

SRI SARVESHWARI TIMES

NOVEMBER 1999

Even truth uttered untimely is like poison

In the absence of discretion,
everything turns into poison

AUGHAR VANI, Avadhuta's Wisdom



Aghoreshwar
Baba Bhagwan Ramji

True wealth is very different than the coins of gold

Below is the transcript of a talk given by Baba Hariji in Sonoma Ashram during the Navaratri on October 13th, 1999.

On this auspicious eve of the fifth night into Navaratri I would like to welcome you.

Navaratri: the whole purpose of this observance is to cultivate into our lives the various forms of Shakti. There are three main kinds of **Shakti: Kriya Shakti, Iccha Shakti, and Gyana Shakti.**

When we evoke Maha Kali during Navaratri and receive her blessings we awaken Kriya Shakti within us. Kriya Shakti is another name of Maha Kali. Having a healthy body, being able to perform various tasks, and having the ability to withstand the negativity that comes our way, these all belong to the realm of Maha Kali. With heightened Kriya Shakti we are able to have clarity of mind, finish tasks at hand, and engage ourselves fully in our practice. In so doing, we open ourselves to all the virtues that reside within us.

Being in touch with our virtues is to acknowledge Maha Lakshmi. With Maha Lakshmi's grace we awaken Iccha Shakti within us. Iccha Shakti is nothing other than our ability to manifest things or situations around us by having a clear vision in our minds. Just like receiving the grace of Maha Lakshmi in the form of material wealth, one is able to procure whatever one wishes for. With a developed Iccha Shakti one is able to attain happiness and peace in one's life, home and community.

Living such a life prepares one to come closer to the absolute truth, the ultimate knowledge. Remaining established in the ultimate knowledge is obtained by the grace of Maha Saraswati. In order to obtain Maha Saraswati's grace, we evoke Her during the last part of the Navaratri. Maha Saraswati's grace enriches us with Gyana Shakti. With Gyana Shakti awakened, one remains established in wisdom and spreads the light of knowledge like a

lamp spreading light in the darkness. Although the three aspects appear to be different, they are expression of the same One, who is beyond any name and form.

During Navaratri, we give a name and form to that nameless, formless Absolute who is beyond any boundaries, Mother, Maa. I try to come closer to Her. That Maa, the Divine Mother, is Sakar, with a form as well as Nirakar, without any form. **Maha Lakshmi is more than the virtuous words we use to describe Her! She is much more. Maha Kali, Maha Lakshmi, Maha Saraswati... She does exist!** Many great beings, saints, and seekers in history have had Darshan (to be in the presence of) with these Maha Devis, Maha Shaktis. They appeared before them in person! And, when not in that form, Maha Shakti, Maha Maya exists all around us.

The Divine Mother also has the name Maha Maya, the Grand Illusion. She exists before us, all around us in the form of Great Illusion. **This whole Jagat, the world, is nothing but expression of the Divine Mother.** It is Shakti, the Mother Herself that permeates every particle of this universe, giving it a life. She exists.

There was a great scholar of Advaita who went to Kashmir to have a discussion with the great Shakta-saint of Kashmir. He did not believe in Shakta-theory, but when he arrived in Kashmir, he got sick to such a point that he could not even move. A little girl came to him and whispered in his ear, "Oh great one, what are you doing here? Why have you come?" He said, "I have come here to speak against seeing the world as Divine Mother, to speak against Shakti, but right now I am so sick, I have no strength, I have no Shakti even to move." "If you have no Shakti," the little girl offered, "and you cannot move, are you not yet convinced that **without Shakti you cannot even speak against Her?** You can speak against Her only with Her blessing, not on your own! She exists in every single particle, and I am Her!" He was a great scholar. Immediately he realized the hollowness of all theory in his head, and recognizing the true form of Shakti, he bowed to Her.

