

Editors Welcome

Om Gurudevaye Namaha

Salutations and prostrations to the Divine Embodiment of Love, our Beloved Swami Murugesu Maharishi, and to the Light of our lives, Swami Shankarananda Maharajji

"I simply haven't the nerve to imagine a being, a force, a cause which keeps the planets revolving in their orbits, and then suddenly stops in order to give me a bicycle with three speeds."

Quentin Crisp

Wow, can you believe there's only one month to go till the New Year? With the several tragic events and heartaches that have occurred during the year, and just as many joyous and divine celebrations, are we ready for the consequential events that 2012 brings?

There are people who do not believe in God. How can they not believe in a God when's there's such beauty around the world? How do you explain to someone the divine experiences that we encounter at the ashram when they do not even believe that there is a *Something* out there? A driving Force that enables us to live day to day. A Being that provide the nourishment that this body needs, and the experiences that the soul requires. Clearly, they lack FAITH! Faith that there is and there always will be, a GREATER BEING who makes this Earth rotate, who allows the sun to shine and the rain to pour, who provided the 8 wonders of the world and creates something as joyous as a baby being born. Faith in God is far more than just a word. It needs to be lived and practised constantly.

So as we say goodbye to 2011, and while you are making countless New Year's resolutions, I ask just one thing, ***KEEP YOUR FAITH IN THE DIVINE MOTHER AT ALL TIMES***. Let Her flag fly high and She will not let you down. And as Gurudev said last week, She might say yes, no or maybe later! Here's to a divinely awesome 2012!

In reverence of the Master always

Praneshri

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MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

Swami Shankarananda Maharajji

Dearest immortal souls of these troubled times. As we honour the birth of the Christ Consciousness in the form of the beloved Lord Jesus, may your heart be uplifted anew by the joy and hope so strongly felt during this sacred season. The joy of this sacred season of Christ's birth opens our hearts to feel a new blessing that this glorious victory has brought to multitudes through the centuries. The coming of such great ones, who purely reflect God's light, strengthens our faith so that we too can experience a re-birth from a matter-bound existence to the limitless nature of our souls. We behold in them our own infinite potential to expand our consciousness and manifest in our individual lives and our relationship with God's goodness and love. Our souls respond to this triumph over all human limitations because it stirs within us the dormant knowing of our infinite, immortal nature.

Within every human being dwells the glorious, ever-loving image of God. Through the lives of such great ones, as the Lord Jesus, in whom God's omnipotence and divinity are fully revealed, God calls each of us the resurrect ourselves from anything that impedes the expression of the immanence of this limitless power and blessings, from an ego- and matter-bound existence to the unbounded divine qualities and bliss of Spirit.

Though centuries have come and gone since Jesus was born the power of His example and His omnipresent love continues to transform receptive souls. He too lived in a time of much turmoil, but He showed us how to respond divinely to so attune ourselves with the Heavenly Father that we can feel for all as He does, that we can rise above the dualities of this world to find peace in this and be a giver of love and peace to others.

By dwelling on Christ's life and striving to emulate the qualities He expressed, you will open your heart to absorb more deeply the spirit manifest in Him and all God-united souls. The strength that upholds the universe filled His being, yet even greater was His humility, which allowed Him to perfectly express

God's will and His love. As long as we live within the confines of our ego's needs and opinions, we easily create barriers that separate us from God and from one another. But when we think less of ourselves we become more receptive to His wisdom in all the ways it comes to us, thus expanding our understanding and compassion. Christ was free of any need for position or recognition. He sort only to serve and by doing the same we can know as He did, the joys of giving. Jesus saw the divine in everyone, even in those who had erred for He looked beyond their human flaws to see the true SELF.

Every outreaching act enlarges our consciousness, but it is by going into the temple of silence where restless thoughts and emotions subside that we can fully experience the 'peace that surpasseth all understanding.'

The infinite love Christ felt the love by which God is drawing all souls back to Him. If you preserve what I tell you, you can attain 'a communion of unutterable sweetness with infinite Grace, the indescribable glory, the eternal protection.'

That is the priceless gift God offers to us this Christmas season. May this be the beginning of a joyous soul-awakening time.

Merry Christmas to all!!

OM





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The Importance of Karthikai Deepam

Karthigai Deepam is a festival of lights celebrated by Tamil Hindus on the full moon day of *Karthigai* month (November/December), which is observed in every home and in every temple. This occurs on the day when the moon is in conjunction with the constellation *Karthigai* (Pleiades) and *punima* (Full Moon). This constellation appears as a group of six stars in the firmament in the shape of a pendant from the ear. Many legends and lyrical poetry have grown round this star. The six stars are considered in Indian mythology as the six celestial nymphs who reared the six babies in the *saravana* tank which later were joined together to form the six faced Muruga. He is therefore called *Karthikeya*, the one brought up by the Karthigai nymphs. Houses and streets are lit up with rows of oil lamps (*Deepam*) in the evening of the festival day.

