

# SRI SARVESHWARI TIMES

MAY 1999

One who realizes the inner beauty of the self,  
realizes the mystery of the Divine

AUGHAR VANI, Avadhuta's Wisdom



Aghoreshwar  
Baba Bhagwan Ramji

**Any act of bhakti, devotion that we do, never goes to waste. Never!**

Since the last celebration of Navaratri, Babaji has been asked several questions regarding the proper way of understanding the relationship between God as the Great Unknown, the Divine Mother, Guru, and a meaningful life. Here we have transcribed some of his words collected during different satsangs (spiritual talks with seekers) in the last month at Sonoma Ashram.  
... Editors

"...in aghor way of thinking, we know that the most proper way to address God is through the expression 'Great Unknown'. That 'Great Unknown' is the most extreme concept our mind can conceive. Whenever we want to speak about that which is greater than all else, beyond form, we use the expression 'Great Unknown'. Even so, it remains a concept of the mind, something elusive in its nature, something about which nothing can be said, completely mysterious to our human experience. Through our mind we come to understand that It must be formless, beyond any name, gender, color, race, and place, yet that It permeates everywhere and everything. This is called the *Nirgun*, the no-qualities (guna), the no-attributes, the nondistinct aspect of God, the God without a face. This is the way of knowledge, *jnana marga*.

But what happens when we start listening to these deep and strong emotions arising from our hearts as we close our eyes to be in the presence of our mantra? To express our devotion, we give that 'Great Unknown' a name, a form, a figure. This way of approaching the 'Great Unknown'- by giving a name and a form - is called *sakar-bhakti*, devotion with name and form (namrup-sakar). It is from sarkar-bhakti that we are able to establish ourselves into *nirakar-bhakti*, that state in which the heart itself acknowledges the 'Great Unknown' How is this shift possible? How does it happen? Above all, why are there so many different, sometimes even contradictory features of Gods and Goddesses?

The Formless permeates everywhere, and out of compassion takes form depending on the intensity and bhava of the call of the seeker. As an analogy, consider the all pervading light of the sun. It is equally distributed in every part of the solar system, and even beyond. Yet we

have the capability of concentrating that vast light into a very small point in which that very light becomes fire. We can decide where to focus our lens, what degree to concentrate that available power, even what to transform. So, that power, that Great Unknown can take any form, according to the lens of our intention.

The 'Great Unknown' possesses the potential of taking this or that form, and at the same time to not take any form at all; this principle holds true also in our understanding of the nature of the Guru. Every time we chant Arati, in the first stanza we are reminded of this, "Om jai Aghar daani, niraakaara saakaara niraamaya". Om, hail to the generous Aghor Guru. You are formless, as well as with a form.

We have to remember that any step in developing this relationship, any act of bhakti, any devotion that we do, never goes to waste. Never! No matter how we call, if our heart is open and pure, it is always heard, though we may not notice or recognize it when the response to that call comes. The Divine Mother may come in the form of a friend or a stranger, or even in the form of an inspirational thought. She may come in a totally unexpected form, but always She comes.

For example, *Maha Lakshmi*, the auspicious one, who is also known as the Goddess of wealth, comes in many disguises. First, She may come in the form of contentment. At any given moment one may think he needs a million dollars; he craves one million dollars and becomes restless. The next moment another thought may emerge, "Oh, I have enough. I am so happy with what I have!". This thought is a manifestation of the grace of the Divine Mother, *Maha Lakshmi*, the greatest wealth one can have. It is called *santosh dhan*, the wealth of contentment.

*Maha Lakshmi* also comes in the form of happiness. Whenever I am inspired to do something new with enthusiasm, this is also emergence of *Maha Lakshmi*.

*Maha Lakshmi* preys upon despair. Whenever we find ourselves in a state of despair, we should know that *Maha Lakshmi* has removed her protective shade from us. Then, what can we do? We call upon Her, "Oh, Mother, help me! Come to my side!". Despair should always be dealt with in this way.

*Maha Lakshmi* comes where there is joy, to a home where incense and a ghee lamp are burning every night, to where there is reciting of *Maha Lakshmi stotra*. Doing havan with your mantra on full moon is also pleasing to *Maha Lakshmi*. *Maha Lakshmi* says, "A home where incense and a ghee lamp are burnt in the evening, a home which is free from squabble and quarrel, that abode, that home is very dear to me. I go there. I enter very quietly and take my place! In a home where there is contentment, I reside permanently with all my friends, my entourage of countless virtues".

This is what puja of *Maha Lakshmi* teaches us, to go deeper, and give those virtues - those friends of *Maha Lakshmi* that reside within us - a chance to emerge. Have faith in Her. She always encourages us to keep moving, to move ahead with enthusiasm.

