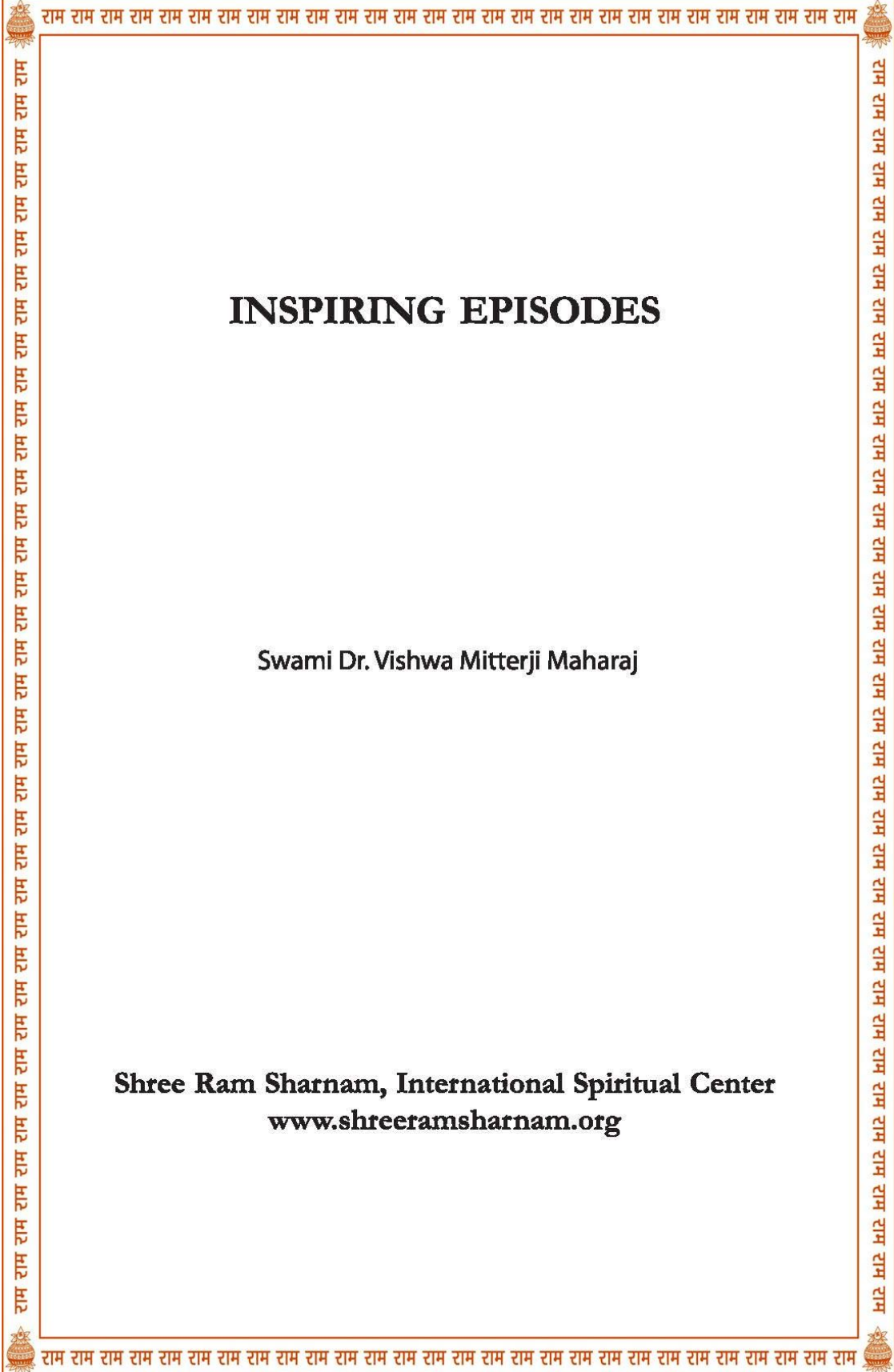


INSPIRING EPISODES

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Subject	Page
1. A Humble Dialogue with the Almighty	1
2. Good Samskaras of the Jaap of the "Name" of God	7
3. The Incarnation of God as the Name	15
4. The Actual Guru-Dakshina - Inspiring Incidents	31

INSPIRING EPISODES

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help us intelligently understand Your ways – ‘Where are you wandering, lost? All these grand mansions, so much of everything – all these luxuries and conveniences have been granted by Me, so that you do not feel inadequate of anything, so you perform the *Jaap* of My Name as much as possible. All this you are taking from Me, but you are forgetting Me. What kind of being are you?’ This is the Almighty’s admonishment. This is His complaint towards us. Blessed are those who, despite having all these worldly pleasures, are performing *Jaap* of the Name of God, who are performing adoration of the Name of the Saviour of the Downtrodden (*Patit Pavan*). Almighty! this servant bows his head at the feet of all those who are earning the Name of the Lord, he is the servant of all of them and Your Servant.