Festival of Lamps

Karthigai is essentially a festival of lamps. The lighted lamp is considered an auspicious symbol. It is believed to ward off evil forces and usher in prosperity and joy. While the lit lamp is important for all Hindu rituals and festivals, it is indispensable for Karthigai. This festival is also celebrated to commemorate the bonding between brothers and sisters in south India (analogous to Bhaiya-Dhuj and Raakhi). Sisters pray for the prosperity and success of their brothers and light lamps to mark the occasion...

History of Karthigai Festival

One of the earliest references to the festival is found in the *Ahananuru*, a book of poems, which dates back to the Sangam Age (200 B.C. to 300 A.D.). The *Ahananuru* clearly states that Karthigai is celebrated on the full moon day of the month of Karthigai, as per South Indian calendar. It was one of the most important festivals (*peruvizha*) of the ancient Tamils, including now the areas of modern Kerala too. *Avaiyyar*, the renowned poetess of those times, refers to the festival in her songs. Karthikai Deepam is one of the oldest festivals celebrated by the Tamil/Keralite people. The festival finds reference in Sangam literature like *Ahananuru* and the poems of *Auvaiyar*.

Mythological aspect of Karthigai Festival

Lord Siva appeared as a huge flame of light before Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma, who each considered himself supreme and said that the matter could be tested if the two could search for Lord Siva's Head and feet. Lord Vishnu took the form of a *varagar* (boar) and delved deep into the earth, Lord Brahma that of an *Annam* (swan) and flew towards the skies. Lord Vishnu failed in his search and returned. But Lord Brahma, chancing upon a piece of *thazhambu*, a flower, learnt from it that it had been floating down for thirty thousand years from Lord Siva's head. He seized upon this and claimed to Lord Siva that he had seen the other's top. Lord Siva realized the falsehood and pronounced that there would never be a temple for Lord Brahma in this world. He also interdicted the use of the flower *thazhambu* in his worship. Lord Eswaran (Siva) appeared as a flame, this day is called Maha Dheepam.

Tiruvannamalai

Karthigai festival in Tiruvannamalai hills is very famous. On Karthigai day, a huge fire lamp is lit up on the hill, visible for several kilometers around the hill. The fire (deepam) is called *Mahadheepam*, Hindu devotees visit here and pray to Lord Shiva.

Mother Gayathri

*O Mother Gayathri shower me with your choicest blessings.
Mother Gayathri gives me the strength and knowledge to reach
for my goals.
I shall chant the Gayathri Mantra and Mother Gayathri will
remove all sins and ignorance.
She will light up my life.*

Avashen, 13 years

Nava means nine and *ghara* means planetary energy. Navagraha pooja is a prayer ritual performed to energise an individual or family according to the nine planetary forces.

The purpose of the Navagraha is to countereffect any negative astrological effects to the nine planets. The Navagraha pooja can be done by anyone. When performing the Navagraha pooja it adds to the efficacy of the prayer to wear the colour pertaining to your planet. Your planetary number can be calculated as follows, birthday+ birth+month+birth year=planetary number. Eg: 15 July 1953 will be calculated as follows: 1+5+7+1+9+5+3=31.

The 3+1=4 in this is the planetary number of this person. The planetary colour and substance associations are as follows:

Surya (Sun) number 1, colour: red, stone: ruby, day: Sunday, related to the soul, wheat.

Chandra(Moon) number 2, colour: white, stone: moonstone or pearl, day: Monday, related to the mind, paddy rice.

Kujan (Mars) number 3, colour: red, stone: red coral, day: Tuesday, related to ego, red bean.

Budhan (Mercury) number 4, colour: green, stone: emerald, day: Wednesday, related to communication, green bean.

Guru (Jupiter) number 5, colour: yellow, stone: yellow sapphire, day: Thursday, related to wisdom, gram.

Sukran (Venus) number 6, colour: white, stone: diamond, day: Friday, related to wealth, field bean.

Saani (Saturn) number 7, colour: black, stone: blue sapphire, day: Friday, related to career and longevity, black thil seed.

Rahu (North Node) number 8, colour: dark blue, stone: garnet, related to chaos, black gram.

Ketu (South Node) number 9, colour: light blue, stone: cat's eye, related to supernatural influences, linseed.

The offering mantra for each planet is:



Om Guru Suryan namaha
Om Guru Chandran namaha
Om Guru Kujan namaha
Om Guru Buddhan namaha
Om Guru Guru namaha
Om Sukran namaha
Om Guru Sani namaha
Om Guru Rahu namaha
Om Guru Ketu namaha

Navagraha is every Saturday morning from 4am onwards. During the nine day fast, some of us fast salt free.

To do the prayer you will need to bring 1 or 2 litres of milk and 500ml of maas, 10 flower heads, 9 betel leaf, 9 bananas, a new towel and a container with a lid for collecting the prayer milk.