Baba has taught us that during Navaratri, we simply **try to come closer to the Divine Mother by truly accepting Her presence in that form as a Mother.** Be just like a child to the Mother. Like a seeker once said, "Oh Mother, I have been calling you not only during Navaratri, I have been calling you, Maa, Maa, Maa... for years and you still not have come to me. But I know that Mother likes to hear her name Maa coming from her baby, so sweet the name! I know that you just like to hear it, O Maa. This is why you don't appear before me! So I will keep calling."

So **this is the attitude of a true seeker.** If the child is persistent and calls the Mother again and again, no matters how many things Mother is doing, sooner or later She drops it all, comes and picks up the child, and gives to him her full attention. **As a seeker, all we can do is call with that vibration of the heart.** She does exist. Maha Kali does exist. Maha Lakshmi does exist. It is not just words, theories, and ideas. **In Sakar form, the Divine Mother has existed, is existing.**

There was a person who received a mantra of Krishna. But deep inside he had the insight that there is the primeval Shakti Maha Kali. He felt drawn to Kali, so he used to worship Kali in the middle of the night. He had a statue of Kali and he would go and do all the pujas. Someone confronted his Guru, "How is it possible being your disciple, he is worshipping Kali. This is a sacrilege! If you don't believe it, come with me at two in the morning to his house."

On this advice the Guru went to the house of his disciple in the middle of the night. The disciple sensed his Guru was on the doorstep and feared great humiliation both for himself and for his Guru, for he was doing exactly opposite of what his Guru had taught him! He pleaded before that statue, "Oh Mother, I have given you all my attention. Please save me at this moment from being humiliated in front of my Guru. Please turn into Krishna!" That statue of Kali turned into Krishna. A temple was built in South India where this occurred. That temple stands today.

For the last two, three days I have been talking about Kali and Lakshmi in the form of virtues, which is true, but I do not intend to negate the physical presence of Maha Kali, Maha Lakshmi, Maha Saraswati and the real blessings that are obtained by doing our jap...

What is our jap? **Our jap is that incessant call to the Divine Mother.** Our different mantras are different names of that Mother we are calling. All we have to do is add sincerity to our mantra, and take our practice seriously.

This Navaratri is really an observance of discipline and determination: I do what I commit to do. I do what I say. Then I am honoring that Shakti. Having a schedule of intentions, I keep that schedule, maintaining discipline. Doing so cleans our system, our mind. The fasting that we do is not just for cleansing the body. It is much more. It can be explained in terms of chemistry too. If you eat less food, you spend less energy digesting it. The energy that the body is constantly bubbling up, is very pure, but is masked or overpowered by the energy of the fire required to digest food. Once our body does not have to put out the digestive fire, the energy that arises next is a very subtle energy, very pure. You sit and let that energy rise with your mantra-jap, and see what height it can take you to! It is very, very subtle. Just as a subtle fragrance can be completely overpowered by a strong odor and the senses dulled, so too can be the experience of energy dulled by the fires required to digest large amounts of food.

As we observe Navaratri, we minimize the intake of the world through all of our sensory organs (eat little, speak little, sleep little, hear little). Our body, thereby, does not have to process these things inside, and the energy that arises is very, very, pure. This is the whole purpose behind austerities during Navaratri: to keep constant the purity of energy that is rising within. Sustenance of the body requires very little; the rest is just gratification of our different senses.

We keep our attention one pointed. If we are sitting to do jap, and we notice our mind is running away, if we forget that we are doing jap, and have counted one, two, three beads, pull yourself back again, and continue. When we are not sitting down to do meditation during Navaratri, we are taught to continue our mantra, to continue our jap while walking, while working, while cooking, while doing whatever—keep repeating your mantra. There will be times you forget, times you are interrupted, times something happens, but after a minute or two, come back just like you come back to your mala.