My Almighty! Grant us wisdom. Take away our intoxications, which are more dreadful and worse than alcoholic addictions – the intoxication of fame and honour, of superiority. My house is bigger than another’s; I have more cars than others. These intoxications can be ruinous. Almighty! no one except You can do this task. All other things are available in the market, they are available in a shop, but all this is only available at Your Divine Door, no where else. Placing the dust of the Lotus Feet of a Saint –Great Soul on one’s forehead can make all this happen, otherwise it cannot happen. Your Devotion (*bhakti*) is not available in the market place, detachment is not available in the market, love for the Divine is not available in the market. Almighty! You are the Giver for all of us. We beg from You, the Supreme Giver. From today may we never forget Your Name, may we never forget You. Almighty, the manner in which You remember us, it is our ultimate duty to remember You even

INSPIRING EPISODES

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Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

more. Our welfare lies in this and You always think of our welfare. You cannot think of anything except our welfare. How does it matter to You – whether anyone remembers You or not? What difference does it make to You? If You desire that we remember You, then Almighty there is no one as Benevolent as You. No one. That is why I say again and again – my Almighty! Your Deeds and Kindness can never be repaid. You are the Ultimate Benevolence (*Param upkari*) oh, Almighty! Even parents are not so selfless, they too expect something or the other. You are the only one who wants our welfare, our salvation, and expects nothing in return.

Glory be to You, my Lord Ram! Be merciful upon us. We do not know how to do *bhakti*, do not know how to love, do not know how to perform *jaap* of Your Name. We have only given unhappiness to others in life. We are repositories of grief. Not about others, but I know about myself and can say with certainty: 'Oh, Almighty! there is no crime in this world, no mistake, no sin which I have not committed. Even then, it is Your Glory that You accept us. How can we forget You? How can we forget our debt to You? How can we forget Your Greatness, Your Compassion, Your Benevolence, Your Forgiveness. Almighty! if there is someone else like me, please accept that person also as You have accepted all others. If there is someone worthless like me, grant him too refuge at Your Lotus Feet, make him chant Your Name, take away his sorrows, bestow upon him virtuousness.

Oh Lord Ram! The intoxication of liquor goes after some time, but that of pride, wealth and honour does not go so easily and the intoxicated person stumbles, sometimes this

INSPIRING EPISODES

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Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

way and sometimes the other way. This is the reason why we commit sins. Almighty! the intoxication known as ego does not allow us to submit before You. Neither does it allow us to bow before Your devotees. We are men, we are husbands – this intoxication does not allow us to forget all this. If we cannot be rid of this, oh Lord Ram! how will we imbibe humility in this life-time. Oh, Almighty! help us rid these intoxications. All of us are sitting in supplication before You. Grant us the boon. Oh Lord! crush this pride, fame and honour. Protector of the poor (*Dina naath*) there is none other than You who can do this. Once this pride breaks we will learn to bow both before You and before those who are Your Creatures. This is pride oh, Almighty, due to which we suffer from bouts of anger and anxiety. These are the attacks which pave the way for attacks of the heart. What is the intoxication about? Oh, Almighty! everything is Yours, nothing belongs to me. If we understand this Truth, then with Your Blessings this intoxication will end, no virtue is mine, nothing is mine. Everything belongs to You.

Mera mujh mein kuch nahi, jo kachu hai so tor

Tera tujhko saumpate, kya lagat hai mor

Nothing is mine, whatever there is, is thine

To give all that is Yours to You, what is there for me to loose!

My Almighty! All is Yours. You are the Doer of Everything. 'You are the one who does everything!' – make us realize this truth. We have asked for a lot. Prabhu! From who else can we ask? Who else will give? Bless us, be merciful upon us oh, Lord, The Supreme Jewel (*Daata Shiromani*). Be Compassionate, be Merciful. Supreme Giver! Be Merciful upon us. We worthless beings may forget You, but You should

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

never forget us, my Lord Ram! There could not be a more unfortunate day, there cannot be a more tragic day than that when You forget us.

My Almighty! see your children at Your Divine Court are standing with folded hands in supplication, they are standing in front of You. From today, we are no one else's, the world does not belong to us, we do not belong to the world. We are Yours, You are ours. Whatever we may be like, accept us – oh Lord! Never forget us.

Pray forgive us Almighty! Be merciful and compassionate (*Kripa karo*), be merciful and compassionate (*Kripa karo*) my Lord!