SEARCHING FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE

The project, known as SETI, was started more than half a century ago to find out if other planets in our solar system (or beyond it) have intelligent life. An observatory at Green Bank, West Virginia, has a 100-meterwide radio dish that is aimed at stars (suns) more than 10 light years away. A light year is the distance light travels in one year at a speed of 186,000 miles a second (approximately one trillion miles). Some scientists estimate that several thousand planets capable of supporting life must be in the Milky Way Galaxy. Even if highly intelligent beings do inhabit such planets, easy travel to or from them is not yet possible with current means of space transport. Our galaxy is approximately 100,000 light years from one side to the other. Travelling one-fourth of that distance at the speed of light (which can't be done) would be a 25,000-year one-way trip.



BABAJI'S BIRTHDAY

Youth Feedback

Mid-Rand

Om Kriya Babaji Nama Aum.

My loving salutations and humble prostrations at the lotus feet of our Master, Swami Shankarananda Maharajji, our Kriya Guru, Yogiara Ramaiah and our Moola Guru, Mahavatar Kriya Babaji.



The anniversary of the birthday of Mahavatar Babaji started amidst much excitement. The Ashram was prepared and decorated; Prasad was prepared for offering and garlands made.

Mahavishnu arrived early to set up the altar for the prayer. We, at Midrand were also blessed in that Gurudev had invited Swami Murugananda Saraswathi to attend the birthday celebrations.

Swami Murugananda arrived with the devotees standing outside the Ashram to receive Him. Mahavishnu commenced the Pooja at 9h30, with prayers to the Sun, and then to the 18 Siddhars. An offering of flower petals was made to the Gurus in the Kriya Lineage and thereafter, Pooja was performed to pay homage to Lord Muruga. This was very special, since Muruga received Kriya initiation from Mother Parvati who then initiated Agastyar Muni and Maha Bogar who initiated Mahavatar Babaji into Kriya Yoga. Mahavishnu recited the various names of Muruga whilst Yadev offered flowers, kumkum, sandanum and various other ingredients. Mahavishnu sang a beautiful song in praise of Muruga and Babaji began. Here, with the presence of whose name means Muruga".



10

I turn to Gayathri. I abide in Gayathri. I am secure in Gayathri

Swami Shankarananda Maharajji

A moving Pooja to Mahavatar Babaji followed, with Mahavishnu praising Babaji in many different ways ending with the offering of flowers with the recitation of mantras to Babaji.

A hawan was then performed, with all the devotees present offering ingredients to Agni and, yet again special mantras were chanted by Mahavishnu to pay homage to Mahavatar Babaji. After the Pooja, Swami Murugananda gave us a discourse on the Principles of Dharma, in light of the questions that were put to Him. Swami Murugananda was very clear in His message to us live by ethical values. Even when explaining the principle of “atharva” meaning accumulation of wealth, Swami Murugananda stressed that wealth on the spiritual path should be based on need. Swami also said that even as a businessman you should be running your business on ethical principles.

The birthday celebrations ended with us feeding about 80 orphans at the New Jerusalem Homes at Midrand in keeping with Babaji's principles of feeding those less fortunate than yourself.



The Life of **Jesus Christ**

The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."

--Luke 2:10-11

Christianity was founded on the life and teachings of a Jew named Jesus Christ. The English word **Jesus** comes from the Greek form of the Hebrew *Joshua*, a common name which means *saviour*. **Christ** is a title and it comes from the Greek form of the Hebrew *Messiah*, meaning *anointed one*.

Jesus was born to a devout Jewess named Mary and a carpenter named Joseph. Matthew and Luke report that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Jesus was from a small town called Nazareth, where he probably trained as a carpenter under his father.

Jesus re-enters the Gospel narratives at about the age of 30 (circa 26 AD). The four gospels agree that Jesus' first act was to be baptized by John the Baptist. This event marked the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Jesus then spent from one to three years teaching and working miracles among his disciples and before large crowds. His recorded miracles included turning water to wine, walking on water, healing the sick, multiplying a small meal to feed a crowd, casting out demons, and even raising a man from the dead.



The teachings of Jesus focussed primarily on the *kingdom of God* and were usually relayed through parables drawing on familiar images from agricultural life. He rebuked the hypocrisy of some Jewish leaders and taught the importance of love and kindness, even to one's enemies. Jesus' popularity grew quickly, but so did opposition from local leaders. Roman rulers were uncomfortable with the common perception that he was the Messiah who would liberate the Jews from Roman rule.

Jesus was brought before the Jewish chief priests for trial. When questioned, he said very little but affirmed he was the Messiah. He was then judged worthy of death for blasphemy and handed over to the Roman governor of Judea, Pontius Pilate, for punishment.

