्थवादभ्रमः । नामाऽस्तीति निषिद्धवृत्तिविहितत्यागौ च धर्मान्तरैस्साम्यं नामनि शङ्करस्य च हरेर्नामापराधा दश ॥	<i>Bhagavannāma-bhūṣaṇa (not extant); referenced in Bhagavannāmāmṛta-rasodaya, ullāsa 6</i>	641
तृणादपि सुनीचेन तरोरपि सहिष्णुना । अमानिना मानदेन कीर्तनीयः सदा हरिः ॥	<i>Caitanya's Śikṣāṣṭaka 3</i>	641

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तज्जपस्तदर्थभावनम् ॥	<i>Yoga-sūtra 1.28</i>	642
अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते । तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 9.22</i>	642
बर्हापीडं नटवरवपुः कर्णयोः कर्णिकारं विभ्रद्वासः कनककपिशं वैजयन्तीं च मालाम् । रन्धान्वेणोरधरसुधया पूरयन्गोपवृन्दैर्वृन्दारण्यं स्वपदरमणं प्राविशद्गीतकीर्तिः ॥	<i>Śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.21.5</i>	642
अकृतायां प्रतिष्ठायां प्राणानां प्रतिमासु च । यथा पूर्वं तथा भावः स्वर्णादीनां न विष्णुता ॥		642
पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति । तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 9.26</i>	643
नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 11.40</i>	643
श्रुतिस्मृतिर्ममैवाज्ञा	<i>Viṣṇudharma 74.30</i>	643
यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् । यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 9.27</i>	644
विहर पितृवने वा विश्वपारे पुरे वा रजतगिरितटे वा रत्नसानुस्थले वा । दिश भवदुपकण्ठं देहि मे भृत्यभावं परमशिव तव श्रीपादुकावाहकानाम् ॥	<i>Ātmārpaṇa-stuti 45</i>	644
तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत । तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 18.62</i>	644
तच्चिन्तनं तत्कथनमन्योऽन्यं तत्प्रबोधनम् । एतदेकपरत्वं च तद्भ्यासं विदुर्बुधाः ॥	<i>Yoga-vāsiṣṭha 3.22.24</i>	644



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यद्वक्त्रं मुहुरीक्षसे न धनिनां ब्रूषे न चाटून्मृषा नैषां गर्वगिरः शृणोति न च तान्प्रत्याशया धावसि । काले बालतृणानि खादसि परं निद्रासि निद्रागमे तन्मे ब्रूहि कुरङ्ग कुत्र भवता किं नाम तप्तं तपः ॥	Verse ascribed to Bhartṛhari; Sāyaṇa's <i>Subhāṣita-sudhānidhi</i> 2.136.22; <i>Kuvalayānanda</i> , example for <i>vyājastuti-</i> <i>alaṅkāra</i>	645
न खलु धनत्वं जातिर्यस्य यदिष्टं तदेव तस्य धनम् । तत्तदिव पामराणामाकिञ्चन्यं धनं विदुषाम् ॥	Nīlakaṇṭha-dīkṣita's <i>Vairāgyaśataka</i> 43	645
द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये ...परा चैवापरा च ।	<i>Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad</i> 1.1.4	646
कारीर्या वृष्टिकामो यजेत ।	<i>Āpastamba-śrautasūtra</i> 19.25.16	646
ज्योतिष्टोमेन स्वर्गकामो यजेत ।	<i>Āpastamba-śrautasūtra</i> 10.2.1	646
अथ परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते ।	<i>Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad</i> 1.1.5	646
निचाय्य तन्मृत्युमुखात्प्रमुच्यते ॥	<i>Kaṭha-upaniṣad</i> 1.3.15	647
वाक्यार्थश्च विचार्यतां ... श्रुतिमतस्तर्कोऽनुसन्धीयताम् ।	<i>Upadeśapañcaka</i> 3	647
तर्काप्रतिष्ठानात् ...	<i>Brahma-sūtra</i> 2.1.11	647