Glossary

Satchidananda: Eternal blissful consciousness/the infinite Supreme Soul

Dandvat Pranam: Bowing in salutation with hands, legs, knees, chest, head, mind, sight and speech

Patita Pavan: Saviour of the downtrodden

Dina Naath: Protector of the poor

Daata Shiromani: Lord, the Supreme Jewel

INSPIRING EPISODES

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Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

time in isolation doing *jaap* and *sadhna*.' The wife was pious (*sadhvi*); she joyfully gave her consent. Now *Brahmandevta*, by constant *Ram Naam upasana* (sitting close to/ meditating on the Name of Lord Ram), got deeply immersed in the ochre of Lord Ram. His *sadhna* started to bear fruit. People began to come seeking *darshan*. The news of his fame even reached the Emperor. Accompanied by Birbal, he went to seek *darshan* of the *Mahatma* (great soul)!. Before taking leave, Akbar said: '*Mahatma* (great soul)! I, Emperor of India, Akbar, pray to you – if you require any materials please unhesitatingly send me a message; immediately the material will be made available in your service.' Smilingly, *Brahmandevta* replied: 'King! you do not have anything which I need. Yes, if you need anything, please do not hesitate to ask for it.' Birbal said: 'Emperor, do you recognize him? – he is the same Brahman who, three months earlier, was begging. The *jaap* of the 'Name' of Lord Rama has made a beggar into a donor; it has made him the master of True Wealth. The glory (*pratap*) of the *susamskara* of the *jaap* of the Name of Lord Rama has reformed both his present and after-life (*lok parlok*). Emperor! you had said 'Reform him' – so I first gave him the incentive of gold coins and made him do *jaap* of the 'Name' of Lord Ram, and when he started to experience the joy (*raas*) of the 'Name' of Lord Ram, he stopped taking the gold coins. He became possessed of the Lord's love and began to do *jaap* and today his *samskaras* of doing *naam jaap* has become entrenched.' On hearing this, Akbar was greatly astonished.

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

In this way, appropriate examples prove that the good *samskaras* from the 'Name' of the Almighty extinguish our poor *samskaras* and save us from the attraction of temptations. Such a rescue on one occasion makes us stronger and this when it is repeated it ensures that we do not fall prey to temptations and gradually the seeds of poor *samskaras* are destroyed. It is imperative upon individuals not to give an opportunity to poor *samskaras* to revive themselves.

(3)

The *samskaras* of the purifying (*pavan*) 'Name' of Lord Ram are also pure; which eradicate the impurity of the inner self and make the self of the *upasak* (practitioner of '*upasana*') also pure and impart the strength to lead a pure and honest life. One such incident is presented here -

Paper for making currency notes is produced in Horshangabad. However, though most of it is from overseas, but is inspected here. An *upasak* (one who does *upasana*) of the 'Name' of Lord Ram was holding the post of inspection officer. His decision in the process of inspection was final. On inspection, one entire lot of paper was found to be defective (not of satisfactory quality). As a result, the *sadhak* did not accept the lot. His senior officials counseled him not to enter into disputes but to approve the consignment of paper as it was. The *sadhak* did not agree. The foreign officials also pressurized him and even tried to tempt him; however, as the *sadhak* was influenced by good *samskaras* of

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

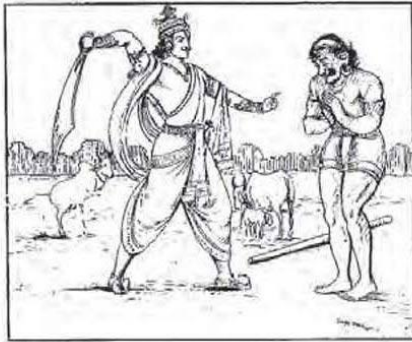
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food. If you think carefully, the spiritual aspirant experiences the same. Even if there may not be an external snake, an external mountain, or physical fire; are spiritual aspirants (*sadhaks*) not troubled by jealousy, anger and malice? Are all people not burning in the fires of worry?

The fires of worry engulf the entire world

Only those saints escape who make God's name their prop!

The snakes of vices are ever-waiting to bite the spiritual aspirant. The poison of material interests does not loosen its grip. The fire of worry is always lit. The mountain of pride is ever-ready to collapse.



There is an event from the reign of Raja Parikshit, son of Abhumanyu. Raja Parikshit learnt of the coming of Kali Yuga into his kingdom, so he took his army to attain supreme victory. At one place they saw that *Dharma* has taken the form of a bull and was roaming around on one leg. At another place they encountered the earth in the form of a cow; she had tears falling from her eyes. *Dharma* asked the earth: 'Why are you unhappy?' The earth explained: 'Dharma, Bhagwan Shri Krishna has, at this time, withdrawn his divine play from this world and the world has fallen prey to the evil eye of the sin-filled Kaliyug. Seeing all this I am deeply saddened.' Raja Parikshit again saw a *shudra* dressed in royal robes holding a stick and

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

violently beating cows and bulls. The Raja asked: 'Hey, cruel one, who are you? Why are you beating them?' He replied: 'King, I am Kali. I am doing my work.' The King responded angrily: 'I will not allow you to remain here.' Kali replied: 'King, at least listen to my merits and flaws and only then pronounce your judgment. In my age brothers will fight over wealth and worldly possessions. Men and women will break the boundaries of decorum. Few women will live within the bounds of dignity. Violence will be dominant. Humans will be unintelligent and have short life spans. On hearing Kali's declaration, the King spoke tremblingly: 'Enough, enough, the limits have been reached. Under your influence humanity will be extinct. I will kill you.'