Jesus was brutally beaten, clothed in a mock-royal purple robe and crown of thorns, and then executed by crucifixion at Golgotha (The Place of the Skull). The Gospels report that only Jesus' mother and a handful of female disciples were present at the execution. Jesus suffered on the cross for six hours before finally crying out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" The Gospels of Matthew and Mark report extraordinary events upon Jesus' death - the entire land went dark, there was a great earthquake.

A few days later the risen Jesus appeared to the disciples, where he passed through a locked door yet demonstrated he was not a ghost by eating and allowing himself to be touched.

The resurrection of Jesus is central to the early church. Historically, it may be impossible to determine what happened or what the disciples actually experienced, but one thing seems clear - they sincerely believed, from an early date that Jesus had been raised from the dead.

The belief that Jesus' resurrection makes it possible for people to have peace with God in this life and meet a favourable end in the next was a major source of the incredible courage shown by the early Christian martyrs.

On the road to Enlightenment with Patanjali

As we trod the pathway on the journey to Self- and God-Realisation, God hands us many tools; the eight-fold path of Yoga is one of them. Patanjali helps one to understand the various concepts of Yoga and eliminates confusion. By steady study of these yoga sutras, its application will take you to bliss.

The next two verses for discussion are from book one:



Verse 20:

Sraddhaviryasmrtisamadhiprajnapurvaka itaresam

Practice must be pursued by maintaining one pointed devotion, great will power, remembrance of the teaching, energy and confidence for some time after which the goal of Yoga will be realised.

Practice must be pursued with trust, confidence, vigour, keen memory and the power of absorption to break this spiritual complacency.

Verse 21:

Tivrasamveganamasannah

The stronger and the most intense the devotion and energy, the nearer the state of Yoga.

The goal is nearer for those who are supremely vigorous and intense in their practice.

At Your Service

A COLLECTION OF SATSANG TRANSCRIPTS

BY SWAMI SHANKARANANDA MAHARAJJI

A discourse given by our Master at various Friday night services

Be faithful to your path

When Swami Murugesu was alive, we had 5000 devotees in Sri Lanka on the day he took samadhi. And now we have barely 800 devotees. They have all taken to other organisations.

The same thing happened in the Divine Life Society. When Swami Sahajananda passed on, there were immediately problems in the organisation and membership dropped. Why is this happening? The answer is very simple. All these people - devotees of Swami Murugesu, Sahajananda and even Sai Baba - follow a man.

Too many of you are coming here because of me. You should be coming here because of Gayathri Ma. I don't want an internal struggle when I leave, where everyone wants to be the boss, and to be better than the other person. You must come here for my guru or for Mother Gayathri only. I'm telling this so you can go home and think about it, and change the way you think. We are all thinking wrongly and following a man. He can only show you where to go but if tomorrow I leave this body, the numbers here will dwindle to nothing. No one will want to take instructions from anyone else.

But if you come here for one purpose to get the energy and blessing from Divine Mother then we won't have that problem. I'm not saying don't follow the guru. But don't make the guru the centre of everything, so that you can't function when the guru takes samadhi.

I see this sometimes when I'm away. It is not good for an organisation. Functioning should continue at the same pace no matter who is in charge.



**KID'S
CORNER**

JOKES

The best medicine for the Soul

On what nuts can pictures hang?

Walnuts.

What are southern fathers called?

Southpaws.

What birds are always unhappy?

Bluebirds.

What can you hold without touching it?

A conversation.

What cat lives in the ocean?

An octopus.

What did Napoleon become after his 39th year?

40 years old.

What did one broom say to the other broom?

"Have you heard the latest dirt?"

What did the big watch hand say to the small hand?

"Got a minute?"

What did the chicks say to the miser?

"Cheap! Cheap!"

Glossary

Yogi One who practices yoga

Pranayama The scientific art of mastering the breath

Dharma Eternal principles of righteousness that uphold all creation; man's inherent duty to live in harmony with these principles.

WORDSEARCH

A big CONGRATULATIONS goes to Riashni Naidoo for being the first to complete the wordsearch in November!! She was the only one to find the secret word LIKIT JAPA. Well done, young lady. Keep up the good work! 🤗

Christmas

U	A	I	K	A	K	L	A	S	T	M	Y	G	I	F	T	S	V	X	
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patanjali
Jesus
Last supper

yoga
samadhi
Infinite

gifts
generous
Kriya

Can you find secret word number 10?

RESOLUTION LESSON

2011 is almost over! Can you believe it! Christmas day is around the corner. I remember as a child, the stores used to have their decor and gifts up by August so that people could start preparing for Christmas. But this year, it seems the stores have put their goodies on the shelves quite late.... Why is this?

Upon reflection, I realised that life has become so fast that we cannot seem to keep up anymore. We have so much more to do, so many more people to interact with - think about it: we now have 7 BILLION people on the planet!

Generally at this time of year we can look back to see what our achievements were and consider that had we the opportunity to re-live the year, would we change anything?