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यत्नेनानुमितोप्यर्थः कुशलैरनुमातृभिः । अभियुक्ततरैरन्यैरन्यथैवोपपाद्यते ॥	<i>Bhāmatī on Brahma-sūtra</i> 2.1.11	647
विदुषां निवहैरिहैकमत्या यददुष्टं निरटङ्क यच्च दुष्टम् । मयि जल्पति कल्पनाधिनाथे रघुनाथे मनुतां तदन्यथैव ॥	<i>Dīdhiti</i>	647
पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदम्	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad</i> 5.1.1	648
पराञ्चि खानि व्यतृणत्स्वयंभूस्तस्मात्पराङ्गश्यति नान्तरात्मन् ।	<i>Kaṭha-upaniṣad</i> 2.1.1	649
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 6.34	649
अर्के चेन्मधु विन्देत किमर्थं पर्वतं व्रजेत् । इष्टस्यार्थस्य संसिद्धौ को विद्वान्यत्नमाचरेत् ॥	Maxim cited in the <i>Śābara-bhāṣya</i> on <i>Mīmāṃsā-sūtra</i> 1.2.4	650
असौ मया हतः शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि ।	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 16.14	650
न जातु कामः कामानामुपभोगेन शाम्यति । हविषा कृष्णवर्त्मैव भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥	<i>Manu-smṛti</i> 2.94	650
नित्यानित्यविवेकः सर्वेषां घटघटत्वयोरास्ते । स विवेको यः शान्तिकृदविवेकोऽन्यः समस्तोऽपि ॥	<i>Nilakaṇṭha-dīkṣita's Vairāgya-śataka</i> 20	651
तरति शोकमात्मवित्	<i>Chāndogya-upaniṣad</i> 7.1.3	651

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पिशुनैः प्रकाममुदितां परस्य निन्दां शृणोति कर्णाभ्याम् । तेन परः किं म्रियते व्यर्थं मनुजोऽतिपापभागभवति ॥	<i>Prabodha-sudhākara 59</i>	652
यस्माद्यावत्सुखं स्यादिह हि विषयतस्तावदस्मिन्प्रियत्वं यावद्दुःखं च यस्माद्भवति खलु ततस्तावदेवाप्रियत्वम् । नैकस्मिन्सर्वकालेऽस्त्युभयमपि कदाऽप्यप्रियोऽपि प्रियःस्यात्प्रेयानप्यप्रियो वा सततमपि ततः प्रेय आत्मारख्यवस्तु ॥	<i>Śataślokī 10</i>	653
यया यया भवेत्पुंसां व्युत्पत्तिः प्रत्यगात्मनि । सा सैव प्रक्रियेह स्यात्साध्वी सा चानवस्थिता ॥	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad- bhāṣya-vārtika 1.4.402</i>	654
जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तिषु स्फुटतरं योऽसौ समुज्जृम्भते प्रत्यग्रूपतया सदाऽहमहमित्यन्तः स्फुरन्नेकधा । नानाकारविकारभाजिन इमान्पश्यन्नहंघ्रीमुखान्नित्यानन्दचिदात्मना स्फुरति तं विद्धि स्वमेतं हृदि ॥	<i>Vivekacūḍāmaṇi 219</i>	654
शान्ता महान्तो निवसन्ति सन्तो वसन्तवल्लोकहितं चरन्तः । तीर्णाः स्वयं भीमभवार्षावं जनानहेतुनाऽन्यानपि तारयन्तः ॥	<i>Vivekacūḍāmaṇi 39</i>	654

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प्रज्ञावानपि पण्डितोऽपि चतुरोऽप्यत्यन्तसूक्ष्मार्थदृ- ग्व्यालीढस्तमसा न वेत्ति बहुधा सम्बोधितोऽपि स्फुटम् । भ्रान्त्यारोपितमेव साधु कलयत्यालम्बते तद्गुणा- न्हन्तासौ प्रबला दुरन्ततमसश्शक्तिर्महत्यावृतिः ॥	<i>Vivekacūḍāmaṇi 116</i>	655
आविद्यो ह्येष बन्धो विरमति न विना वेदनं कर्मजालै- र्मालोद्भूताहिरस्तं व्रजति किमु नमस्कारमन्त्रौषधाद्यैः ।	<i>Svārājyasiddhi 1.7</i>	656
ज्ञात्वा देवं सर्वपाशापहानिः	<i>Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad 1.11</i>	656
तमेवं विद्वानमृत इह भवति ।	<i>Taittirīya-āraṇyaka 3.12.7</i>	656
आदावन्ते च यन्नास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा ।	<i>Gauḍapāda-kārikā 2.6</i>	656
स्वस्याविद्याबन्धसंबन्धमोक्षात्सत्यज्ञानानन्दरूपात्मलब्धौ । शास्त्रं युक्तिर्देशिकोक्तिः प्रमाणं चान्तस्सिद्धा स्वानुभूतिः प्रमाणम् ॥	<i>Vivekacūḍāmaṇi 475</i>	657
स यश्चायं पुरुषे । यश्चासावादित्ये । स एकः ।	<i>Taittirīya-upaniṣad 2.8.5</i>	657
ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परम् ।	<i>Taittirīya-upaniṣad 2.1.1</i>	657
यदा ह्येवैष एतस्मिन्नुदरमन्तरं कुरुते । अथ तस्य भयं भवति ।	<i>Taittirīya-upaniṣad 2.7.1</i>	657