Kali further said: 'Maharaja, I have a very strong virtue; listen to that. In *Satya Yuga* long performance of *japa* (meditative repetition of a mantra or name of Divine Power); ascetic practices (*tapas*), fasting, meditation; in *Treta Yuga* performing elaborate rituals, in *Dvapara*, Service to Lord (*Bhagwat Seva*) - all the merits could thus be accumulated; all that merit is now achievable in my age by lovingly chanting *Jaap* of the Name of Rama.' This is what Shri Shukdevji tells Parikshit: 'King, ordinarily *Kaliyuga* is the treasure chest of flaws (*dosh*); but there is one very big positive virtue (*guna*) in it. That virtue is just this: that in *Kali Yuga* the only requirement is the mere worship of the Name of God (*Naam Sankirtan*) - all worldly attachments are left behind and one is thus able to attain the Almighty.

Although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age: simply by chanting or repeating krsbna-katha, one is liberated from the material bondage

(Sbrimadbhagwat12/3/5)

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

It is thus implied that in *Kaliyuga*, God incarnated as the Name provides human beings with salvation. Thus, those spiritual aspirants who take refuge in the Name of God for their protection, in the end the Almighty, with His Perfect Energy appears in seen or in unseen form and shall slay the *Hiranyashakyaparupi Kaliyuga*. In this way an aspirant's spiritual endeavor becomes successful.

To depend on the Name, to seek proximity to the Name (*Naam Upasana*)- despite the obstacles and difficulties placed by *Kaliyuga* is the direct proof of God's Grace. Living examples are: Goswami Tulsidasji and Bhakta Shiromani Surdasji. They worshipped the Name. The Almighty was compassionate and purified their beings and made them worthy of respect and also immortalized their compositions. The worship of the Name (*Naam-upasana*) is devotion-centered. The path of *Bhakti* is of those who do not have their own strength. If a follower of this path of *Bhakti* (devotion) feels his own strength in any way, or even has minimal pride in his own strength - then, he is not a true follower of the path of *Bhakti*; his supreme strength is God Himself. In the weakness of the devotee's self, lies strength and it is this quality which attracts the Almighty. This path is for those who have purged their pride. They know that -

The 'Name' and pride cannot exist, in one mind, at the same time

Light and darkness at one place, cannot be seen anywhere

(Bhaktiprakash)

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

devotional-ism increases, people become aware of their 'true-self' (*sat swarup*) - that is the aim of *Satsang*.' Kaliyuga said: 'At this time, it is my reign. Intelligence lies in remaining subservient to the side that is sovereign.' 'Brother, I live not in your reign, I believe in the Reign of Rama (*Ram Rajya*) who is my King, not you. Reigns come and go.' 'Your disobedience will cost you dearly,' with this warning *Kaliyuga* departed. The very next day a person came and said: 'Maharaj! you had ordered liquor but the payment has not yet been received.' The Saint understood: 'This is a game of *Kali*.' All his devotees turned into critics. Soon the *ashram* was empty. *Kali* appeared again and enquired: 'How is the *ashram*? How is devotion? It is all quiet. Those who regarded you as God, now consider you as the devil. Thus, I would again say, in my realm do not go against me by preaching *Naam Upasana* (meditation upon the Name).' If you agree, then from tomorrow itself, double the number of disciples will start coming.' The Saint asked, 'How?' *Kali* said: 'I will show you tomorrow itself.'

A leper was lying on the road and lamenting: 'Hey! Someone please takes me to the Saint. If he is compassionate enough to sprinkle water on me, then my leprosy will disappear - this God has revealed to me in my dreams.' People said: 'No, he is a drunkard, not a Saint.' 'Oh, no he is a Saint of a high order.' People took him to the Saint. The Saint sprinkled water and the ailment was cured; from an elderly state, he became a handsome youth. All the disciples were shamed and started to beg forgiveness. The *Satsang* again began to overflow with people.

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

Kali visited again and said: 'So you have seen my power. Therefore, be on my side.' The Saint immediately responded: 'No, we shall remain one with Lord Shree Ram. The *satsang* will continue, so that people do not become slaves of material subjects, but become disciples of Rama.' *Kali* threatened: 'It will cost you dearly; you have already seen my influence.' 'Yes, I have witnessed it. I have been both criticized and praised. You have also seen the Splendour of Ram Rajya? In every circumstance I remained equanimous; in both I remained unmoved and calm- this is the effect of the Almighty's divine favour. The worship of the Name (*Naam Bhakti*) makes God favourable to the disciple and equanimity (*samta*) is the highest state which the disciple gains by the Compassion of Lord Rama.