Now is a good time to think about those New Year Resolutions - think of something you would like to achieve for 2012 - even if it is just one thing. Try not to set too many goals because then life could become too hectic. My goal was to learn to tie a sari on my own for 2011. It's not perfect, but it's a start!

Here is a great lesson moving forward into 2012: read, absorb it, love it, live! Have a wonderful and blessed 2012.

In ancient Greece (469 - 399 BC), Socrates was widely lauded for his wisdom.

One day an acquaintance ran up to him excitedly and said, "Socrates, do you know what I just heard about Diogenes?"

"Wait a moment," Socrates replied, "Before you tell me I'd like you to pass a little test. It's called the Triple Filter Test." "Triple filter?" asked the acquaintance.

"That's right," Socrates continued, "Before you talk to me about Diogenes let's take a moment to filter what you're going to say. The first filter is Truth. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?"

"No," the man said, "Actually I just heard about it."

"All right," said Socrates, "So you don't really know if it's true or not. Now let's try the second filter, the filter of Goodness. Is what you are about to tell me about Diogenes something good?"

"No, on the contrary..."

"So," Socrates continued, "You want to tell me something about Diogenes that may be bad, even though you're not certain it's true?"

The man shrugged, a little embarrassed. Socrates continued, "You may still pass the third test though, because there is a third filter, the filter of Usefulness. Is what you want to tell me about Diogenes going to be useful to me?"

"No, I'm not sure really."

"Well," concluded Socrates, "If what you want to tell me is neither true nor good nor even useful, why tell it to me or anyone at all?" The man was bewildered and ashamed.

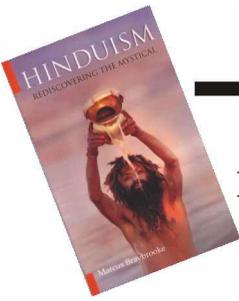
This is an example of why Socrates was a great philosopher and held in such high esteem.

ABC of Hinduism

Extract from *The Science of Self Realisation* RE Davis

KARMA To maintain a balanced physical consciousness, God in his infinite wisdom, created the concept of Karma. Basically karma is "every action has a reaction". There is a misconception that Karma is only bad. Karma means action, both good and bad action. As we progress in life, the Karma is either credited(good) or debited(bad). And when we reach the end, the cosmic accountant tallies the results and determines whether we need to come back to pay off our debt or we can retire eternally.

KUNDALINI Soul Force. In people who are not yet spiritually awake, it is mostly dormant. In spiritually awake people, its energies are active, transformative and empowering. They are aroused by aspiration to spiritual growth, devotion, meditation and other practices; being in places where spiritual forces are strong; and mental and spiritual attunement to an enlightened person.



HINDUISM

Rediscovering the Mystical

Book Review

MARCUS BRAYBROOKE

ISBN: 81 7992 299 5

Hinduism will help readers rediscover a sense of the mystical, an awareness of the reality of the divine, who or which can never adequately be described in human language. Experience of the divine creates a sense of oneness with all humans and a concern for the poor, the sick and the suffering.

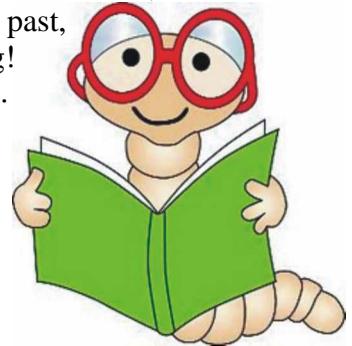
Focusing on the positive insights, values and practices of Hinduism, the author draws the reader's attention to some valuable Hindu contributions to humanity's understanding of the spiritual world. It substantiates that world religions can do a great deal to rehabilitate humanity, by giving it meaning and purpose.

Extract from the book

The great Saivite poet Manikavacakar sang of God's love for human kind and rejoiced in God's mercy:

You bestow on me a grace undeserved by me
And enabled this slave's body and soul
To joyfully thaw and melt with love.
For this I have nothing to give in requital to You,
O Emancipator pervading the past,
The future and everything!
O infinite primal Being...

*** All books that are published for review are available in the Gayathri Peedam Library. Annual Family Membership is available. Speak to Gurudev or Lalitha for further information. Hari Om.**



THE CHRONICLES OF PUGLANANDA

Pugla:

Why is it that shoes are not allowed in temples and mosques yet they are allowed in churches?



Guruji:

The human body consists of 72 thousand nerves and these nerves end underneath the feet. So the easiest way to experience energy is through our feet. Even socks is not allowed but we still use them in winter.



According to the Bible, God told Moses *Take off your sandals, for the place you are standing is holy ground* (Exodus 3:5). But Christians fail to follow that instruction of God.

However I have been to a Church in Maysore, India and I was not allowed inside the Church with my sandals.

18 TAMIL SIDDHARS

Pambatti

Pambatti lived in the 11th century AD and was born in Marutha Malai, Kongunadu

His guru is Chattamuni and Pambatti has made many contributions related to the gnana siddhi, the siddhi of knowledge.