In Navaratri we do Maha Jap. Being Mantrarat (absorbed in the mantra), twenty-four hours. I have no time for daydreaming, self-loathing, self-analyzing, analyzing somebody else or criticizing somebody, no time! Why waste this precious time? It is such a powerful time! **And this is what practice is all about: keep coming back, keep coming back, keep coming back!** You have to have a sense of that longing, that urgency. One saint has likened it to, "My house is on fire. I have no time for anything else, I am running!" Just so, there is

no time. We never know when this lamp of life can be snuffed away. It can happen any moment. Nobody knowsÄ really.

Maha Maya, Maha Jagadamba! During Navaratri we also pray, "**Oh Mother, please, remove this curtain of ignorance from my eyes, and that curtain of ignorance is nothing but You Yourself: Maha Maya, the Grand Illusion**". In the form of Maha Lakshmi in the Kali Yuga that is the greatest maya. Lakshmi is worshipped predominantly as a Goddess of wealth. True wealth is very different than the coins of gold: wealth of contentment, wealth of being able to appreciate what beauty is in my life, what strengths I have, like the wealth of sweet speech.

We also pray to Maha Lakshmi, "**Oh Mother, if you come, come in the right amount, not too much, but not too little**. If there is too much of you in my life there is the possibility of being intoxicating by your presence. I may begin to forget humility. And if there is too little of you, I may have to spread my palms in front of another. Please save me from that as well. May I be able to live within my means. Please, give me right intellect, otherwise if I live beyond my means, I will have to stand before someone and expose myself to humiliation."

When we have the grace of Maha Lakshmi we live a very full life, with total contentment. I am happy in my rags, I do not have to look at somebody's silk and feel deprived. I am very happy with my rags.

Tonight I would like you to continue with this meditation: go into your heart, evoke that golden light in your heart, open the lotus in your heart a little bit more. Invite the Mother to come and take a seat there with her one hand stretched out "be fearless," the other hand "giving boon." Just hold this image. All the prayers that we are doing to Maha Lakshmi are definitely heard. Just add a little sentiment to it, "Oh Mother, I do not know what you look like, who you are, where you live, how to call you..."

The real thing is to bring Her in the seat of our heart. Prayer is always heard, always. As a result of prayer, things happen in our lives. Somebody is saved from some accident, we are saved from some calamity... this is the result of prayer. It is not a coincidence. It is a result of our mantra. Mantra is the best friend, the name of the Divine Mother that we call constantly. In Kali Yuga this is the best friend, the best sadhana, nam jap, repeating the name.

Some day Mother will appear in a way that we can recognize Her. She does keep appearing all around, all day long, provided we are still enough to recognize Her. Please treat the remaining days of Navaratri with great care. Simplify your life, simplify, simplify. Minimize your needs, your intakes.

Feel that essence, the pure energy, that Shakti, Maha Maya arising within you. Sometimes you feel that energy to be so subtle, like smoke infiltrating your whole being. But you must be really still to feel it. You can hear Her sounds, if you are very silent, very still, a sound almost like the crickets, a sound of silence. She is all around us. We just have to be calling Her, and ready to listen to Her, see Her. May we all receive Maha Lakshmi's blessings in Her various forms. With this I bow to that great presence, the Divine Mother residing in your heart.

OM HARA HARA MAHADEV

Ashram News:

The observance of Navaratri was held at the Ashram from October 9th through October 18th. Many people participated in the 9 day long observation of intensifying one's practice. Morning and evenings prayers were filled with chants, songs and meditation. This Navaratri was a special one with good weather and good company.

The multipurpose hall is almost finished. We plan to begin using it before the end of the year. There is still some finish work to be done. The new kitchen is very close to being functional.

Upcoming events:

Nov 21 through Nov 28: Baba's Maha samadhi week:

Please join us in the week long observation of Baba's Maha Samadhi observance at the Ashram. Every evening we will chant 108 rounds of Aghoranna Paro Mantra and keep the lamp lit for the whole week.

New Year's (Millennium eve) event:

The Ashram is hosting a very special evening on Dec 31st to welcome the new millenium. Please plan to join us for the evening and register early by returning the RSVP card.



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