The *Upanishads* declare the Name of God as the highest of all truths and the worship of the Name as the highest form of worship. Verbal, mental and in low tone- these three types of worship (*upasana*) bring all joys and bestow compassion. In all four ages the influence of the Name (*Naam*) is manifest; but in *Kaliyuga* its special significance has been emphasized. Since ancient times it has been given the highest place. This form of meditation ('sitting close' *upasana*) has been described as the fulfiller of all desires and remover of fear and disease. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christian and Jews - all, in some form or the other, accept the ...importance of *Naam Upasana* ('sitting close to'/ meditation on the name of God) The main parts of this are: *Naam Smaran* (remembering and repeating the name of God), *Dhyana* (meditation; contemplation; the seventh rung in the eightfold ladder of Yoga) and *Sankirtan* (singing in the praise of God).

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

1. *Naam Smaran*: Taking the Pure and Holy Name of the Almighty, by verbal recital or in the mind, is called *smaran*, while repeating the Lord's name, remembering His virtues with love and emotion is called *smaran (simran)*. Singing in praise of *Simran*, the Saints do not tire:

*All happiness lies in simran, the Almighty resides in
simran...*

(Bhaktiprakash)

Feeling the Presence of God everywhere, always feeling the Presence within you, besides you at all times, conversing with Him in your mind is called sweet remembrance yoga (*smaran yoga*).

*Remembrance yoga is easy; other Yogas are difficult
Simran gives darshan of the Almighty, is the abode
of the Almighty and the cure of illnesses*

(Bhaktiprakash)

Everyone has the equal right to do *jaap* (meditative repetition) of the Name of Rama - whether the person is illiterate or literate, poor or rich, of high or low caste, woman or man, pure or impure, sinful or virtuous, vegetarian or non-vegetarian, happy or sad. The *jaap* (meditative repetition) may be performed at all times and at all places- in jail, in washroom, at cremation sites, fields, hospitals, anywhere. The Name God (*Naam Bhagwan*) is King among Gods which acts as a watchman for the devotee and protects piety and virtues and saves them from vices. The sound of the Name is the *Garuda* (mythical bird, usually the mount of

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

purified, his conduct and behavior reformed and his temperament changed. His hunger and sleep lessened considerably; his yearning for union with Lord Ram awakened. His self became peaceful; he could feel the ultimate peace and experience the ultimate spiritual ecstasy. A divine radiance appeared under his face. With the blessings of the Name (*Naam*), he became a saint. One day the saint organized a gathering. The well-to-do and the king provided monetary help. Subsequently, the saint explained the glory of the Name (*Naam*) to everyone and *Bhajan Kirtan* was performed. As they were leaving, everyone bowed to the saint. The king also came and said: 'Mahatma! you have not shown any miracle.' Smiling, the saint responded with respect: 'King, a miracle has occurred. I am your old servant who a few years back bowed to both you and your officers. Today, along with you, all others are prostrating respectfully before me. What bigger miracle can there be?' Everyone was astonished upon hearing this. How easily the Name God (*Naam Bhagwan*) upon being pleased, makes manifest among the devotees the Miracle of His glory.

2) *Naam Dhyaan*: concentrated *jaap* (repetitive meditation) of the Name (*Naam*), even if selfish, awakens soul-power (*atmashakti*). If it is mental or chanted alongwith the breath and in a loving manner by focusing the mind on the Name, ceaseless *jaap* (*Shabd Brahma*) and limitless sound (*Naad Brahma*) appear on their own accord. *Naam Dhyaan* is an easy and excellent means for cleansing the mind, burning old misdeeds and realizing the true self. This is the ultimate means for Union with the Endless.

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

where loving tears well up and passion emerges - such a *Kirtan* affects the mind, the body and the marrow itself. The soul easily becomes peaceful through this. The Saints have truly pronounced that the worship of the Name is a very easy and the highest means of attaining the Lord's Love. Just as birds perched on a tree flee on hearing the clapping of hands, thus the birds of sin flee on clapping while singing the praise of God (*Sankirtan*). Elucidating the glory of singing the virtues of Lord Ram, Shri Tulsidasji states:

In the Kali age, however, men reach the end of mundane existence simply by singing the Almight's (Hari's) praises. In the age of Kali neither Yoga, nor the performance of sacrifices nor spiritual wisdom is of any avail; one's only hope lies in singing Lord Rama's praises.

(Ramcharit Manas, 7/ 103/4-5)

He further elaborates - one who loves Ram Naam (the Name of Lord Ram) more dearly than Shri Ramji is destined to attain salvation in this dire age of Kaliyug. On being asked by someone, Goswamiji explains the method of the worship of the Name:

Repeat Ram Ram, memorize Ram Ram, do jaap of Ram Ram, oh, tongue!