The term "Siddha" comes from the word "siddhi" which means the experience of Shiva. Siddhisvara, God of Siddhis, is a name of Shiva. Siddhis indicate whether the practitioners of yoga have attained a stage to reach the ultimate goal, namely, liberation. It is wrong to think that the Siddhars are magicians or uncouth ascetics credited with supernatural powers. They are not atheists or agnostics as is commonly believed. They believe in God, but not a God of this or that religion. For most of them there is a God, a Shiva, without any limitation or attributes. Shiva is grammatically and philosophically an impersonal conception. The real name for "Shiva" is "It" or "Atu" or "Thatness" or "Suchness". A genuine Siddhar is beyond atheism and faith (theism) alike.

A Siddhar is a free thinker and a revolutionary who refuses to allow himself to be carried away by any religion, scripture or rituals. A Siddhar is one who has attained a stage of realization where he is not bound by the injunctions of the sastras, and where he has gone beyond the Vedas. There is always a gulf between words and the experience, which they stand for. To seek enlightenment in words and ideas is like expecting the sight of a menu card to reach and satisfy the inner processes of a hungry person. A description can never in itself convey experience. All the sastras, Vedas, Puranas, and the various religious sects turn humanity into conditioned animals. Truth is felt experience and it cannot be translated fully in any sastra. As a Doha song says: "Looking at the fruit in the tree is not smelling it. Does the disease fly away at the sight of the physician?" The Siddhars seem to be opposed to the scriptures, but their temper is devout. They are "pious rebels" inside the field of religion and as such they are not atheists. Have you ever had a chat with Gurudev about the contradictions and mistakes in the Ramayan?

Karai Siddhar draws a distinction between a Siddha and a non-Siddha by saying that a Siddha points to the path of the experience whereas a non-Siddha points to the path of scriptures.

A Siddhar is one who enjoys perfect bliss even while he is in his physical body. The body is treated by him as the best medium of realizing the truth. Similar to the sacred rivers, temples, mountains, etc., the body is a sacred passage to the ultimate Reality. Sivavakkiyar raises a pertinent question: why should we go out to these places when the threshold is in us? Siddhars know how to preserve the body through light rays ("mani" in Tamil) sound waves ("mantra") and medicine ("marundu" or "ausadha"). The technique of the preservation of the body is called kaya sadhana: it is an attempt to attain a perfect body called Siddhar deha. In short, one who has obtained the power of dematerializing and spiritualizing the body, and knows how to transmute the corruptible physical into the incorruptible superphysical basis of life, is a Siddhar. A Siddhar attains and possesses an eternal spiritual body called the divya-deha and is one who finally breaks out of the karmic cycle and attains deliverance from time. Using the expression of Mircea Eliade, we may say that the Siddhars are those "who understood liberation as the conquest of immortality".

The Lord's Passover

*We are children of the light
We belong not to the night
The Lord's feast we celebrate
According to that solar date*

*First day of the calendar
The Spring Equinox occurs
Sunset on the fourteenth day
Brings the fifteenth, His holiday*

*Christ's blood shed for our accord
The Passover of The Lord*

Anon

Going Green for God

LET'S RECYCLE!!!



Are you having fun learning about how to save the environment? Is your family helping to do God's work by saving the planet?

Glass recycling makes a difference

Glass is 100% recyclable and scrap glass is an important ingredient of new glass! Recycled glass retains its quality and by including recycled glass in the production process; less water, raw material and energy is used! Glass is completely pure and has been used by many for thousands of years on a daily basis. Few, homes, businesses and schools can manage without it.

Did you know?

- Recycling 1 bottle saves the energy to make 5 cups of tea
- Recycling 1 glass container saves the energy to light a 100W bulb for an hour, run a washing machine for 10 minutes, power a TV for 20 minutes and a computer for 25 minutes!

Our needs continually grow but the demand strains our limited energy supplies. Our planet is already under pressure from pollution and global warming. We need to do the best we can to protect the environment for future generations!

Tree of the Month: **WILD POMEGRANATE**

The wild pomegranate inhabits the ever-green forests along the coast and in the mountains. This small, ever-green tree can even be called a shrub. The bark is greyish brown and smooth and the leaves are simple, thick and very dark green. The flowers are gorgeous! They are orange to crimson in colour; tubular in shape and grow up to 2,5cm long. What is so awesome is that they grow in clusters! The nectar is strong and sweet and will attract humming birds. They flower in spring and summer but can flower as early as August too. The fruit is urn-shaped and occurs in dense clusters. The fruit is leathery with spikes crowning the fruit.





COP17/CMP7
UNITED NATIONS
CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2011
DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

COP17

We are sure you are aware of this conference happening in Durban at the moment - it is a Climate Change Awareness Conference. This is the 17th international conference to assist in the reduction of the effects of global warming, but is it working? Is it a waste of the tax payers money? It has cost SA over R500 million to host this event; money that could have been used to plant trees, which will actually make a difference!