If we have *Maha Lakshmi's* grace, we live a very happy life. If Her grace is not there, we may have plenty of wealth but are unable to enjoy it; someone else enjoys it. You have seen examples of this in our society; some people have many homes and possessions, yet run around without rest. Servants live in their homes. It is the servants who enjoy it all. The owners are never at home. They are running, running, running...and worrying, worrying, worrying. Some, who have all kinds of money cannot even eat tasty food; they have been put

on strange diets, or have become addicted to anti-depressant drugs .

If we have the grace of *Maha Lakshmi*, we are able to enjoy what we already have. We are happy, we cherish, we appreciate what we have, even if it is very little. When this contentment is found in our home, we should know that *Maha Lakshmi* resides within. It is good to have aspirations, but not to be caught up with them. Real success is to have enough for my family... to have a roof over the head, food for today, clothing and a little extra for the guest who might drop in unexpectedly. Anything more is just desire, which is followed by discontent or fear, the cause of suffering.

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## Book Review:

### **Oasis of Stillness: Life and Teachings of Aghoreshwar Bhagwan Ramji** a book by Hariji.



#### **Trying to Touch the Sky: A personal Experience of Oasis of Stillness** by Laura Bonazzoli

**In Baba Hariji's Tatsat to *Oasis of Stillness: Life and Teachings of Aghoreshwar Bhagwan Ramji*, he writes to Baba: "I feel it is my duty to share with others the great gift of Yourself, recognizing that my effort to tell something about You is like someone trying to touch the sky." In the same way, I have felt both overwhelmed and humbled by Babaji's request to share some of my thoughts about Baba's biography: whether I describe it as sweet, inspiring, moving or life-changing...any adjective I use will only put limitations on the boundless power of this work. And so I offer instead a brief description of my personal experience of Baba's book, "to encourage everyone to receive the gift of grace that I have received."**

**I began reading *Oasis of Stillness* when my daughter, *Veena*, was just two months old. I would nurse her to sleep in my arms, then ease the book off the table my chair and read. Almost from the beginning, I recognized that during these precious, quiet moments, I was not simply reading about Baba, but actually experiencing his presence. I felt - and still do feel each time I turn to this book - that I was visiting Baba in person, receiving directly from him the darshan of his life story and teachings. When my daughter would wake, I would look down at her with new eyes, seeing with Baba's grace the Divine Mother in her sleepy face, and feeling with Baba's grace the Divine Mother within me.**

**And yet, the reading was not always easy. Each time I came across an instance of Baba's unusual powers, such as his ability to read people's unspoken thoughts, to manifest objects (such as a garland of marigolds) from thin air, or to heal the sick,**

doubt would rise within me. One day, filled with this doubt, I opened the book at random. These are the words my eyes fell upon: "The Divine has much more faith in us than we have in the Divine. Whatever faith we have in the Divinity or the Guru is because of the faith that they have in us." (page 188)

I often remembered Baba's teaching of "Be a human being," and I reflected on how I exhibited nurturing behavior in my words, thoughts, and deeds, and how I could become more human. More human came to mean to be in the present, not lost in my mind, lost in the past-future loop. Being human is to be aware and awake to the Divine Mother within and without. To be human is to be the Divine.

I also questioned the effect, the worth, the permanence of Baba's teachings: If such a saint had so recently lived among us, how could we still be killing one another, even claiming that our acts were performed for God? This time the answer came in a photograph of Baba (page 80): his wide-open eyes revealed to me an unconditional love for everyone and everything, even the confused and confusion itself. Wherever you are... he seemed to be saying...love.

These were just a few of so many lessons. Over time, I have come to see that Baba's biography is not like a novel to read and put aside, but a lasting gift to turn to again and again to further my sadhana. And as I spoke to others who had read it, I found that they felt the same. Here is an excerpt from a letter from a friend: "The book, *Oasis of Stillness* is appropriately named. On the day I received it as a gift, I started reading it and immediately felt calm and centered. Because of this, I read a page or two of the book every morning... Every part of the book speaks to me, from the story of Baba's life, to the discourses, questions and answers, and golden sayings... I feel nourished and guided by Baba Bhagwan Ramji's example and teachings..."

May *Oasis of Stillness* find a wide audience, bringing to seekers everywhere a personal experience of Baba's limitless love.

<p>The book, <i>Oasis of Stillness: Life and Teachings of Aghoreshwar Bhagwan Ramji</i> can be obtained from the ashram for a contribution of \$15.00, please call or write for more information.</p>
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**Ashram News and events:**

**May 23. Sunday: Open House (9:00 to 3:00 pm)**  
A day to familiarize your friends and family with the ashram.

**May 29. Saturday: Full Moon Havan**

**June 5. Saturday: 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM**  
Intensive at the ashram. (Every first Saturday of each month is set for intensive focusing on yoga, meditation, chanting, reflections and satsang.)



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