(Vinay-Patrika 65)

The mind has three states. It is sometimes calm, sometimes sad and sometimes happy. Tulsidasji explains: 'When the mind is peaceful, do *jaap* of *Ram Ram* is such a manner that you attain

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

‘Ok, then ask your Guru Ma what she wants.’ Shri Krishna enquired from the Guru’s wife – ‘In what way may I serve you?’ ‘Krishna, you are our most capable student. My son has departed to the abode of Yama, bring him back for me.’ Shri Krishna brought the son of the Guru back from the abode of Yama and placed him in the lap of the Mother. What significance *Guru-dakshina* has; the relations between Guru and disciple have! For the completeness of this pure relationship, upon receiving ‘*naam-daan*’ (the gift of the “Name”), *Guru-mantra* or knowledge, it is essential that the disciple give the Guru, in some form or another, *Guru-dakshina*.

(2)

Mahatma Shukdev grew *atma-gyani* (knowledgeable one who has received the stage of self realization) while in the womb itself. Refusing to emerge from there he started to say – ‘I want to remain unattached from worldly illusion (*maya*). The Almighty stopped the momentum of *maya* for five split seconds, then Shuk emerged from the womb. Detachment (*vairagya*) was so powerful that on birth itself he left for the forests. His father Maharishi Vyas Devji wanted to send his detached son to King Janak but Shukdevji had many doubtful questions in his mind - for instance- he is a king, I am a *rishi* (sage); he is a householder; I am a renunciate; he is *kshtariya*, I am Brahmin; he is a materialist (*bhogi*), I am a yogi, a *sanyasi*. How can I make such a king Janak my guru? He went to him many times, but returned. In the criticism of a saint mahatma, in seeking their faults, one’s virtuous earnings are lost. Devrishi Narad, in order to teach him, took the form of an old person and was pouring mud into a drain of water. In so much water, mud would not stand. On seeing this Shuk asked – ‘What are you doing?’ The elderly person replied- ‘I am making a dam.’ ‘Foolish person – does a dam get built just by throwing mud like this?’ The old person promptly turned his face and said – ‘I am not

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

foolish. Foolish is that Shukdev, see his foolishness; prideful he has abandoned his feelings for Guru and wasted his accumulated knowledge (*gyan rash*).⁷ Shuk fainted on hearing this; on gaining consciousness he got up and went straight to Raja Janak

*Respectfully, devotionally, lovingly, came close to
Janak,
Who was in the cosmic world, the island of dharma.
Message was sent through the gate-keeper-
King! Shuk has come here, with the thirst of love,
Grant darshan, be merciful, enable crossing of the
worldly oceans.
Seeing his young age, King of Mithila gave the
command,
Stay at the hallway, for three nights remain.
Hearing the commandment, Shukdev obeyed
immediately,
Stood for three days, without a wrinkle on his brow!*
(*Bhakti Prakash*)

In the same way a message was sent to stay for three days and three nights more. There, fasting in winter, Shukdevji stayed on. There ladies came and went by their own will but Shukdevji remained happily engrossed in *bhakti*. Seeing this the ruler asked for the reason of his arrival?

*With folded hands to Janak said
Shuk Muniraj,
Path of self-realization, devotion, grant me today!*
(*Bhakti Prakash*)

On considering Shukdev worthy and a pure receptacle, Sadguru Maharaj Janak gave him *diksha* of the 'Name' of the Almighty. Shukdevji spent a few days at the feet of his Guru doing *sadhana*,

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

all doubts were dispelled. The disciple wanted to give his Guru, *Guru-dakshina*. 'Son! (*Vatsya*) I don't want anything.' On his insistence and to show the vital-ness of *Guru-dakshina*, Raja Janak said: 'Give me whatever may be of no use in your view.' After thinking and contemplating, the disciple picked up some earth. The earth immediately said – 'To rivers, oceans, mountains, palaces and houses I give the gift of myself. To every human, I give food, flowers, fruits, myself. How am I useless?' Throwing the earth, he picked up a stone which said – 'From me houses, palaces, forts are designed; I am not a waste.' Shukdevji's mind was alerted – pride in oneself is at fault; this is useless and due to this there are bondages in the world. Thus each disciple should place his duty (*kartavya*) that is the pride of his doing, his ego at the holy feet of the Guru in the form of *Guru-dakshina*. Gurudev's ask only for this from their disciples.

(3)

Saint Tukaram narrates in his own words mysteries, secret things about himself - 'Listening to religious stories, I fell in love with the Almighty. I became a disciple of Lord Vithal, started to perform incessant *jaap* of his 'Name'. The Lord felt merciful and in my dreams, *Satguru* met me. I was returning from a dip in the Ganges, the meeting was on the way. He said – 'On the inspiration of God Vithalnath, I have come to give you instructions.' I said - 'I have never even done any service towards God, how merciful He is.' He gave the Divine 'Name' of Ram-Krishna-Hari and asked for a one-fourth kilo (*pav*) of *toop* (*ghee*-clarified butter) as *guru-dakshina*. Tukaram clearly says - the true meaning of *toop* is the feeling of - 'I' - mine, that is *abenta mamta* not *ghee*. He explained – 'You are neither man nor woman, you are the soul, a part of that imperishable God. Surrender to me all your feelings of the body, that is your doer-ship (your ego), give that to me.'