Well, curiosity got the better of me, so on the first Tuesday of the conference I spent the day walking around, meeting people, learning what they are doing globally as well as eating free food. Now, what appeared in the beginning as a huge campaign to let us know how much good work is really being done - and truly, a lot of great work is being done, eventually became a huzz-buzz of market bazaar with everybody jumping on this bandwagon as a new way to make money! It is quite amazing the new technologies and ideas that are coming out, but is it too little, too late? Where is the thought of God in all this? Did anybody turn around and consider that perhaps global warming is God's way of punishing us for the gross negligence of the Earth entrusted to us? Did anybody turn to God and say, *Lord, we are aware and acknowledge our terrible errors, so please guide us to the solutions. Anything is possible with You, Lord and I give myself unto Thee for direction.* Yes, no, maybe? We can! We can speak to God all day every day and request those solutions with the energy required to carry out those solutions. God is ever loving and forgiving and once we are able to surrender unto His Divine Will, absolutely anything is possible.

Here is a message from December 1st: *This is probably the largest, the most deeply rooted, revolution that mankind has ever seen... it will revolutionise the way you and I interact with each another, the way we travel, the way we consume, the way we produce, everything. There is not one aspect of our human life that will not be touched by this... our lives will be very, very, very, different. We're talking here about a very serious revolution - Christiana Figueres, head of the UN climate secretariat.*

Strange how such bold comments can be made in the midst of devastating floods and thousands of people who have lost their homes. See God's subtlety? Perhaps this is God's way of giving those COP17 delegates the message that the damage is done, stop talking and do some work!



With the inspiration of all the great work being done, we need to be ever more careful about the care of our home. This planet is the only one we have, so please with all the love in my heart, let's become more active in encouraging family and friends to do their bit. All hope is not lost! But we cannot rely on a handful to save us. Each one has to do a bit to contribute! Many hands make light work - many aware minds and activities can save Mother Earth!

Is There a God?

*One may ask, 'Is there a God? '
For me there can be no doubt
'Cause I learned His sacred name
And in anger cursed it out*

*God said in His commandments
To honour His sacred name
And to those who broke that law
He would hold them to the blame*

*The Lord graciously forgives
Is a fact that I do know
While I bear the punishment
I rightly earned long ago
He alleviates symptoms
That from my illness flow*

26

I am in need of the healing power that Gayathri radiates

Swami Shankarananda Maharajji



Bhagavad Gita

The Divine Song of God

What does GOD want from us?

To live righteously! The Gita, in *chapter 12* verses 13 and 14, discusses this question;

Advesta sarva bhutanam maitrah karuna eva ca;

Nirmamo nirahankarah sama dukkha sukhah ksami.

He who hates no creature, who is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from feelings of "I" and "mine", even-minded in pain and pleasure, forbearing

The beginning of this verse is beautiful!

Apart from these qualities, the worshipper is also one who neither agitates any being nor is agitated by any being, and who is free from joy, misery and fear.

Verse 14:

Santustah satatam yogi yatatma drdhaniscayah;

Mayyarpita mano buddhii yo madbhaktah sa me priyah.

Ever content, steady in meditation, self-controlled, and possessed of firm conviction, with mind and intellect fixed on Me one who is this devoted to Me, is dear to Me

He wants you to be thinking of Him all the time.

Krsna explains that the one who performs selfless action with the sense of self-surrender has an advantage over the follower of the Way of Knowledge, who worships the unmanifest. Both of them accomplish the same action, but there are more hurdles in the way of the latter. He bares the responsibility of the profits and losses himself, whereas the burden of the dedicated worshipper is borne by God.

DANCE, LIVE, MERGE

Dancing with Shiva

Why Is There Suffering in the World?

The nature of the world is duality. It contains each thing and its opposite: joy and sorrow, goodness and evil, love and hate. Through experience of these, we learn and evolve, finally seeking Truth beyond all opposites. Aum.

There is a divine purpose even in the existence of suffering in the world. Suffering cannot be totally avoided. It is a natural part of human life and the impetus for much spiritual growth for the soul. Knowing this, the wise accept suffering from any source, be it hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, famine, wars, disease or inexplicable tragedies. Just as the intense fire of the furnace purifies gold, so does suffering purify the soul to resplendence. So also does suffering offer us the important realization that true happiness and freedom cannot be found in the world, for earthly joy is inextricably bound to sorrow, and worldly freedom to bondage. Having learned this, devotees seek a satguru who teaches them to understand suffering, and brings them into the intentional hardships of sadhana and tapas leading to liberation from the cycles of experience in the realm of duality. The Agamas explain, "That which appears as cold or as hot, fresh or spoiled, good fortune and bad, love and hate, effort and laziness, the exalted and the depraved, the rich and the poor, the well-founded and the ill-founded, all this is God Himself; none other than Him can we know." Aum Namah Sivaya.