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संसारजसुखासक्तं ब्रह्मज्ञोऽस्मीति वादिनम् । कर्मब्रह्मोभयभ्रष्टं तं त्यजेदन्त्यजं यथा ॥	<i>Garuḍa-purāṇa 2.49.64</i>	658
वाग्वैखरी शब्दझरी शास्त्रव्याख्यानकौशलम् । वैदुष्यं विदुषां तद्बद्धुक्तये न तु मुक्तये ॥	<i>Vivekacūḍāmaṇi 60</i>	658
शान्तो दान्तः परमुपरतः क्षान्तियुक्तः समाधिं कुर्वन्नित्यं कलयति यतिः स्वस्य सर्वात्मभावम् । तेनाविद्यातिमिरजनितान्साधु दग्ध्वा विकल्पान्ब्रह्माकृत्या निवसति सुखं निश्चियो निर्विकल्पः ॥	<i>Vivekacūḍāmaṇi 356</i>	658
ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति	<i>Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad 3.2.9</i>	659
तस्य पुत्रा दायमुपयन्ति सुहृदः साधुकृत्यां द्विषन्तः पापकृत्याम्	Termed a śruti of the <i>Śātyāyanins in the bhāṣya on Brahma-sūtra 3.3.26</i>	659
<b>Chapter 25: His Scientific Insight</b>		
दीर्घचतुरश्रस्याक्षण्या रज्जुः पार्श्वमानी तिर्यङ्मानी च यत्पृथग्भूते कुरुतस्तदुभयं करोति ॥	<i>Bodhāyana-sulba-sūtra 1.48</i>	667
स एवाधस्तात्स उपरिष्टात्स पश्चात्स पुरस्तात्स दक्षिणतस्स उत्तरतस्स एवेद... सर्वमित्यथातो ... ।	<i>Chāndogya-upaniṣad 7.25.1</i>	668
त्वं स्त्री त्वं पुमानसि त्वं कुमार उत वा कुमारी । त्वं जीर्णो दण्डेन वञ्चसि त्वं जातो भवसि विश्वतोमुखः ॥ नीलः पतङ्गो हरितो लोहिताक्षस्तद्विद्मर्भ ऋतवः समुद्राः ।	<i>Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad 4.3,4.4</i>	668

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ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमिदं वरिष्ठम् ।	<i>Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad</i> 2.2.12	668
नक्षत्राणामहं शशी... इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि... मेधा... सरसामस्मि सागरः... मृगाणां च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं... पवनः पवतामस्मि... ज्ञषाणां मकरश्चास्मि... अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि... अहमेवाक्षयः कालो... ऋतूनां कुसुमाकरः... द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि... व्यवसायोऽस्मि... मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां...	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> - 10.21, 10.22, 10.34, 10.24, 10.30, 10.31, 10.31, 10.33, 10.33, 10.35, 10.36, 10.36, 10.38	668
मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥ प्रभवः प्रलयस्स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 9.16, 9.18	668
अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः । प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> 15.14	668
नम आयच्छब्दो विसृजद्भ्यश्च वो नमो नमोऽस्यद्भ्यो विच्छद्भ्यश्च वो नमः ।	<i>Śrī-rudra</i> 6.2	669
यच्च स्वभावं पचति विश्वयोनिः पाच्यांश्च सर्वान्परिणामयेद्यः ।	<i>Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad</i> 5.5	670
न जायते म्रियते वा विपश्चिन्नायं कुतश्चिन्न बभूव कश्चित् ।	<i>Kaṭha-upaniṣad</i> 1.2.18	671

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नीरोग उपविष्टो वा रुग्णो वा विलुठन्भुवि । मूर्च्छितो वा त्यजत्वेष प्राणान्भ्रान्तिर्न सर्वथा ॥	<i>Pañcadaśī 2.106</i>	682
तीर्थं श्वपचगृहे वा नष्टस्मृतिरपि परित्यजन् देहम् । ज्ञानसमकालमुक्तः कैवल्यं याति हतशोकः ॥	<i>Paramārthasāra 81</i>	682
तदधिगम उत्तरपूर्वाघयोरश्लेषविनाशौ तद्व्यपदेशात् ॥ इतरस्याप्येवमसंश्लेषः पाते तु ॥	<i>Brahma-sūtra 4.1.13-14</i>	683
अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥	<i>Bhagavad-gītā 5.26</i>	683
तस्य तावदेव चिरं यावन्न विमोक्ष्येऽथ सम्पत्स्य इति ।	<i>Chāndogya-upaniṣad 6.14.2</i>	683
न तस्य प्राणा उत्क्रामन्ति ब्रह्मैव सन्नब्रह्माप्येति ।	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad 4.4.6</i>	683