34

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

take the wealth.' 'Even that is not yours King, much of it is your father's and the rest belongs to the people. How is it yours? Horses, elephants, vehicles – are also not yours; today, they are with you, tomorrow with someone else. King, even the body is not yours; on death it will be left here. Give your mind in *dakshina*.' Making this even more explicit, Guru Nanak says: 'This which you are saying – I give wealth, kingdom, body, mind, intellect, keep all this with yourself. Give 'T' to me. If you give 'T', all is gained and if 'T' is not given, then even on giving everything, nothing is given.' Maharishi Yajyavalka asks Raja Janak for his mind –

*In auspicious bhakti, Janakji said, may my mind
belong to the sage,*

*Rishi said, my consent is there, your offering is
accepted.*

*Self-knowledge has been realized, consider your
yagya successful Oh, King!*

*He said listen beloved guru, may desires fly with
wings.*

*Equanimity has not come to my mind, there is
excessive restlessness,*

*Muni said – 'Offering is incomplete, with this the
mind cannot focus fully.'*

*After giving the offering of the mind, do not waver,
do not work with my mind,*

*Consider your mind as mine now, perform the work
of the kingdom.*

*Intentional silence, steadfastness werem achieved,
peace came after losing all doubts,*

*Calm, quiet mind, immovable body, the maya of the
mind was fully removed.*

(Bhakti Prakash)

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

Giving his blessings, the Rishi said – ‘Oh, King! I return your mind in the form of *prasad*. Do not think it your own, consider it mine and rule and also perform ‘Shri Ram’ bhajan.’ Raja Janak was overwhelmed with joy, lost body-consciousness.

(5)

There is a true incident about Tibet; one disciple went to his Gurudev and requested for *diksha* (initiation). The Guru said – ‘There are thousands of disciples here, there is no place for you.’ ‘Gurudev, be merciful. I can stay quietly here or there.’ ‘Fine, you pound the rice for everyone’s meals.’ The disciple made the Guru’s instructions paramount, as a crown on the head (*shirodhari*) and day and night did this work. Neither did the disciple ever go to the Guru, nor did the Guru ever approach the disciple. Many years passed, the time for the Gurus’ *nirvana* arrived. He wanted to bestow the Guru’s position, thus asked his disciples - ‘What you may have learnt here all these years, write its essence and give.’ Almost everyone wrote this – ‘The mind is a mirror, the Guru cleanses the dirt which accumulates on it.’ The Guru was dissatisfied and displeased. Thus, he said – ‘Ask the person who pounds the rice once.’ Everyone went, on being asked he replied – ‘Brothers, I am uneducated, I cannot write but what did you all write?’ What the majority had written, they told him. Then he said- ‘Brothers, when the Guru has been found, then how is the mind with oneself? The Guru is the looter of the mind, we use his mind, thus for everything *Satguru* is responsible.’ On hearing this, for the first and last time Guru Maharaj went to the disciple and bestowed the guru’s position to him and himself achieved *nirvana*.

From the above narrated example, *Guru-dakshina*’s essentialness, greatness and superiority become apparent. With giving *guru-dakshina*, according to the way of the *Shastras*, the Guru-disciple

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

relationship becomes strong. Disciples have placed at the feet of the guru as *guru-dakshina* their self-pride, their ego, that is their mind in all its principal, but what is the practical form of this? On this theme, some examples are presented –

(1)

Once Mahatma Buddha told his disciples – ‘Bhikshus, four months from today I will achieve complete *nirvana*, then this body will not be in your midst; thus whatever is worthy of being done, do it soon; there is now no time for delay.’ The entire *sangha* (congregation) drowned in great sorrow. Crying woefully, beating their chests, blubbering, the disciples started deep thought - ‘What will happen now?’ All were worried about how the set-up would run. A disciple named Tishya, on hearing the news, did not cry nor scream but entered intentional silence (*Maun*). His companions started to think, he is so deeply hurt that he has even stopped talking. They feared that he may go mad. Due to his good behaviour Tishya was extremely loved; the news of his quietude reached Gurudev, Tishya has, like a turtle, withdrawn himself internally. The disciple was called, he bowed at the holy feet. Buddha said, ‘Son (*Vatsya*)! These *bhikshus* want to know about your feelings, your mental state.’ Tishya replied with respectful humility - ‘God! Your instructions – what is worth following – follow, do not delay. I am trying to follow those instructions, trying to make them possible. Be merciful, may my determination be fulfilled.’ With tearful eyes, Tishya respectfully requested- ‘My Lord! Oh, merciful Gurudev! Before *nirvana* may my ‘I’ die - for this grant me strength and also blessings. Now neither will I speak, nor move, nor waver. I have to use all my strength for this. Oh, merciful! Be kind so that these four months, I use for a revolution in my life – this way or that way may I be.’ Listening to the disciple, the pleased Guru said – ‘Oh, bhikshus! Become like Tishya. What will come of crying and blabbering?’