Webster's Dictionary: a bribe is "1) anything, especially money, given or promised to induce a person to do something illegal or wrong; 2) anything given or promised to induce a person to do something against his or her wishes." Bribery money when received, in cash or kind, is bad money, because it is wrongly gotten--in whatever of the three ways--by psychological force, the arousal of greed or by devious coercion. In many countries, bribery has become a way of life.

Merging with Shiva

Living in the external area of the mind, it appears that thoughts are always changing. New concepts come and old ones go, as do customs and systems of living. From an inner perspective, it is similar to riding on a train, seeing the countryside, animals, people and buildings quickly pass by. Everything seems to be changing, but it is only you who is traveling through space. So it is within the mind. You travel through inner space rapidly or slowly, depending upon the nature of your sadhana or your natural emotional velocity. It is through holding fast to this perspective that a swift inroad to further enlightenment can be attained. If you hold to the perspective that thoughts and forms are always changing, your awareness automatically traps itself into the pygmy consciousness as a victim in a vast, ever-changing conglomerate of pranic mind substances. You have experienced this, no doubt, as it is the experience of those who have not awakened to the inner path.

CONGRATS DR MAHAVISHNU MOODLEY

Aristotle once said: “The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet.”

How true a saying! We all know that these past six years have been both exciting and trying. You have been stressed and anxious while waiting for results. You were ever ready to quote all the things you learnt during lectures over the phone. You have told us hilarious stories about some of the antics



patients did. But I don't think there is anyone who could be more proud of you than we were when the professor said: “DOCTOR MSM MOODLEY!” The emotions, the excitement, the delight that we felt were all because of you. You are a role model you have in our Divine, you do, your sense of good looks, we are so Mother chose you to be here for you. As you journey, we wish you We love you Vishee! Congratulations!



to those around you. The faith the dedication to everything humour and of course, your blessed that the Divine our brother! We will always take the next step on your everything of the best.



Your siblings
Seelo, Melli and Tasha

POETRY

The ABC'S Of Happiness

*Aspire to realize your potential
Believe in yourself
Create a good life
Dream about what you might become
Exercise frequently
Forgive honest mistakes
Glorify the creative spirit
Humour yourself and others
Imagine great things
Joyfully live each day
Kindly help others
Love one another
Meditate daily
Nurture the environment
Organize for harmonious action
Praise performance well done
Question most things
Regulate your own behaviour
Smile often
Think rationally
Understand yourself
Value life
Work for the common good
X-Ray and carefully examine problems
Yearn to improve
Zestfully pursue happiness*

Hitesh Ramyad, 14 years

PENNE WITH CAPSICUM AND MASCARPONE

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 2 red onions, chopped
- 1 red, 1 yellow and 1 green capsicum, de-seeded and cut into 1cm pieces
- 275g dried penne
- 200g mascarpone
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 4 tablespoons fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- Black pepper
- 4 tablespoons freshly grated Parmesan



Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and fry the garlic, onions and capsicum for 10 minutes, stirring frequently, or until the vegetables have softened. Bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil, add the pasta and cook for 8 minutes or until just firm in the centre (al dente). Drain, set aside and keep warm.
2. Stir half the mascarpone, the lemon juice, parsley and seasoning into the capsicum mixture. Cook for 5 minutes or until the mascarpone melts.
3. Stir the remaining mascarpone into the pasta, then add to the capsicum mixture, tossing together well. Serve with a sprinkling of Parmesan.

Gayathri Peedam Calender 2011/2012

December

- 10 Pournami
24 Christmas Eve Service
26 Gurudev's arrival from India
31 New Year Service

January 2012:

- 5 Paramahansa Yogananda
Janastami
7-8 Midrand trip (Strini Pooja 8th Jan)
9 Pournami
14 Specail Business Pooja
21 Special Family Pooja - Kuben

February

- 4 Mahanavagraha 1
7 Pournami
18 Sunk pooja at the ashram
20 Mahashivaratri
25 DINNER

March

- 7 Paramahansa Yogananda
Mahasamadhi Pooja
8 Pournami
23 Ramayan week starts
24 Special Family Pooja - Dean
25 Car Wash Day

April

- 1 Ramayan week ends.
Ramnaumi.
6 Good Friday; Hanuman Jyanti;
Pournami
22 Park day with Bunnies & Juice
28 Mahanavagraha 2

Kriya Yoga Classes

Monday: Verulam 7pm, Gokale Hall
& Umhlanga 6:30pm

Wednesday: Cowies Hill & Watsonis
Library 6:30pm

Thursday: Stonebridge Hall; Phoenix
6:30pm

Saturday: Verulam 6am (Advanced)

Sunday: Verulam 6am (Prana Mudras)

*Speak to Aunty Jane, Kailashdeva,
Pranananda or Lalitha for more information



**Please note that all dates are subject to change.
For updates, please visit our website:
www.gayathripeedam.com*