38

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi



Prayer through flower garland offerings is not my prayer; those who offer flower, garlands of *dhyaan* everyday- that is the true prayer. Make your lives *sadbnamay*, making it enlightened is my true prayer. What has happened to Tishya let that happen in you.' The Guru's permission, his command, his teachings, his tradition to the letter, obedience, to be strongly resolute for a pure life journey, earning the wealth of the Lords 'name', to earn and accumulate the capital of good *karma* and to see the Lord in all humans and to serve them in the manner of serving the Guru; behave with them lovingly, to continue self study and to broadcast and spread the Guru's teachings and to motivate them for *satsang* and to encourage them for *sadhana* – is real Guru puja. To continue to offer such prayer like flowers that is to stay committed to maintain the above vows is in a real sense *Guru-dakshina*

(2)

At a Rishi's ashram on the banks of the Ganges, many disciples gained spiritual knowledge. On completing their education, they returned to their respective homes. While leaving, they would ask the Acharya – '*Gurudev!* What may we give in *Guru-dakshina*? The guru would reply – 'What you have gained, when you are in society, implement it, bring your knowledge into your behaviour, stand on your own feet, earn truthfully and then after one year whatever your heart desires, you may give.' Upon leaving the *ashram* whatever was earned in their work, the disciples gave a portion with devotion to the Guru Maharaj. Once a simple, ordinary disciple came to the Gurukul; he was an ordinary householder, worked hard all day to maintain his family. Extremely keen to learn, his exemplary behaviour won the hearts of everyone. The Rishi taught him lovingly; whatever he learnt he would aspire to implement in his mind; whatever task was given to him, he completed by the next day. When his education was completed he too enquired – '*Gurudev!* What may I give in *guru-dakshina*?'

39



INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

The Rishi told him what he used to tell all his other disciples. He returned after a year, prostrated at the holy feet and said – ‘Gurudev! I have come to present *guru-dakshina*.’ Pleased to see him, the Guru asked – ‘Son! What have you brought?’ He brought forth ten people, they were from his village. He said – ‘I have brought them in *Guru-dakshina*.’

‘For what?’ ‘Lord, what learning you had imparted to me, I took to them, in just that their lives have been reformed; now make them your disciples, so that so many more people tread the correct path.’ Joyfully, the Rishi said – ‘You have given me whole precious, most superior *Guru-dakshina*. Son, you have gained most superior things here, distributed the most superior and also presented me with the most superior.’

Frequently people go to the holy feet of the Guru to resolve worldly problems, the reason for coming to the *satsang* is the same that the *darshan* of the Saint Guru fulfills desires. They take *diksha* of the ‘Name’ with the same hope that their worldly problems are resolved. For a while they perform *jaap* of the ‘Name’, do different types of prayers, disappointed by one they appeal to another. Today Vrindavan, tomorrow Rishikesh, day after they submit attendance at the holy feet of Balaji Bhagwan. Life is spent in tarrying. For such a person Bhakt Kabir Sahib says –

*See the world's intoxication and madness, no
one heeds devotionism (Bhakti bhava)
Some come to ask for a son,
give a rupee as offering,
Some come stricken by sorrow,
be merciful on us please
Some celebrate weddings,
engagements, anxious to please Saints-priests,*

INSPIRING EPISODES

Author: Shree Vishwa Mitter Ji Maharaj

Shree Ram Sharnam, New Delhi

youth said – ‘Almighty! All this I have left behind and come. Will this teach me the essence of life? Will I understand death? Mahatma ! All this is impermanent (perishable); if even from saints one gets the impermanent, then from where may one get the everlasting?’ On hearing the youth’s reply the Saint was overjoyed.

‘I am the body!’ the death of this egoistic feeling is the real end – this is the essence of death’s mystery. This could be submitted as *Guru-dakshina* at the holy feet of the Guru and killed or by any other means. Only after the death of the ego can a disciple become worthy of true *Guru-seva*, otherwise without serving the world the disciple will serve his own ego and ruin his life. Those who obliterate themselves and are oriented to the Guru, never allow their Guru to die, through following his purposes and through spreading his message they keep him alive. Such disciples continue to give Guru Maharaj- life long, real *Guru-dakshina* and themselves too become immortal. Thus is why saints-mahatma’s by their experiences have uttered the truism - ‘Those who have embraced Ram, obliterated their selves, have achieved Ram.’ Where you will obliterate yourself, there the One responsible for becoming, will make you thus that you will always remain being; that is, you will become one who can never be obliterated. Such *Satguru* and disciples are both spiritually great (*dhanya*)!